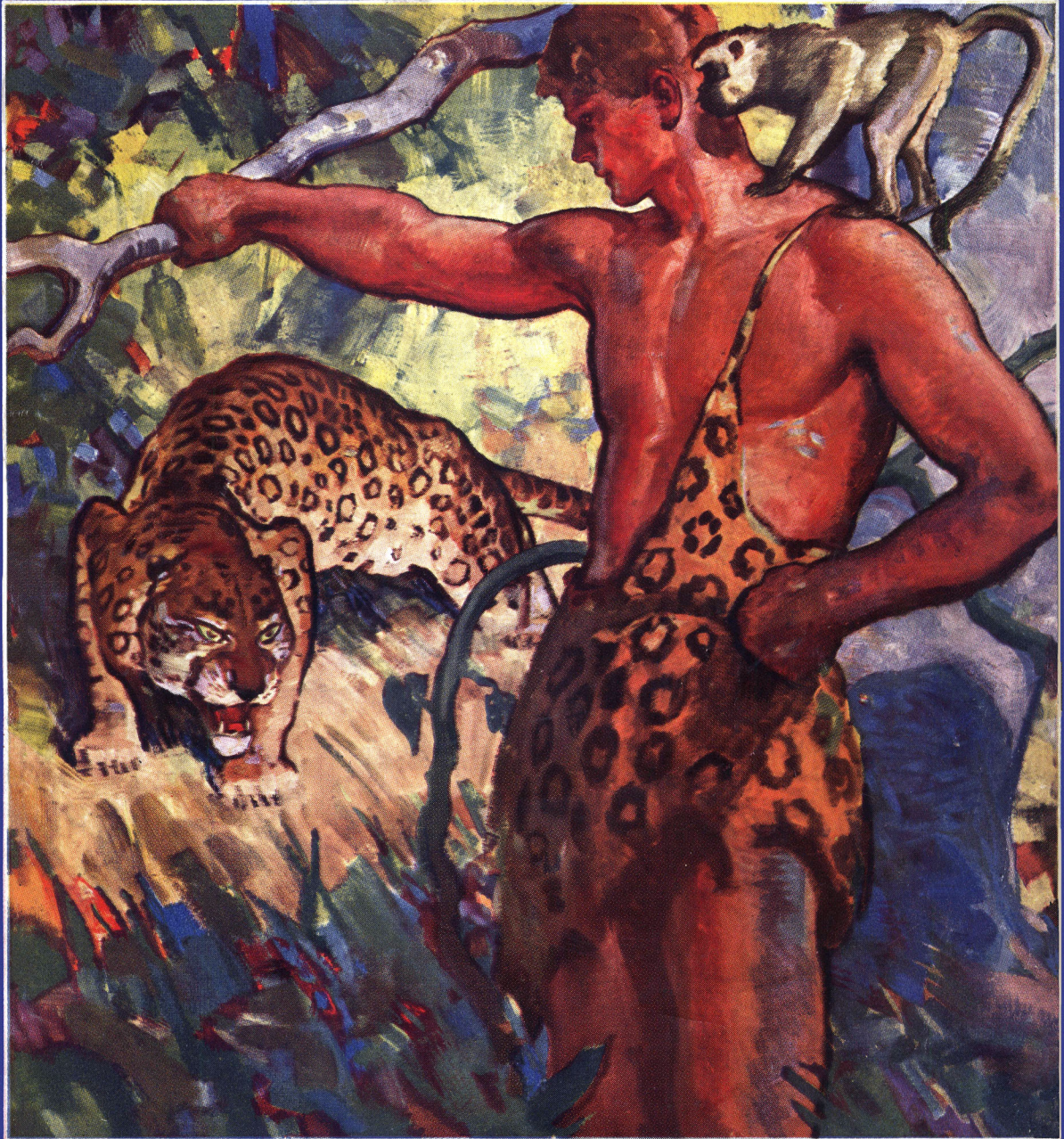


BLUE BOOK

Magazine

October

15 cents



A new **TARZAN** novel

Edgar Rice Burroughs, H. Bedford-Jones,
William Makin, Robert Mill, William Chester

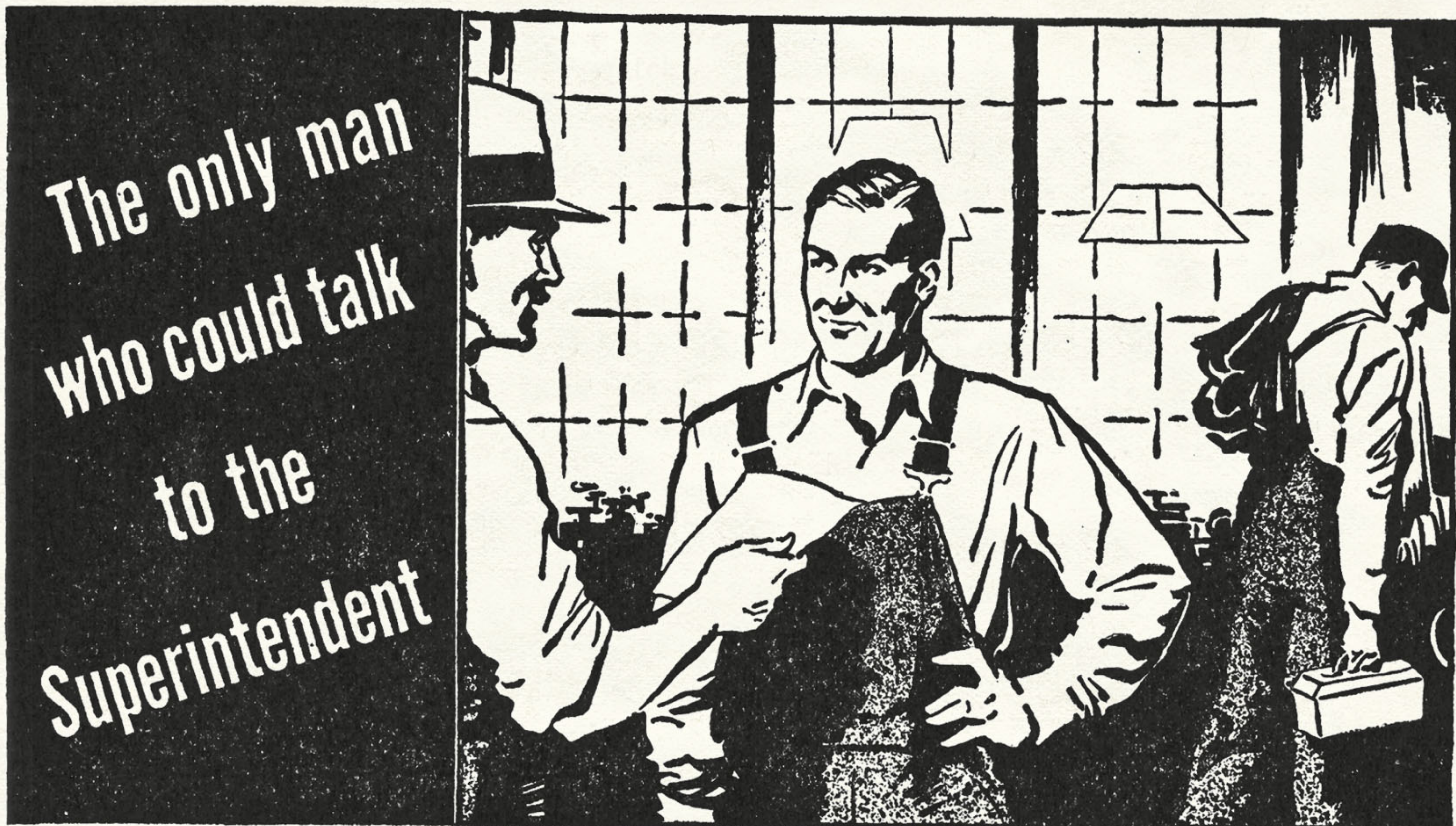
Between Ourselves

THIS month Tarzan comes back to you—a gallant partner in vicarious adventure, famous the world over in magazine-story, in book, in movie and even on the radio. It is an entirely new story, of course; for one of the many advantages a magazine should offer you over these other forms of entertainment is the complete novelty of its contents; and Blue Book, at any rate, gives you only stories fresh from the author's pen. There's no better combination than an old fiction friend in a new story; and Tarzan, who has kept alive the tradition of heroic romance in a day of realism too often sordid, is therefore doubly welcome.

In this issue we have ventured an editorial experiment by leaving out the customary novelette in favor of more long short stories. Next month we plan an experiment in the other direction, a longer and really exceptional novelette—"Proud Rider," by Harvey Fergusson, who writes with notable grace and power of his native New Mexico, and has won recognition from the critics for books like "Blood of the Conquerors" and "Wolf Song."

There is of course no hard-and-fast dividing line between a long short story and a short novelette—or, for that matter, between a long novelette and a short novel. We have always felt that quality is far more important than quantity anyhow, and have therefore not insisted too strongly on what are, after all, artificial distinctions in length. We should, however, be glad to receive expressions of your preference, in the matter. . . . Which brings us to another question of your preference: William Chester's fine "Hawk of the Wilderness" comes to its conclusion in this issue: Would you like to have a sequel?

—*The Editor*



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to the
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BLUE BOOK



OCTOBER, 1935

MAGAZINE

VOL. 61, NO. 6

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DONALD KENNICOTT, Editor

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The Sailor's

An artist who is also an enthusiast on the subject of sailing-ships here gives us a specially interesting little article on a type of ship famous in maritime history, the brig.

By **COULTON
WAUGH**


THIS interesting little ship has two masts, characteristic, by the way, of all the brig family. Both are square-rigged, with both masts in three sections. If a brig had her spanker run upon a light additional mast stepped a few inches aft of the mainmast, instead of being directly attached to the mainmast, she was called a snow.

The brig was a famous rig in the Nineteenth Century. There were privateer brigs, gun brigs, and merchant brigs. Salem and Marblehead sent out scores of these pretty little ships to earn fortunes trading with the Far East. The brig *Grand Turk* was the first vessel from America to blaze the way to China via the Cape of Good Hope, and the brig *Smyrna* the first American vessel to enter the Black Sea.

But perhaps the most famous of all brigs were the "Gordie Colliers" of England. These rough-and-ready vessels were regarded as the prime school in which a sailor might learn his trade. The captains always used the chain-cable to board the ship, as they considered the use of a gangway effeminate. A famous graduate of the rough ways of coal brigs was Joseph Conrad, greatest writer of the sea. In his story "The Rescue" Conrad has immortalized the brig.

Rare old Captain Cook was a product of this hard school, and when in 1776 he began his last voyage, he chose a coal brig for his flagship—the *Discovery*.


Cook had begun his explorations in 1768. Before that time geography was more or less a matter of rumor: great



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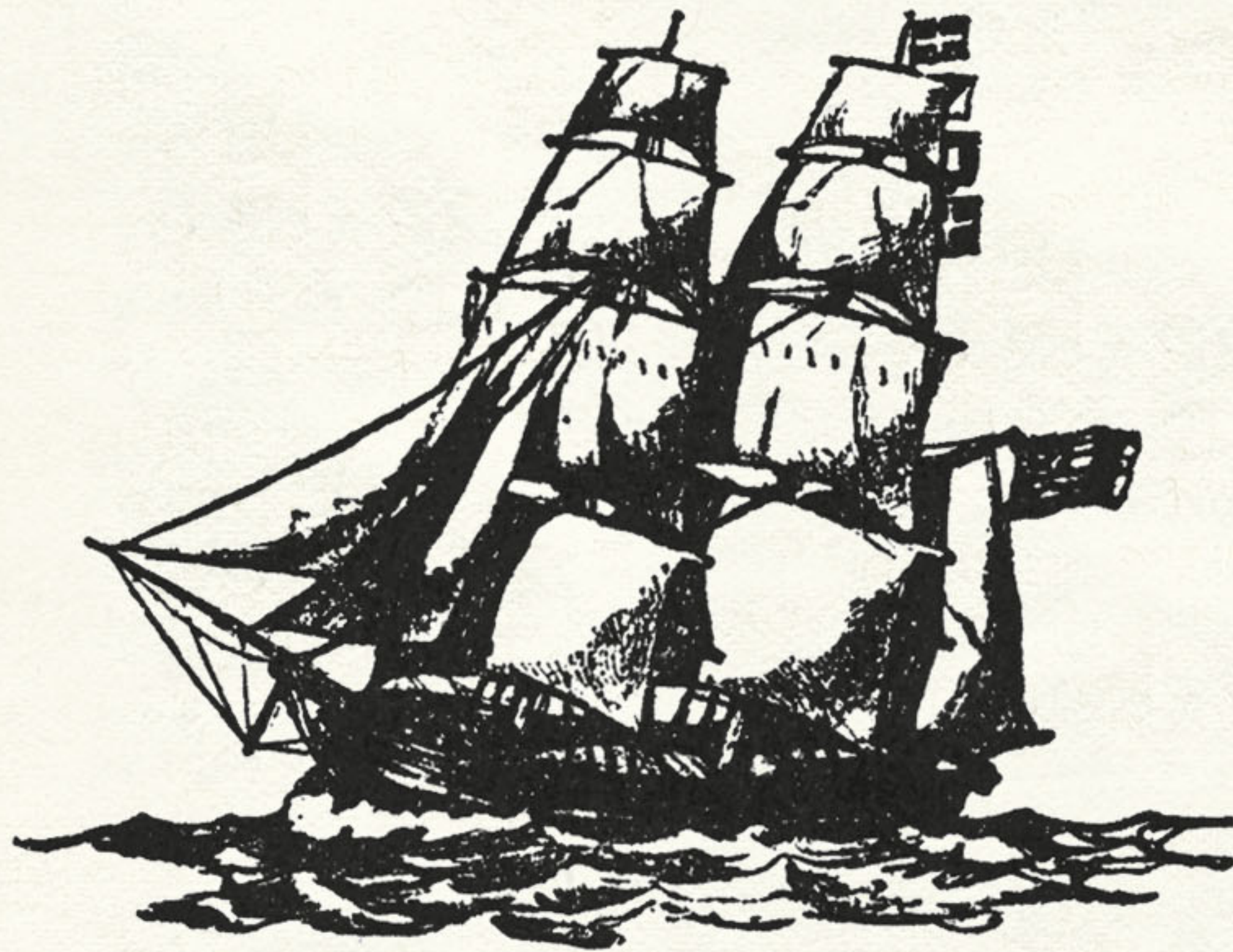


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Scrapbook



continents were thought to be in the Pacific and Atlantic, and fabulous monsters floated on unknown oceans. Cook set out in quest of these mythical continents. He rounded the globe, and as "Atlantis" and "Terra Australis" vanished forever before his onslaught, new names began to appear to human ken. Australia he rounded, and added to the British Crown; he discovered new South Wales, determined the real position of New Guinea, Easter Island, the Marquesas and the Friendly Islands. He crossed the South Atlantic, exploding the myth of a great continent. On his last voyage, undertaken to settle the long-disputed matter of the Northwest Passage, Cook discovered the Hawaiian Islands and explored Alaska as far as Icy Cape. Blocked by a solid wall of ice, the *Discovery* headed back to Hawaii. Here, while attempting to recover a boat stolen by natives, the grand old explorer met his end, fighting bravely to the last.

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THE world's favorite fiction hero here comes back to you in one of the most exciting and extraordinary of all his adventures. Over twelve million Tarzan books have been sold, not counting translations abroad. The story which follows will suggest the reason.



TARZAN and

THIS is a tale of desperate adventure and peril among strange folk in the heart of Africa's most remote and least-known jungles. . . . It must begin, however, at a tea-table at the Savoy in London; and with a conversation between Tarzan's wife Jane, and her friend Lady Tennington. . . .

"My dear Jane," Lady Tennington was saying, "you know everyone. Who is that woman at the second table to our right? The one who spoke so cordially. There is something very familiar about her; I'm sure I've seen her before."

"You probably have. Don't you remember Kitty Krause?"

"O-oh, yes; now I recall her. But she went with an older crowd. Let's see—she married Peters, the cotton king, didn't she?"

"Yes, and when he died, he left her so many millions she didn't have enough fingers to count 'em on; so the poor

woman will never know how rich she is. That's her new husband, with her."

"Husband? Why, she's old enough to—"

"Yes, of course; but you see he's a prince, and Kitty always was ambitious. S-sh, Hazel; she's coming over."

The older woman, followed by her husband, swooped down upon them. "My darling Jane," she cried, "I'm so glad to see you."

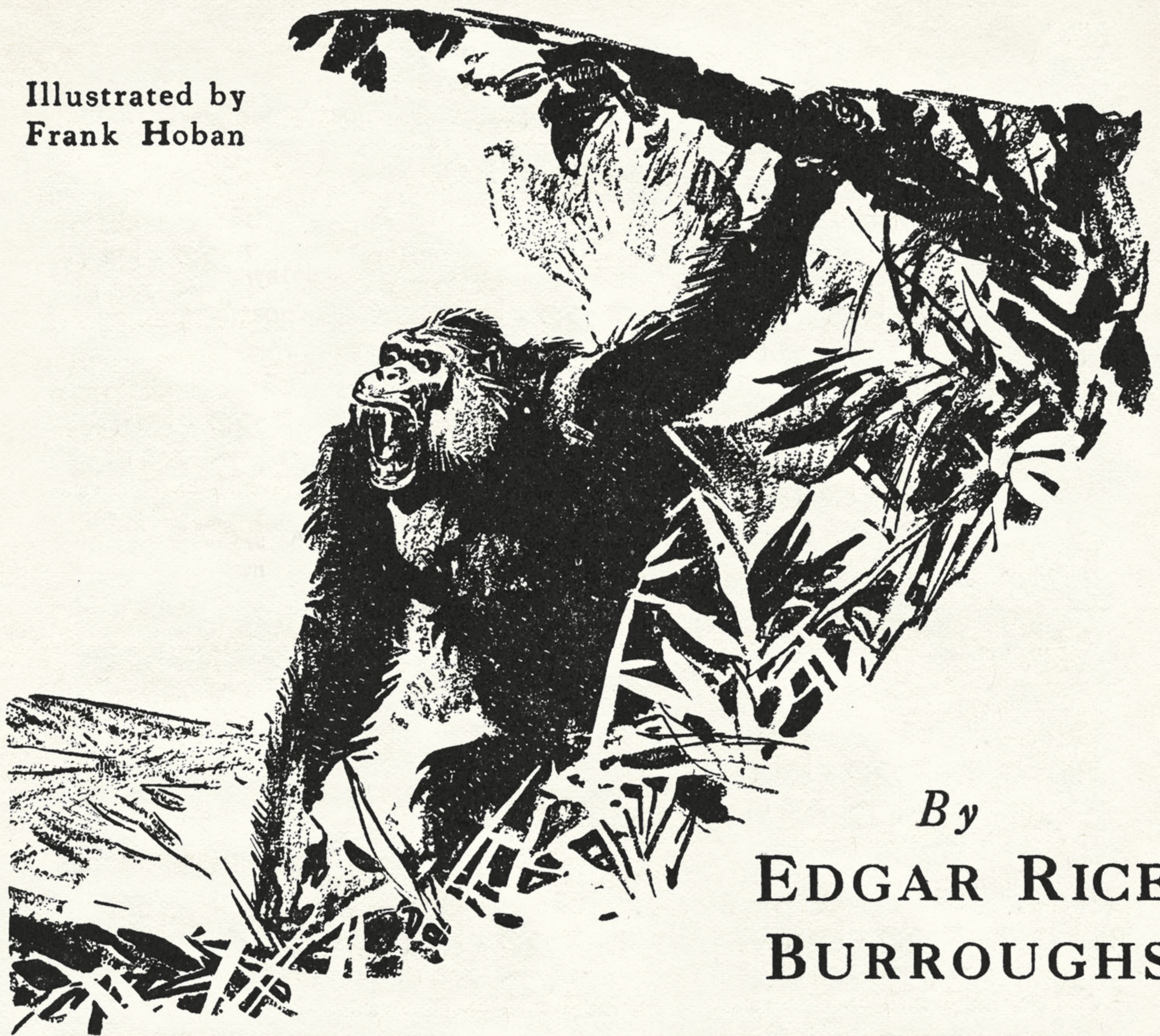
"And I'm glad to see you, Kitty. You remember Hazel Strong, don't you?"

"Oh, not of *the* Strongs of Baltimore! Oh, my dear! I must present my husband, Prince Sborov. Alexis, my very, very dearest friends, Lady Greystoke and Miss Strong."

"Lady Tennington now, Kitty," corrected Jane.

"Oh, my dear, how perfectly wonderful! Lady Greystoke and Lady Tennington, Alexis, dear."

Illustrated by
Frank Hoban



By
EDGAR RICE
BURROUGHS

the Immortal Men

"Charmed," murmured the young man. His lips smiled; but the murky light in his deep eyes was appraising, questioning, as those eyes gazed upon the lovely face of Jane, Lady Greystoke.

"And now, I suppose, you are going to settle down?" asked Jane.

"Oh, my dear, no. You never could guess what we're planning on now. We are going to Africa!"

"Africa! Oh, how interesting!" commented Hazel. "Africa! What memories it conjures."

"You have been to Africa, Lady Tennington?" inquired the Prince.

"Right in the heart of it—cannibals, lions, elephants—everything."

"Oh, how thrilling! And Jane knows all there is to know about Africa."

"Not quite all, Kitty."

"But enough," interposed Hazel.

"I'm going down myself, shortly," said Jane. "You see," she added, turning to

Prince Sborov, "Lord Greystoke spends a great deal of time in Africa. I am planning on joining him there."

"Oh, how perfectly wonderful!" exclaimed the Princess. "I mean, we can all go together."

"That is a splendid idea, my dear," said the Prince, his face brightening.

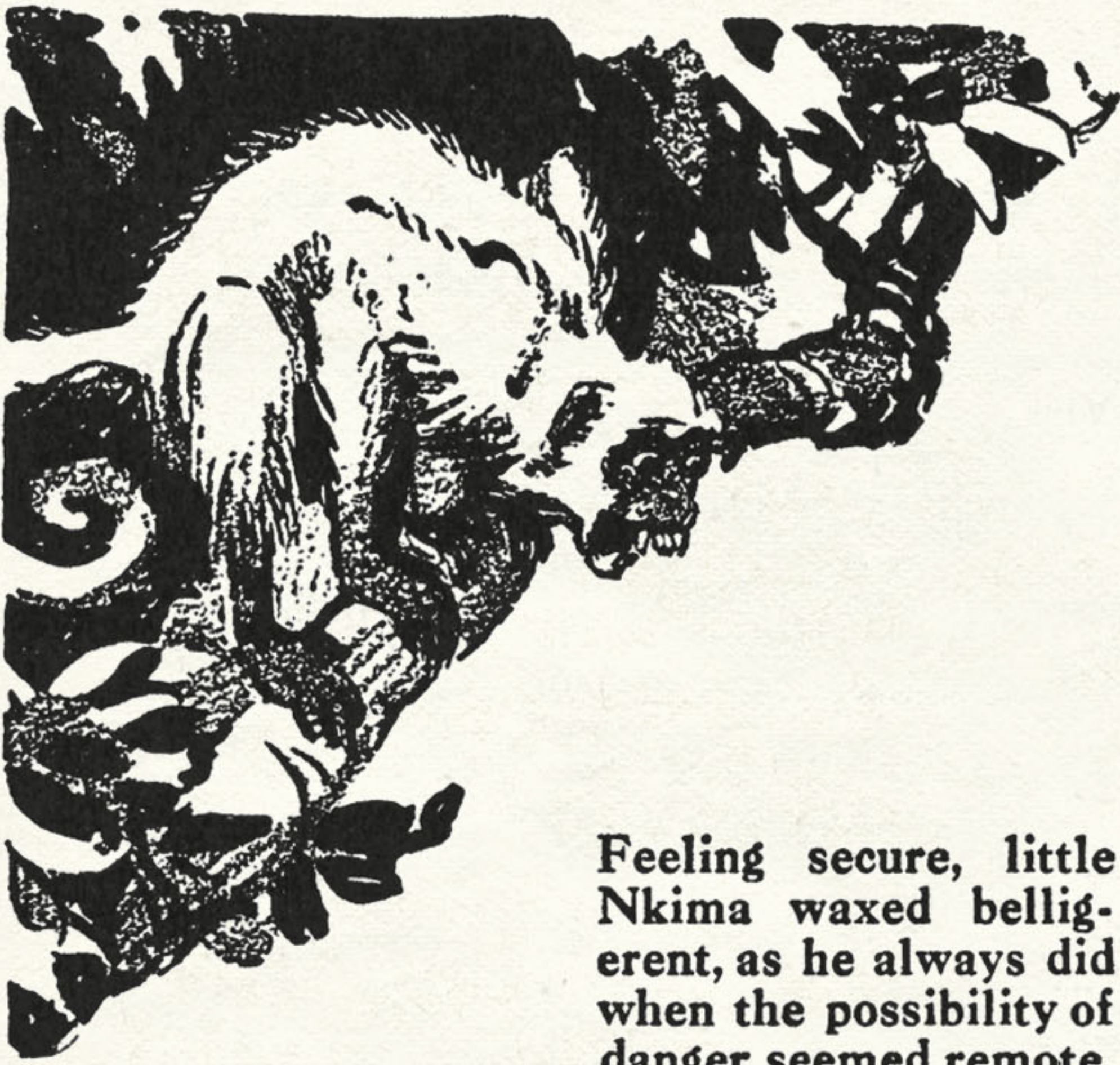
"It would be lovely," said Jane; "but you see, I am going into the interior, and I am sure that you—"

"Oh, my dear, so are we."

"But Kitty, you don't know what you're talking about. You wouldn't like it at all. No comforts, no luxuries; dirt, insects, smelly natives, and all kinds of wild beasts."

"Oh, but my dear, we are—I mean, we really are. Shall I tell Lady Greystoke our secret, darling?"

The Prince shrugged. "Why not? She could have little more than a passing interest."



Feeling secure, little Nkima waxed belligerent, as he always did when the possibility of danger seemed remote.

"Well, maybe some day she will. We all grow old, you know, my dear."

"It seems incredible to think—" murmured Alexis.

"What did you say, darling?" interrupted his wife.

"I was just going to say that Lady Greystoke might think the story incredible."

"Now you must tell me," said Jane. "You have my curiosity aroused."

"Yes indeed, do tell us," urged Hazel.

"Well, my dears, you see it was like this: We have been doing a great deal of flying the past year, and it's perfectly wonderful. We just love it, and so I bought an airplane in Paris last week. We flew to London in it; but what I was going to tell you is about our pilot. He is an American, and he has had the most amazing experiences."

"I think he is what you call a rackster in America," said Alexis.

"You mean a gangster, my dear," corrected the Princess.

"Or a racketeer," suggested Hazel.

"Whatever he is, I do not like him," said Alexis.

"But my dear, you have to admit that he is a good pilot. I mean that he is perfectly wonderful—and he has been to Africa and had the most frightful experiences."

"The last time he was there, he got track of a witch-doctor who possesses the secret of an amazing formula for renewing youth and inducing longevity. He met a man who knows where the old fellow lives, way in the interior; but neither of them had money enough to organize an expedition to go in search of him. He says that this will make people as young as they wish to be, and keep them that way forever. Oh, isn't it wonderful!"

"I think the fellow is a scoundrel," said Alexis. "He has induced my wife to finance this expedition; and when he gets us down there in the interior, he will probably slit our throats and steal our jewelry."

"Oh, my darling, I am sure you are quite wrong. Brown is the last word in loyalty."

"He may be all of that, but still I don't see why you want to drag me to Africa. Bugs, dirt—and I do not like lions."

Jane laughed. "Really, you might spend a year in Africa without seeing a lion; and you will get used to the bugs and the dirt."

Prince Sborov grimaced. "I prefer the Savoy," he said.

"You will go with us, dear, won't you?" insisted Kitty.

"Well," hesitated Jane, "I really don't know. In the first place, I don't know where you are going."

"We are going to fly direct to Nairobi and outfit there; and, my dear, to get any place in Africa, you *have* to go to Nairobi first."

Jane smiled. "Well, it happens that that is where I intend going, anyway. Lord Greystoke is to meet me there."

"Then it's all settled. Oh, isn't it wonderful!"

"YOU almost make me want to go," said Hazel.

"Well, my dear, we would be delighted to have you," exclaimed Princess Sborov. "You see, I have a six-passenger cabin plane. There are four of us, and the pilot and my maid will make six."

"How about my man?" interposed the Prince.

"Oh, my dear, you won't need a man in Africa. You will have a little colored boy who will do your washing and cooking and carry your gun. I read about it time and time again in African stories."

"Of course," said Hazel, "it's awfully sweet of you; but I really couldn't go. It's out of the question. Bunny and I are sailing for America on Saturday."

"But *you'll* come with us, Jane dear?" the Princess insisted.

"Why, I'd like to, Kitty, if I can get ready in time. When do you start?"

"We are planning on going next week; but of course, I mean—if—"

"Why, yes, I think I can make it, all right."

"Then it's settled, my dear. We'll take off from the Croydon Airdrome next Wednesday."

"I'll cable Lord Greystoke today; Friday I am giving a farewell dinner for Lord and Lady Tennynton, and you and Prince Sborov must be there."

CHAPTER II

SOUND ABOVE THE STORM

THE Lord of the Jungle rose from a crude leaf-covered platform constructed in the crotch of two branches of a mighty patriarch of the forest. He stretched luxuriously, and the slanting rays of the morning sun mottled his bronzed body through the leafy canopy that stretched interminably above him.

Little Nkima stirred and awoke. With a scream, he leaped to the shoulder of the ape-man and encircled his neck with his hairy arms.

"Sheeta!" screamed the monkey. "He was about to spring on little Nkima."

The ape-man smiled. "Nkima has been seeing things in his sleep," he said.

The monkey looked about him among the branches of the trees and down at the ground below. Then, seeing that no danger threatened, he commenced to dance and chatter; but presently the ape-man silenced him and listened.

"Sheeta comes," he said. "He is coming up-wind toward us. We cannot smell him, but if Manu had the ears of Tarzan, he could hear him."

The monkey cocked an ear down-wind and listened. "Little Nkima hears him," he said. "He comes slowly." Presently the sinuous, tawny body of the panther forced its way through the brush and came into view below them.

"Sheeta is not hunting," said Tarzan. "He has fed, and he is not hungry." And reassured by this, Nkima commenced to hurl invectives at the savage beast below them. The great cat paused and looked up, and when he saw Tarzan and Nkima, he bared his fangs in an angry snarl. But he started on again, for he had no business with them.

Feeling secure in the protection of Tarzan, little Nkima waxed belligerent, as he always did under similar circumstances when the possibility of danger seemed remote. He hurled at his hereditary enemy every jungle epithet he could put his tongue to, but as these seemed to make no impression upon Sheeta, he leaped from Tarzan's shoulder to a trailing vine that bore a soft, ill-smelling fruit; and gathering one of these, he hurled it at the panther.

By accident, his aim proved true, and the missile struck Sheeta on the back of the head.

With an angry snarl, the beast wheeled about and started toward the tree that harbored his annoyer. Screaming with terror, little Nkima fled upward to the safety of the smaller branches that would not bear the weight of the great cat.

The ape-man grinned up after the fleeing monkey, and then glanced down at the angry panther. A low, growling "*Kreeg-ah*" rumbled from his throat, and the other beast below returned an answering growl. Then it turned and slunk away into the jungle. . . .

The ape-man was returning leisurely from an excursion into a remote district of the great forest, far from his own haunts. He had heard strange rumors, and he had gone to investigate them. From deep in the interior, on the borders of a trackless waste that few men had entered and from which some had never returned alive, had come a strange and mysterious story. Since long before the memory of living man, curious facts had become interwoven with the legends and the folklore of the tribes inhabiting this borderland, so that they had come to be accepted as something inevitable and inescapable; but recently the disappearance of young girls had increased to an alarming extent, and had occurred in tribes far removed from the mysterious country.

But when Tarzan investigated and sought to solve the mystery, he was balked by the fear and superstition of the natives. So fearful were they of the malign, mysterious power that snatched their young girls from them, that they would give Tarzan no information or



assist him in any way to aid them; and so, disgusted, he had left them to their fate.

After all, why should the ape-man concern himself? Life to the jungle-bred is a commodity of little value. It is given and taken casually as a matter of course. One loves or kills as naturally as one sleeps or dreams. Yet the mystery of the thing intrigued him: Young girls, always between the ages of fourteen and twenty, vanished as in thin air. No trace of them ever was seen again. Their fate remained an unsolved mystery.

But by now Tarzan had relegated the matter to the background of his thoughts, for his active mind could not long concern itself with a problem that did not closely concern him, and which in any event seemed impossible of solution.

He swung easily through the trees, his alert senses conscious of all that transpired within their range. Since Sheeta had passed up-wind, he had known by the decreasing volume of the great cat's spoor that the distance between them was constantly increasing—proof that Sheeta was not stalking him. From far away, muted by the distance, sounded the roar of Numa the lion; deeper in the forest, Tantor the elephant trumpeted.

The morning air, the sounds and smells of his beloved jungle, filled the ape-man with exhilaration. Had he been the creature of another environment, he might have whistled or sung or whooped aloud like a cowboy in sheer exuberance of spirit; but the jungle-bred veil their emotions; and they move noiselessly always, for thus do they extend the span of their precarious lives.

Scampering sometimes at his side, sometimes far above him, little Nkima traveled many times the distance of his master, wasting much energy as, safe in the protection of his benefactor, he insulted all other living things that came his way.

BUT presently he saw his master stop and sniff the air and listen, and then little Nkima dropped silently to a great bronzed shoulder.

"Men," said Tarzan.

The little monkey sniffed the air. "Nkima smells nothing," he said.

"Neither does Tarzan," replied the ape-man; "but he hears them. What is wrong with the ears of little Nkima? Are they growing old?"

"Now Nkima hears them. Tarman-gani?" asked the monkey.

"No," replied Tarzan. "Tarmangani make different sounds—the squeaking of leather, the rattle of too much equipment. These are Gomangani; they move softly."

"We shall kill them," said Nkima.

The ape-man smiled. "It is well for the peace of the jungle that you have not the strength of Bolgani the gorilla; but perhaps if you had, you would not be so bloodthirsty."

"Ugh, Bolgani," sneered Nkima contemptuously. "He hides in the thickets and runs away at the first sound he hears."

The ape-man changed his direction to the right and made a great circle through the trees until presently he reached a point where Usha, the wind, could carry the scent-spoor of the strangers to him.

"Gomangani," he said.

"Many Gomangani!" exclaimed Nkima excitedly. "They are as the leaves upon the trees. Let us go away. They will kill little Nkima and eat him."

"There are not so many," replied Tarzan, "no more than the fingers upon my two hands—a hunting-party, perhaps. We will go closer."

MOVING up on the blacks from behind, the ape-man rapidly closed up the distance between them. The scent-spoor grew stronger in his nostrils.

"They are friends," he said. "They are Waziri."

The two jungle creatures moved on in silence then, until they overhauled a file of black warriors who moved silently along the jungle trail. Then Tarzan spoke to them in their own tongue.

"Muviro," he said, "what brings my children so far from their own country?"

The blacks halted and wheeled about, gazing up into the trees from which the voice had seemed to come. They saw nothing, but they had recognized that voice.

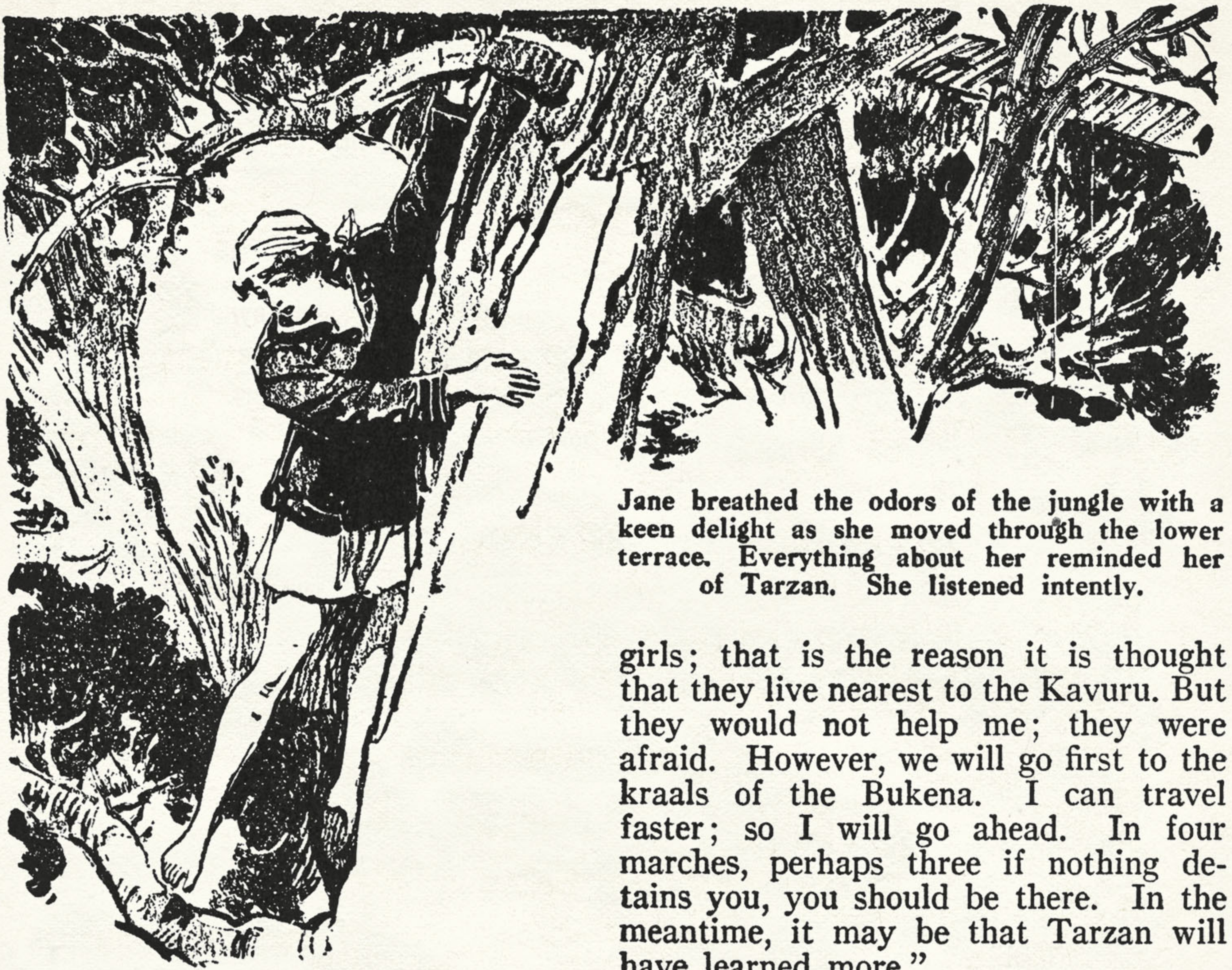
"Oh, Bwana, it is well that you have come," said Muviro. "Your children need you."

Tarzan dropped to the trail among them. "Has harm befallen any of my people?" he asked, as the blacks clustered about him.

"Buiru, my daughter, has disappeared," said Muviro. "She went alone toward the river, and that is the last that was ever seen of her."

"Perhaps Gimla the crocodile—" Tarzan started to suggest.

"No, it was not Gimla. There were



Jane breathed the odors of the jungle with a keen delight as she moved through the lower terrace. Everything about her reminded her of Tarzan. She listened intently.

other women at the river. Buirra never reached the river. We have heard stories, Bwana, that fill us with terror for our girls. There is evil, there is mystery in it, Bwana. We have heard of the Kavuru. . . . Perhaps it is they; we go to search for them."

"Their country lies far away," said Tarzan. "I have just come from a place that is supposed to be near it, but the people there are all cowards. They were afraid to tell me where I might find the Kavuru, even though their girls have been stolen by these people for so long that no man can remember when it began."

"Muviro will find them," said the black doggedly. "Buirra was a good daughter. She was not like other girls. I will find those who stole her, and kill them."

"And Tarzan of the Apes will help you," said the ape-man. "Have you found the trail of the thieves?"

"There is no trail," replied Muviro. "That is why we know it was the Kavuru; they leave no trail."

"Many of us think that they are demons," said another warrior.

"Men or demons, I shall find them and kill them," replied Muviro.

"From all that I could learn," said Tarzan, "these Bukena live nearest to the Kavuru. They have lost the most

girls; that is the reason it is thought that they live nearest to the Kavuru. But they would not help me; they were afraid. However, we will go first to the kraals of the Bukena. I can travel faster; so I will go ahead. In four marches, perhaps three if nothing detains you, you should be there. In the meantime, it may be that Tarzan will have learned more."

"Now that the big Bwana is with me, my mind is happy again," said Muviro; "for I know that Buirra will be found and returned to me, and that those who took her will be punished."

TARZAN glanced up at the skies and sniffed the air. "A bad storm is coming, Muviro," he said. "It is coming from where Kudu the sun beds down at night; you will have to trek directly into it, and it will hold you back."

"But it will not stop us, Bwana."

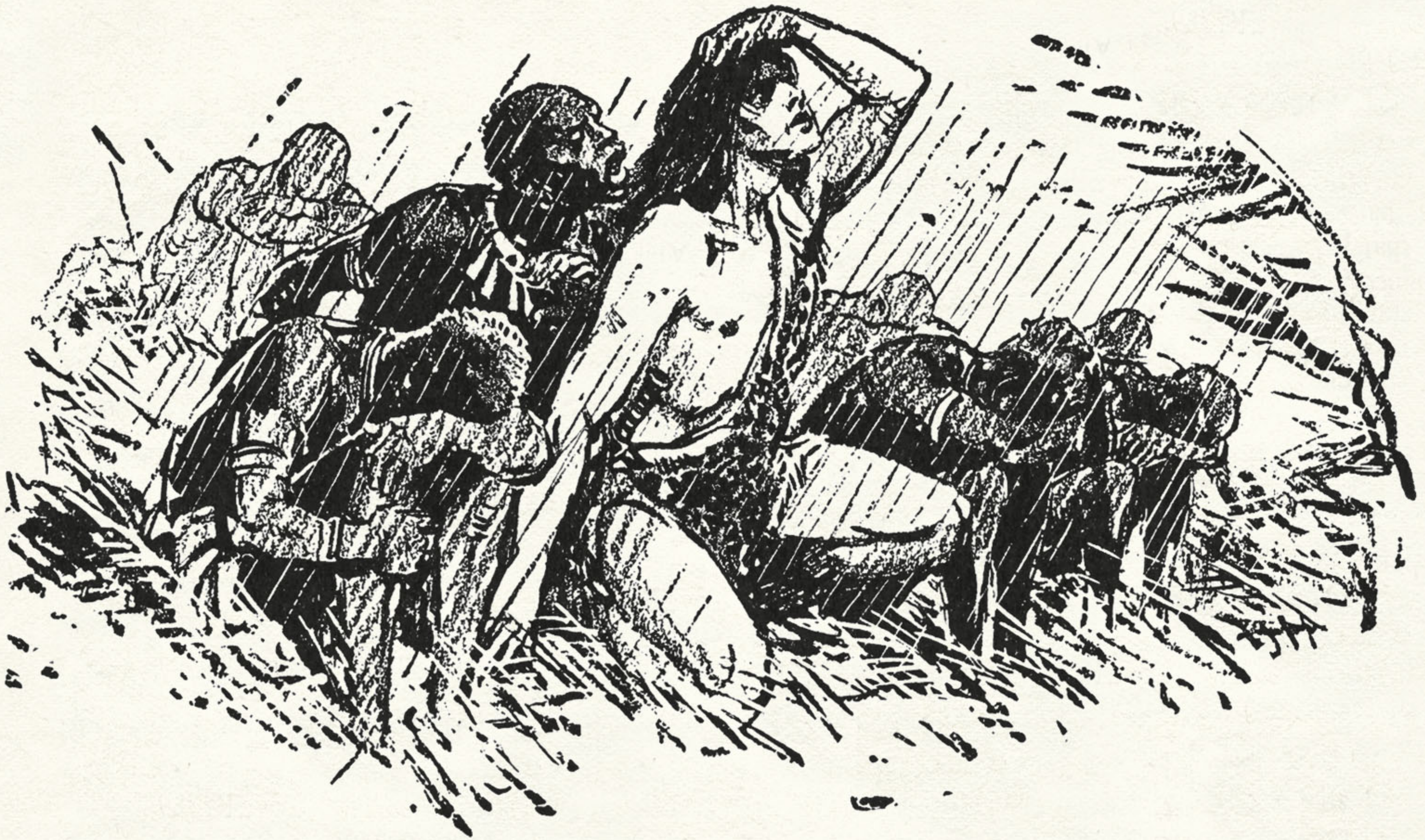
"No," replied Tarzan. "It takes more than Usha the wind, and Ara the lightning, to stop the Waziri."

"Already Usha is drawing his veil of clouds across the face of Kudu, hiding him from his people."

Indeed torn and ragged clouds were scudding across the sky; and in the distance, far to the west, thunder reverberated. The ape-man remained with his head thrown back, watching the impressive spectacle of the swiftly gathering storm.

"It will be a bad storm," he said musingly. "See how frightened the clouds are. Like a great herd of buffaloes, they stampede in terror, fearful of the roars of the thunder-god who pursues them."

The wind now was whipping the topmost branches of the trees. The thunder grew nearer and increased in violence.



"What is it in the sky, Bwana, that moans and whines?" asked one black fearfully.

As the clouds sank thicker across the sky, gloomy darkness settled upon the jungle. Lightning flashed. Thunder crashed terrifically, and then the rain fell. It came in solid sheets, bending the trees beneath its weight; and over all, Usha screamed like a lost soul.

The eleven men squatted with shoulders hunched against the beating rain, waiting for the first fury of the storm to spend itself.

For half an hour they sat there, and still the storm raged unabated. Suddenly the ape-man cocked an attentive ear upward, and a moment later several of the blacks raised their eyes to the heavens.

"What is it, Bwana?" asked one fearfully. "What is it in the sky that moans and whines?"

"It sounds very much like an airplane," replied Tarzan; "but what an airplane would be doing here, I cannot understand."

CHAPTER III

OUT OF GAS

PRINCE ALEXIS poked his head into the pilot's compartment. His face, overcast with a greenish pallor, reflected apprehension, if not actual fright. "Are we in any danger, Brown?" he shouted above the roar of the exhaust and the blast of the propeller. "Do you think you can get us out of here?"

"For God's sake, shut up," snapped the pilot. "Aint I got troubles enough without you asking fool questions every five minutes?"

The man in the seat beside the pilot looked horrified. "S-s-sh!" he cautioned. "You shouldn't speak to 'Is 'Ighness like that, my man. It's most disrespectful."

"Nuts," snapped Brown.

The Prince staggered back to his seat in the cabin. He had almost succeeded in registering offended dignity when a current of air tossed the ship at the moment, and threw him off his balance, so that it was a very angry Prince who lurched awkwardly into his seat.

"Do fasten your safety-belt, darling," admonished his Princess. "We are apt to turn over at any minute. I mean, really, did you ever see anything so terribly rough? Oh, I wish we had never come."

"So do I," growled Alexis. "I didn't want to come in the first place; and if I ever get my feet on the ground again, the first thing I am going to do is fire that impudent boor."

"I think, under the circumstances," said Jane, "that we really ought to overlook any idiosyncrasy of manner that he may manifest. He's got all the responsibility. He must be under terrific nervous strain; and regardless of everything else, I think you will have to admit that so far, he has proved himself a splendid pilot."

"Annette, my smelling-salts, please," cried Princess Sborov in a weak voice. "I am sure I'm going to faint. I certainly am."

"*Sapristi*, what a trip!" exclaimed Sborov. "If it were not for you, dear lady, I should go crazy. You seem to be the only one in the party with any poise. Are you not afraid?"

"Yes, of course I am afraid. We have been flying around in this storm for what seems an eternity; but getting excited about it won't do us any good."

"But how can you help being excited? How could anyone help being excited?"

"Look at Tibbs," said Jane. "He's not excited. He's as cool as a cucumber."

"Bah!" exclaimed Sborov. "Tibbs is not human. I do not like these English valets—no heart, no feeling."

"Really, my dear," expostulated the Princess, reviving, "I think he is perfect—a regular gentleman's gentleman."

VIVID flashes of lightning shot through the dark clouds that enveloped them. Thunder roared and crashed; the ship lurched drunkenly onto one wing and nosed suddenly down. Annette screamed; the Princess Sborov swooned. The plane spun once before Brown could pull her out of it. He righted her with an effort.

"Whe-ew!" he exclaimed.

"My word!" said Tibbs.

Princess Sborov was slumped in her chair. Her smelling-salts had fallen to the floor. Her hat was over one eye, her hair disheveled.

"You had better look after the Princess, Annette," said Jane. "I think she needs attention."

There was no answer. Jane turned to see why the girl had not responded. Annette had fainted.

Jane shook her head. "Tibbs," she called, "come back here and look after the Princess and Annette. I'm coming up to sit with Brown."

Gingerly Tibbs made his way into the cabin, and Jane took the seat beside the pilot.

"That last was a bad one," she said. "I really thought we were through. You handled the ship marvelously, Brown."

"Thanks," he said. "It would be easier if they were all like you. The rest of them get in my hair. Although," he added, "Tibbs aint so bad. I guess he's too dumb to be scared."

"You are having real trouble with the ship, aren't you, Brown?" Jane asked.

"Yes," he said. "I didn't want to tell the others. They'd have gone nutty. We've got too much load. I told the old lady so before we took off; but she was set on bringing everything but the kitchen

sink, and now, even with the decreased gas load, I can't get no elevation. That's the reason I can't get up above this storm, just wallowing around here in this muck without any idea where we are or which way we're going; and there's mountains in Africa, miss, some damned high mountains."

"Yes, I know that," replied Jane. "But you must have some idea where we are; you have a compass, and you know your air-speed."

"Yes," he said, "I got a compass; and I know my air-speed; but there's another thing that the rest of 'em better not know. The compass has gone haywire."

"You mean—"

"I mean we're just flying blind in this pea soup without a compass."

"Not so good, is it, Brown?"

"I'll say it's not."

"What are we going to do about it?"

"If we could get at the baggage compartment, we could throw all the junk out," he replied; "but we can't, and there you are."

"And in the meantime we may crash into a mountain at any moment—is that it?"

"Yes, miss," he replied. "Or run out of gas and have to come down, which will probably be just as bad as hitting a mountain."

"There's no other way out?" she asked.

"Well, I've got a little plan I'd like to work," he said, and turned to her with a grin.

"What is it, Brown?"

"Well, we can't get at the junk to throw it overboard; but the Prince must weigh about a hundred and fifty pounds. That would help some."

JANE turned her head away to hide a smile, but evidently he saw it.

"I thought you'd like the idea," he said.

"We shouldn't even joke about such a thing," she reprimanded.

"I guess we can't help it," he said. "We both got that American sense of humor."

"Is the petrol—gas—really very low, Brown?" she asked.

"Look." He indicated the gauge on the dash. "We're good for about an hour at the outside."

"And no parachutes."

"Nary a 'chute. Most people don't bother with them on a cabin job."

She shook her head. "It does look bad, doesn't it? But we'd better not tell

the others how really bad it is. There is nothing that they can do to help themselves."

"Not a thing," he said with a wry smile, "unless they want to pray."

"I think they've been doing that already! What are you going to do—just cruise around until the gas is gone?"

"No, of course not. If I don't find a hole in this mess in half an hour, I'm going to nose down easy and try to get under it. There'll be nothing to it, if we aint over mountains. That's all I'm afraid of. Then I may find a place where I can get her down. But I'm hoping for a hole. I'd like to look down first."

"Jane! Jane!" It was a plaintive wail from the cabin. "Oh, my dear, where are we? I mean, are we all dead?"

Jane looked back. Tibbs had recovered the lost smelling-salts and had successfully applied first-aid to the Princess. Annette had come to and was sobbing hysterically. The Prince sat tense and ashen-faced, beads of perspiration standing upon his forehead. He was quite evidently in a blue funk. He caught Jane's eye.

"Is there any hope?" he asked. "Has Brown said anything?"

"We'll be all right if he can find an opening in the clouds," she replied. "That is what he is looking for."

"If we'd had a decent pilot, we'd never have got into this," grumbled the Prince. "I told you, Kitty, that you should have hired a French pilot. These Americans don't know anything about flying; and into the bargain, you don't know anything about this fellow Brown."

"I GUESS that guy never heard of the Wright Brothers or even Lindbergh," grumbled Brown.

"Don't mind what he says," said Jane. "We are all under a terrific nervous strain, and not exactly accountable for what we say or do."

"It doesn't seem to be bothering you much, miss," said Brown.

"Well, it's just the way we happen to be," she said, "and we can't help that, either. Just because I succeed in hiding it, doesn't mean I am not frightened to death."

"You're sure a good sport," said Brown. "You've got guts, and so I don't mind telling you that I don't feel like no little schoolgirl going to her first picnic. I can think of lots of things I'd rather do than crash in the middle of Africa."

"What did he say?" demanded Sborov.

"We are going to crash? Look what you've got me into, you old fool!" he cried angrily, turning upon his wife. "You and your rejuvenation and your perpetual youth! *Sapristi!*"

The Princess Sborov gasped. "Why, Alexis!" she exclaimed. Then she burst into tears.

"Oh, why did I ever come?" wailed Annette. "I did not wish to come. I am afraid. I do not want to die. Oh, *mon Dieu*, save me! Save me!"

"Here, madam, try the smelling-salts again," said Tibbs.

"NICE party," remarked Brown. "Perhaps they think I'm enjoying it."

"In great danger, we think mostly of ourselves," said Jane.

"I suppose so. I'm thinking mostly of myself right now; but I'm thinking of you and Annette and Tibbs too. You're worth saving. As far as the other two are concerned, I'd like to chuck 'em overboard; but I think I read somewhere that there was a law against that."

"Yes, I believe there is," smiled Jane. "But really, Brown, do you know I have an idea that you are going to get us out of this all right?"

"That's the first encouragement I've had," he replied. "And I'm sure going to try to get us out of this. It all depends upon what's underneath this mess. If there's any ceiling at all, we'll have a chance; and that's what I'm hoping for."

"I'm praying for it."

"I'm going to start down now, miss. I'll just ease her down slowly."

"At a hundred and fifty miles an hour?"

"Well, we won't lose elevation that fast."

The ship struck a down-current and dropped a hundred feet, careening wildly. The screams of the Princess Sborov and Annette, the maid, mingled with the curses of Alexis.

Jane gasped. "We went down pretty fast that time," she said.

"Well, when she drops like that, you can be sure you're not on the ground, anyway. The air has to have some place to go. It can't get through the earth; so they never carry you all the way down."

For tense minutes the two sat in silence. Then suddenly Jane voiced a quick exclamation. "Look, Brown!" she cried. "Trees! We're below it."

"Yes," he said; "and with five hundred feet to spare. But—"

She looked at him questioningly. "We're not much better off, are we? How much gas have you left?"

"Oh, maybe fifteen or twenty minutes, and I don't need to tell you—well, it doesn't look so hot."

"Nothing but forest," she said; "there's not a place to land anywhere."

"We may find an opening; and believe me, it won't have to be a Croydon either."

"And if you don't find an opening?"

He shrugged. "We'll just have to set down in the tree-tops," he said. "The chances are pretty fair that we won't all be killed, miss." He turned and looked back into the cabin. "Tibbs, get into a seat and fasten your safety-belt. Put your wraps and pillows in front of your faces. I am going to make a forced landing in a few minutes. I will tell you when. If you pad your faces, you may not get hurt at all."

Nobody made any reply. The Princess moaned, and Annette sobbed.

"There's a terrific wind, isn't there?" said Jane. "Look at those tree-tops bend."

"Yes," he said; "and in a way that may help us. The wind will cut down our ground-speed a lot; and if I can hook the tail-skid into those trees, we may land on them easy-like, and hang there."

"You know those tree-tops may be a couple of hundred feet from the ground, or even more?"

"Yes," he said, "I suppose they may; but I don't think we'll go through them; they look too dense. And if I set her down easy, the wings and fuselage will catch and hold her. I think we've got an even break, anyway."

The ship skimmed on a few hundred feet above the swaying forest top for several minutes. There was no sign of a clearing; no break in those wildly tossing waves of green.

"We're out of gas now, miss," said Brown; and mechanically he cut the switch. Then he turned back once more to the cabin. "Hold everything," he said; "I'm going to bring her down."

CHAPTER IV

IN THE KRAAL OF UDALO

THE ship settled toward the madly tossing sea of green foliage below. Blinding rain drove in sheets against the windows of the cabin. Vivid lightning shot through the gloom beneath the dark and glowering clouds; thunder crashed.

Straight into the teeth of the gale, Brown nosed down. The force of the wind held the ship until it seemed to hover above the tree-tops as the pilot leveled off just above them; and as the ship settled, he brought the tail down sharply. There was a crash of splintering wood, the ripping of torn fabric as the ship nosed down into the swaying, slashing branches. And above the noise of the storm and the crashing of the ship were the screams and curses of the terrified passengers in the cabin.

BUT at last it was over. With a final ripping, tearing jolt, the big plane came to rest.

Brown turned to the girl at his side. "You hurt, miss?" he asked.

"I don't think so," she said; "just dazed. It was terrible, wasn't it?"

He turned then and glanced back into the cabin. The four passengers were hanging in their safety-belts in various stages of collapse. "All right back there?" he demanded. "How about you, Annette?" There was a note of greater concern in Brown's voice.

"Oh, *mon Dieu!*" moaned the French girl. "I am already dead."

The Princess Sborov groaned. "Oh, how horrible! Why doesn't some one do something for me? Why doesn't some one help me? Annette! Alexis! Where are you? I am dying. Where are my smelling-salts?"

"It would serve you right," growled Alexis, "dragging me off on a crazy adventure like this. It's a wonder we weren't all killed. If we'd had a French pilot, this would never have happened."

"Don't be so stupid," snapped Jane. "Brown handled the ship magnificently."

Alexis turned upon Tibbs. "Why don't you do something, you idiot? You English and Americans are all alike—stupid, dumb. I wanted a French valet in the first place."

"Yes sir," said Tibbs. "I am very sorry that you didn't get one, sir."

"Well, shut up and do something."

"What shall I do, sir?"

"*Sapristi!* How should I know? But do something."

"I am sorry, sir, but I am not a mountain goat nor a monkey. If I unfasten this safety-belt, I shall simply land on your head, sir."

"Wait a minute," called Jane. "I'll see what can be done." She unfastened her belt and climbed up into the cabin.

The ship had come to rest at an angle

of about forty-five degrees with the nose down, but Jane easily made her way into the cabin; and Brown followed close behind her.

She went first to the Princess Sborov.

"Are you really seriously hurt, Kitty?" she asked.

"I am torn in two; I know that all my ribs are broken."

"You got us into this, Brown," snapped Alexis. "Now get us out of it."

"LISTEN," said the American: "you may be better off in than out, for when we get on the ground, I aint pilot no more. I aint responsible then, and I won't be taking any of your lip."

"Did you hear that, Kitty?" demanded Alexis. "Would you sit there and let a servant talk to me like that? If you don't discharge him, I will."

Brown snorted. "Don't make me laugh. You didn't hire me, you little runt; and you aint going to fire me."

"Don't be impudent, my man," cried Alexis, his voice trembling. "You forget who I am."

"No, I don't forget who you are; you aint nothing. In the country you come from, half the cab-drivers are princes."

"Come, come," snapped Jane. "Stop bickering. We must find out if anyone is really injured."

"Get me out of here," wailed Princess Sborov. "I can't stand it any longer."

"It would be foolish to try to get out now," said Jane. "Just look at that storm. We shall be safer and much more comfortable here in the ship while the storm lasts."

"Oh, we'll never get down from here. We are way up in the tops of the trees," wailed Annette.

"Don't worry none, sister," said Brown reassuringly. "We'll find a way to get down from here when the storm lets up. The ship's lodged tight; she won't fall no farther; so we might as well sit tight like Lady Greystoke says, and wait for it to quit raining and blowing."

Tibbs strained his eyes upward through the window at his side. "It doesn't seem to be clearing any, if I may say so," he remarked.

"These equatorial storms oftentimes end as suddenly as they commence," said Jane. "It may be all over, and the sun out, within half an hour. I've seen it happen a hundred times."

"Oh, it won't ever stop raining; I know it won't!" wailed the Princess. "And I don't see how we are ever going



to get down from here if it does. This is terrible. I mean, I wish I'd never come."

"Crying about it now, Kitty, won't do any good," said Jane. "The thing to do is try to make ourselves comfortable and then make the best of it until the storm lets up and we can get down. . . . Here, Brown, get a couple of those seat-cushions and put down here on the floor in front of the Princess' chair. Then we'll unfasten her belt, and she can turn around and sit on the floor with her back against the pilot's compartment."

"Let me help, milady," said Tibbs, as he unfastened his belt and slid forward.

"The rest of you had better do the same thing," said Brown. "Unfasten your belts, and sit on the floor with your backs against the seat in front of you."

With some difficulty and much sobbing on her part, the Princess Sborov was finally arranged in a more comfortable position; and the others, following Brown's suggestion, disposed themselves as best they could for the wait, long or short, until the storm should subside.

TARZAN and the Waziri hunched in what meager protection they could find until the storm should abate; for in its fury it was a force against which it were foolish for man to pit himself unless the need were great.

For a while Tarzan had heard the roar of the ship's motor, even above the



Udalo rose to his feet. "You shall not steal any more of our young girls," he growled. He slapped his palms together; and instantly the warriors leaped upon the ape-man. "Kill him!" the shout arose.

storm. It had been evident to him that the ship was circling, and then gradually the sound had diminished and quickly faded into nothingness.

"Bwana," said Muviro, "were there men up there above the storm?"

"Yes, at least one," replied the ape-man, "above it or in it. In either event, I should not care to be in his place. The forest stretches many marches in all directions. If he were looking for a place to land, I do not know where he would find it."

"It is well to be on the ground," said Muviro. "I do not think that the gods intended that men should fly like birds. If they had, they would have given them wings."

Little Nkima cuddled close to his master. He was drenched and cold and miserable. The world looked very black to Nkima, and there was no future. He was quite sure that it would always be dark, but he was not resigned to his fate; he was merely too crushed and unhappy to complain. But presently the sky commenced to get lighter. The wind passed on with a last dismal wail; the sun burst forth; and the crushed jungle arose once more to its full life.

The ape-man arose and shook himself, like a great lion. "I shall start now for Ukena," he said, "and talk with the

Bukena. This time, perhaps, they will tell me where the Kavuru dwell."

"There are ways of making them talk," said Muviro.

"Yes," said Tarzan, "there are ways."

"And we will follow on to Ukena," said Muviro.

"If you do not find me there, you will know that I am searching for the Kavuru and Buiru. If I need you, I will send Nkima back to guide you to me."

Without further words, without useless good-by's or God-speeds, Tarzan swung into the dripping trees and disappeared toward the west.

STRANGE stories had come from the Bukena, filtering by word of mouth through a hundred tribes to Uziri, the land of the Waziri. They were tales of the Kavuru, tales of a savage, mysterious people, whom no man saw, or seeing, lived to tell. They were demons with horns and tails. Or again, they were a race of men without heads. But the most common report was that they were a race of savage whites, who had reverted to barbarism and went naked in their hidden fastness. One story had it that they were all women, and another that they were all men. But Tarzan knew the distortion that was the fruit of many tongues, and gave little heed to things he heard; only of those things which he had observed with his own eyes was he sure.

He knew that many tribes stole women; but oftentimes these women were seen again. Yet the women that the Kavuru stole were not, and so he was willing to admit that there was some tribe dwelling in a remote fastness that specialized in the stealing of young girls. But many of the other stories he heard, he did not believe.

For instance, there was the fable of the longevity and perpetual youth of the Kavuru. That, Tarzan did not believe, although he knew that there were many strange and unbelievable happenings in the depths of the Dark Continent.

A LONG trek it was, even for Tarzan, back to the country of the Bukena. The forest was dripping; the jungle steamed. But of such things, and their attendant discomfort, the ape-man took small note. From birth he had become inured to discomfort, for the jungle is not a comfortable place. Cold, heat and danger were as natural to him as warmth and comfort and safety are to you. As you take the one, he took the other, as a matter of course. Even in infancy he had never whined because he was uncomfortable; nor did he ever complain. If he could better conditions, he did so; if he could not, he ignored them.

Just before dark Tarzan made a kill, and the fresh meat warmed him and gave him new life. But that night he slept cold and uncomfortable in the dank and soggy forest.

Before dawn he was astir again, eating once more of his kill. Then he swung off swiftly upon his journey, until the good red blood flowed hot through his veins, bringing warmth and a sense of well-being.

But Nkima was miserable. He had wanted to go home, and now he was going back into a strange country that he did not like. He scolded and fretted a great deal; but when the sun came out and warmed him, he felt better; then he scampered through the trees, looking for whom he might insult. . . .

On the morning of the third day, Tarzan came to the kraal of Udalo, chief of the Bukena.

The sight of the tall, bronzed white, with the little monkey perched upon his shoulder, striding through the gate into the village, brought a horde of blacks jabbering and chattering about him. He was no stranger to them, for he had been there a short time before; and so they were not afraid of him. They were a

little awed, however, for tales of the mighty ape-man had reached them even over the great distance that separated Ukena from the land of the Waziri.

Paying no more attention to them than he would have to a herd of wild beasts, Tarzan strode straight to the hut of Udalo, the chief, where he found the old man squatting beneath the shade of a tree, talking with some of the elders of the tribe.

Udalo had been watching the approach of the ape-man along the village street. He did not seem overly pleased to see him.

"We thought the big Bwana had gone away, and that he would not return," said the chief; "but now he is back. Why?"

"He has come to make talk with Udalo."

"He has made talk with Udalo before. Udalo has told him all that he knows."

"This time Udalo is going to tell him more. He is going to tell him where lies the country of the Kavuru."

The old man fidgeted. "Udalo does not know."

"Udalo does not talk true words. He has lived here all his life. The young girls of his tribe have been stolen by the Kavuru. Everyone knows that. Udalo is not such a fool that he does not know where these young girls are taken. He is afraid of what the Kavuru will do to him, if he leads people to their kraal. But he need not be afraid; the Kavuru need not know how Tarzan finds them."

"Why do you want to go to the kraal of the Kavuru? They are bad people."

"I will tell you," said Tarzan: "Buirea, the daughter of Muviro, the hereditary chief of the Waziri, has disappeared. Muviro thinks that the Kavuru took her; that is why Tarzan, who is war chief of the Waziri, must find the kraal of the Kavuru."

"I do not know where it is," insisted Udalo sullenly. . . .

As they talked, warriors had been approaching from all parts of the village, until now Tarzan and the chief had been surrounded by scowling, silent spearmen.

UDALO appeared ill at ease; his eyes shifted restlessly. The atmosphere seemed surcharged with suspicion and danger. Even little Nkima sensed it; and he trembled as he clung tightly to Tarzan.

"What is the meaning of this, Udalo?" demanded Tarzan, indicating with a nod

the surrounding warriors. "I came in peace, to talk to you as a brother."

Udalo cleared his throat nervously. "Since you were here and went away, there has been much talk. Our people remembered the stories they had heard about the Kavuru. It is said that they are white men who go naked, even as you. We do not know anything about you; you are a stranger. Many of my people think that you are a Kavuru, that you have come to spy upon us and select young girls to steal from us."

"That is foolish talk, Udalo," said Tarzan.

"My people do not think it is foolish talk," growled the chief. "You have come to the kraal of Udalo once too often." He rose slowly to his feet. "You shall not steal any more of our young girls." And with that, he slapped his palms sharply together; and instantly the surrounding warriors leaped upon the ape-man.

CHAPTER V

"THE LION IS COMING!"

"I CAN'T stand it any longer," said the Princess. "I mean, this cramped position is killing me, and it is cold in here; I am nearly frozen."

"What right have you got to whine?" growled Alexis. "You got us into this, you and your aviator." He spat the last word out contemptuously.

"Listen, Prince," said Jane: "you and the rest of us can thank Brown's cool head and efficiency for the fact that we are alive and uninjured. It is little short of a miracle that none of us is hurt. I'll venture to say that there's not one pilot in a thousand who could have set this ship down as he did."

"I beg your pardon," said Tibbs; "if I may say so, it has stopped raining."

"And there's the sun," cried Annette excitedly.

Making her way to the door, Jane opened it and looked down. "We are only fifty feet from the ground," she said; "but we may have a little difficulty getting down—that is, some of us may."

"What in the world are you doing, my dear?" demanded the Princess, as Jane commenced to take off her shoes and stockings.

"I am going to have a look around. I want to see if I can get at the baggage compartment. We are going to need some of the stuff in there. I'm afraid we are



going to find it mighty uncomfortable on the ground; it may be cold in here, but it will be cold and wet both, down there."

"We might make a fire, madam, if I might be so bold as to suggest it," offered Tibbs.

"Everything is rather wet and soggy, but perhaps we can manage it. It's too bad we haven't gasoline left. That would help a lot."

"There'll be some in the sump in the bottom of the tank," said Brown.

"But why are you taking off your shoes and stockings?" asked the Princess.

"It's the only safe way to climb around in trees, Kitty."

"But my dear—I mean—after all, you don't intend to climb around in that tree?"

"Precisely; and that is what you will have to do too, if you ever want to get down from here."

"Oh, but my dear, I couldn't. I positively couldn't do it."

"We'll help you when the time comes, and see that you don't fall; and while I am looking around, Brown, I wish you and Tibbs would remove all the safety-belts and fasten them together into one long strap. It may be necessary to lower the Princess to the ground, and a strap will come in handy in getting the luggage down safely."

"You better let me go out and look around, miss," said Brown; "you might fall."

Jane smiled. "I am used to it, Brown," she said. "You'd probably be in far more danger than I." And then she stepped out onto the crumpled wing, and leaped lightly to a near-by branch.

"Great Scott, look out, miss—you'll fall!" shouted Brown.

"Be careful, madam! You'll kill your-

self." For an instant Tibbs almost showed emotion.

"My dear, I mean, come back," wailed the Princess.

Annette screamed and covered her eyes with her palms.

"My dear lady, come back! For my sake, come back!" begged Alexis.

But Jane paid no attention to them, as she took two short steps along the branch that brought her within reach of the baggage compartment. It was not locked, and she quickly opened the door.

"Wh-ew!" she exclaimed. "What a mess! There's a broken branch rammed right up through here. It's a good thing for us that it didn't come through the cabin."

"Is everything ruined?" asked Alexis.

"Oh, no. Some of the things must be damaged, but I imagine we can salvage nearly everything; and one of the first things I want to salvage is a pair of shorts. Skirts are bad enough at any time, but in a tree-top they are a calamity. What luck! Here is my bag right in front. I won't be but a jiffy, and after I've changed, I'll be able to accomplish something."

She opened her bag and selected two or three garments. Then she swung lightly to a lower branch and disappeared from their view beneath the ship.

"Say!" exclaimed Brown, admiringly. "She's as much at home in the trees as a monkey. I never saw anything like it."

ALEXIS clambered to a point from which he could look out of the door. Brown and Tibbs were removing the safety-belts and fastening them together securely.

Alexis looked down and shuddered. "It must be a hundred feet to the ground," he said. "I don't see how we are ever going to make it; and those branches are wet and slippery."

"Take off your shoes and stockings the way she did," advised Brown.

"I'm no monkey."

"No?"

Tibbs interposed hastily:

"If I might venture to suggest it, sir, we could fasten the strap around you and lower you."

"It will hold a thousand pounds," said Brown; "it's tested for that. It'll sure hold you, but you'd better leave your title behind; that's the heaviest part of you."

"I've stood about enough of your impertinence, fellow," snapped Alexis. "An-

other word like that from you, and I'll—I'll—"

"You'll what?" demanded Brown. "You and who else?"

"I wish you two would quit quarreling," said the Princess. "I mean, aren't things bad enough as they are without that?"

"My dear, I do not quarrel with servants," said Alexis haughtily.

"In the first place," said Brown, "I aint no servant; and in the second place, you'd better not quarrel if you know what's good for you. There's nothing I'd like better than an excuse to smack you on the beezer."

"If you ever dare lay hands on me, I'll—"

"What? Fire me again?" exclaimed Brown. "Now I'll just naturally have to paste you one to show you your place; then maybe you'll remember that you aint nothing but a worm, and that if you had a title a block long, you'd still be a worm."

"Don't you dare strike me," cried the Prince, shrinking back.

"WHAT is the meaning of all this?" Jane stepped into the doorway of the cabin. "I thought I told you two to stop quarreling. Now before we go any further, I want to tell you something: We're stranded here, the Lord only knows where; there may not be another white man within hundreds of miles; we shall have to depend solely upon our own resources. Quarreling and bickering among ourselves won't get us anywhere; it will just make our plight all the worse. One of us has got to take charge. It should be a man, and the only man here having any jungle experience, in so far as I know, or who is capable of commanding, is Brown. But there's too much friction between him and the Prince; so Brown is out of the question."

"I will take full charge," said Alexis.

"The heck you will!" exclaimed Brown.

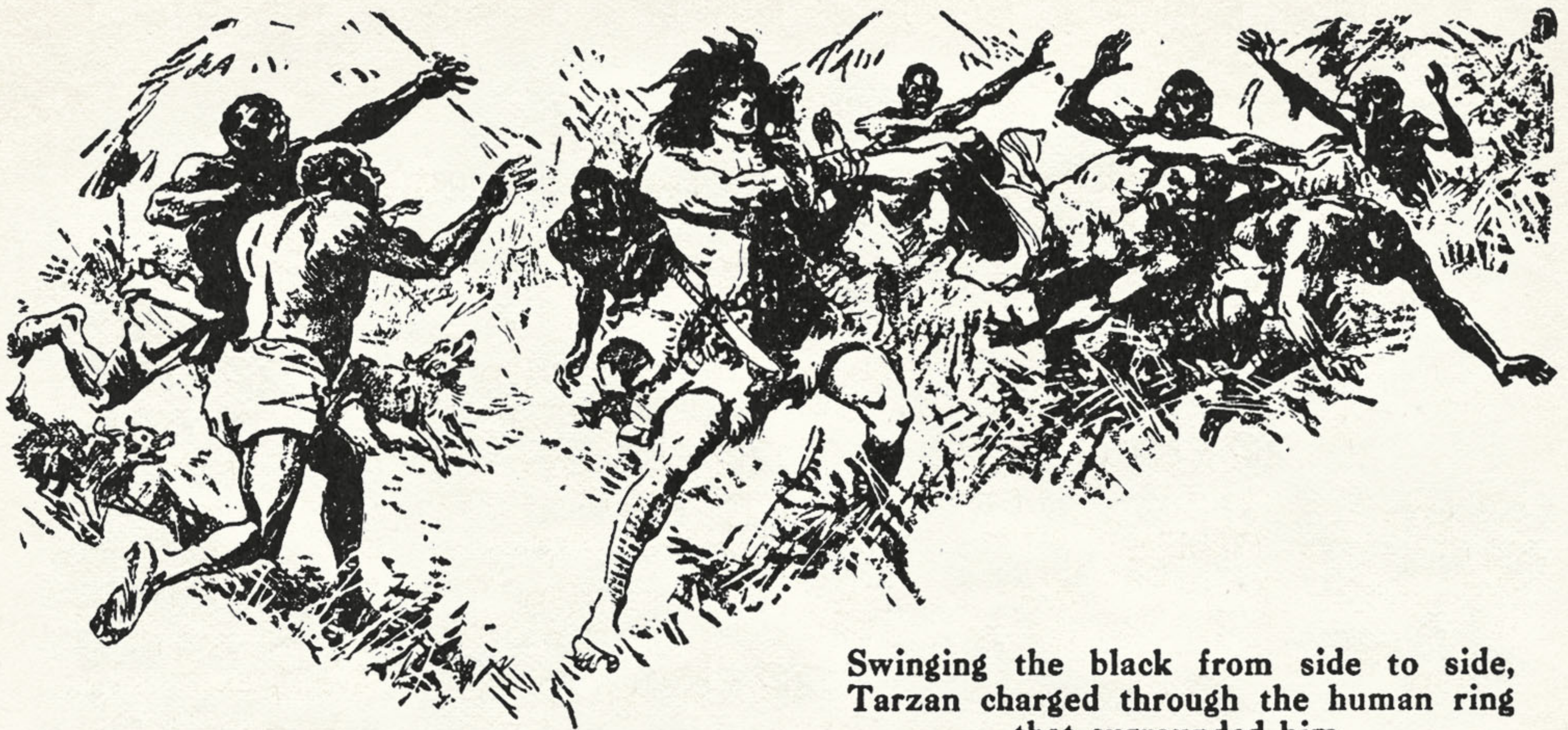
"My rank entitles me to the post," insisted Alexis haughtily.

"You said it," gibed Brown. "You're rank, all right."

"No, Alexis, you're out too," said Jane. "We've got to have some one whom all will obey."

"That just leaves Tibbs, then," said Brown. "Tibbs will suit me all right."

"Oh, dear me, no," cried Tibbs. "Really, if you'll permit me, I couldn't think of assuming so much authority. I



Swinging the black from side to side, Tarzan charged through the human ring that surrounded him.

—I—well, you know, I haven't been accustomed to it, madam." He turned piteously to Jane. "But you, madam, I am sure that we would all be extraordinarily proud to have you for our leader."

"That is what I was going to suggest," said Jane. "I know the jungle better than any of you, and I am sure there isn't anyone else upon whom we could all agree."

"But it's our expedition," objected Alexis. "We paid for everything; we own the ship and all the supplies; I am the one who should command. Isn't that right, my dear?"

He turned to his wife, confident of being upheld in his opinion.

"Oh, really, my dear, I mean, I don't know. Since you said those horrid things to me, I am crushed. My world has collapsed around my ears."

"Well," said Brown, "there's no use chewing the fat any more about that. Lady Greystoke is boss from now on, and if there's anybody that don't like it, I'll attend to them."

The Princess Sborov was slumped dejectedly on the floor of the ship, her handkerchief pressed to her eyes. "It doesn't make any difference to me," she said; "I don't care what happens now. I don't care if I die; I hope I do." As she finished, she glanced up, presumably to note the effect of her words upon her listeners, and for the first time since Jane had returned to the ship, she saw her garb. "Oh, my dear," she exclaimed, "what a cute outfit! I mean, it's perfectly ducky."

"Thanks," said Jane. "I'm glad you like it; it's practical, at least." She was wearing shorts, and a leather jacket. Her legs and feet were bare. A figured red

scarf, wrapped once around her head, confined her hair and served the purposes of a hat.

"But my dear, won't you freeze to death?" demanded the Princess.

"Well," laughed Jane, "I won't exactly freeze to death, but I shall probably be cold lots of times—one gets used to being either too hot or too cold in the jungle. Now I am going down to look around for a suitable camping-place, and you'd all better pray that there's one close by. While I am gone, Brown, you and Tibbs lower the luggage to the ground. Alexis, you go below and receive it; there's got to be some one there to unfasten the strap each time."

"Let Annette do it," growled Alexis. "What do you suppose we've got servants for?"

"Each of us has got to do his share, Alexis," said Jane quietly, "and there are certain things, the heavier and more dangerous work, that will naturally fall to the men. There are no servants and no masters among us now. The sooner we all realize that, the better off and the happier we are going to be."

THE Prince approached the doorway gingerly and looked down. "Let Brown go," he said; "I'll help Tibbs lower the baggage to him." Then he glanced in the direction of the baggage compartment. "How could anyone get out there on that branch," he demanded, "and do anything? He'd fall and break his neck!"

"Oh, can the chatter and go on down, as Lady Greystoke told you to," said Brown. "Say the word, miss, and I'll toss him down."

"No, you won't; you don't dare touch me."

"Then get on over the edge and start down."

"I can't; I'd fall."

"Put the strap around him, Brown," said Jane; "and you and Tibbs lower him to the ground. I'm going along now." And with that, she jumped lightly to a near-by branch and swung down through the leafy foliage toward the ground below.

She breathed the odors of the steaming jungle with a keen delight. The restrictions of ordered society, the veneer of civilization, fell away, leaving her free; and she sensed this new freedom with a joy that she had not felt since she had left the jungle to return to London.

Everything about her reminded her of Tarzan. She looked about her, listening intently. It seemed inevitable that at the next moment she would see a bronzed giant swing down through the foliage to clasp her in his arms; and then, with a sigh and a rueful smile, she shook her head, knowing full well that Tarzan was probably hundreds of miles away, ignorant both of her whereabouts and her plight. It was possible that he might not even yet have received her cable, telling him that she was flying to Nairobi. When he did receive it, and she did not come, how would he know where to search for her? They had flown blind for so long that even Brown had no idea how far off their course they had been, nor even the approximate location of their landing-place. It seemed quite hopeless that they should expect outside help. Their only hope lay within themselves.

WHATEVER their situation, she and Brown, she felt, might reasonably expect to pull through—if they had been alone. But how about the others? Tibbs, she thought, might have possibilities of resourcefulness and endurance. She had her doubts about Alexis. Men of his stamp were often almost as helpless as women. Annette was young and strong, but temperamentally unfitted for the grim realities of the jungle against which they would have to pit themselves. Her efficiency and even her strength would be lessened by the constant terror in which she would exist. As for Kitty, Jane mentally threw up her hands—hopeless, absolutely hopeless, in the face of any hardship, emergency or danger! Yes, she felt that she and Brown could pull through; but could they pull the others through? It went without saying that they would not desert them.

Her mind partially occupied with these thoughts, she moved through the lower terrace of the jungle, for so thickly was the ground overgrown with underbrush that she had kept to the lower branches of the trees to make her progress easier.

She did not go far in one direction, because she realized the difficulty of transporting their supplies for any great distance through the heavy undergrowth.

Circling, she sought for an open space, however small, in which they might build a temporary camp; but the jungle appeared to become wilder and less penetrable.

She had completed half the circle, and was on the side of the ship opposite that from which she had descended, when she came unexpectedly upon a game-trail.

Immediately her spirits rose, for now they were assured of comparatively easy going and the certainty, almost, that eventually they would find natives.

BEFORE returning to the ship, she followed the trail a short distance, and suddenly she came upon a small stream and, beside it, an opening in the underbrush, perhaps an acre in extent.

Elated, she turned back toward the ship, following the trail to ascertain how close it ran to the point from which the baggage must be transported.

As she turned, she heard a slight rustling in the undergrowth behind her, a sound which her trained ears detected quickly and almost identified. Yet she was not sure.

Nevertheless she increased her gait, taking quick glances ahead and upward that she might always have an avenue of escape located in the event of sudden necessity. . . .

The sound continued, a little behind her and paralleling the trail along which she moved.

She could hear Brown and Alexis quarreling with one another and bickering over the handling of the baggage. Alexis was on the ground, and he seemed very close. Of course, she might be mistaken. The thing that she heard might not be what she feared it was; but perhaps it would be as well to warn Alexis before it was too late, and so without further delay she called to him.

"What is it?" he demanded, sullenly.

"You had better climb a tree, Alexis. I think a lion is following me. He is very close."

"I can't climb a tree," shouted Alexis. "I can't move through this undergrowth."

Help! Brown, *help!* Do something, somebody!"

"Lower the strap to him and pull him up," shouted Jane. "It may not be a lion, and he may not bother us if it is; but we'd better be on the safe side."

"Hurry up with that strap, you fool," shrieked Alexis.

"There aint no hurry," Brown replied tantalizingly; "at least, I aint in no hurry."

"If you let that lion get me, it'll be murder."

"Oh, I guess he can stand it," replied Brown.

"Hurry up and lower that strap, you murderer."

"Aint I lowering it, as fast as I can?" Brown drawled.

"Oh, I can hear him now; he's right on top of me; he'll get me."

"That is I you hear, Alexis," said Jane reassuringly.

"Well, what if he does get you?" demanded Brown. "Aint a lion got to eat? In California they feed them animals that aint no good; so what are you crabbing about?"

"Hurry now, Brown," cried Jane. "The lion is coming, and he's coming fast."

CHAPTER VI

THE BALLOT OF DEATH

AS the Bukena warriors closed in upon Tarzan, he stood with folded arms, ignoring them. He was surrounded by many spears; and he knew that at this instant, if he sought to escape or give battle, a dozen spear-points would transfix him instantly.

His one hope lay in gaining time, and he felt that he could accomplish this best by feigning indifference.

"Kill the Kavuru!" shouted a woman in rear of the warriors. "They stole my daughter."

"Kill him! Kill him!" urged others of the savage throng.

A very old man, who had been squatting beside Udalo, leaped to his feet. "No! *No!*" he screamed. "Do not kill him. If he be a Kavuru, his people will come and punish us. They will kill many of us and take all of our girls."

Instantly the blacks commenced arguing among themselves. Some insisted upon killing him; others wanted to take him prisoner, while others thought that he should be released to mollify the Kavuru.

As they jabbered, the spearmen in the front rank relaxed their vigilance. Some of them turned around and sought to expound their views to those behind them; and in this circumstance Tarzan thought he saw his chance to escape. With the speed of Ara the lightning, and the strength of Gorgo the buffalo, he leaped upon a near-by warrior, and swinging the black from side to side in a semicircle, he charged through the human ring that surrounded him, turning constantly meanwhile, so that no weapon could be directed against him without endangering the life of the black.

SO quickly had he acted, that the blacks were taken entirely off their guard; and he had won almost to the clear, where he might have made a quick run for the village gate, when something struck him heavily on the back of the head. . . .

When Tarzan regained consciousness, he found himself in the dark interior of an evil-smelling hut, his wrists and ankles securely bound.

With the return of consciousness came recollection of what had transpired; and the ape-man could not restrain a slow smile, for it was evident to him that the faction that had been afraid to kill him was more powerful than that which would have taken his life.

For the time being, therefore, he was safe; and so he was certain of escape; for he was so constituted that while life remained in him, he could not conceive of permanent captivity, nor could anything for long shake his confidence in his ability to extricate himself from any predicament that might overtake him; for was he not Tarzan of the Apes, Lord of the Jungle?

Presently he commenced to test the bonds that secured his wrists and ankles. They were very strong, and there were a great many strands; and he soon saw that it would be hopeless to attempt to liberate himself. There was nothing to do, therefore, but wait.

UNLIKE an ordinary man, he did not waste time wondering what his fate would be. Instead, he composed himself as comfortably as he could, and fell asleep.

And while he slept, a council of warriors plotted in the council-house with Udalo, the chief. It was they who were deciding what the fate of the ape-man should be.

The old man who had first warned them against killing their prisoner was still his staunchest defender. This was Gupingu, the witch-doctor. He prophesied that dire calamity would befall them if they harmed this man who, he assured them, was a Kavuru. But there were others who spoke quite as insistently for death.

"If he is a Kavuru," said one of these, "his people will come and punish us as soon as they find we have attacked him and made him prisoner. If we kill him, he cannot go back to them and tell them; and the chances are that they will never know what became of him."

"Those are true words," said another, nodding agreement.

Then Udalo spoke. "It is not for one man to decide this thing," he said. "The talk of many men is better than the talk of one."

On the ground beside him were two bowls. One contained kernels of corn, and the other small round pebbles. He passed one of these bowls to the warrior upon his right, and one to him upon his left.

"Let each warrior take a kernel of corn and a pebble—just one of each, not more," he said.

They passed the bowls from hand to hand about the circle; and each warrior took a kernel of corn and a pebble; and when the bowls were returned to Udalo, he set them down beside him and picked up a gourd with a small neck.

"We will pass this gourd around the circle," he said, "and each man shall speak either with a kernel of corn or with a pebble, for the life or the death of the stranger. If you wish him to live, put a kernel of corn in the gourd; if you wish him to die, put a pebble."

IN silence, the gourd was passed around the grim circle.

The dropping of the fateful ballots into the hollow gourd sounded distinctly in every part of the large council-house. At last the gourd completed the circle and came back to Udalo.

There were fully a hundred warriors in the circle; and Udalo could not count to a hundred, but he had an equally certain way of determining the outcome of the voting, even though he was unable to determine how many votes were cast upon each side.

He emptied the contents of the gourd

upon the ground in front of him. Then with one hand, he picked up a grain of corn, and simultaneously, with the other, a pebble, and placed each in its respective bowl; this he continued to do as long as there were kernels of corn and pebbles to match one another. But this was not for long, for he soon ran out of corn; and even then there were seventy-five or eighty pebbles left, showing that only a few had voted to spare the life of the ape-man.

Udalo slowly looked up and around the circle.

"The stranger dies," he said. A savage, sinister shout rose from the assembled warriors.

"Let us go and kill him now," said one, "before the Kavuru can come and find him among us."

"No," said Udalo; "tomorrow night he dies. Thus will the women have time to prepare a feast. Tomorrow night we shall eat and drink and dance, while we torture the Kavuru. Let him suffer as he has made us suffer when he stole our children."

A roar of approval and satisfaction greeted this suggestion.

THE council was over. The warriors had returned to their huts. Fires were banked. Silence had fallen upon the village of the Bukena. Even the usually yapping curs were silent. The kraal was wrapped in slumber.

From a hut near the chief's, a figure crept silently into the night. It paused in the shadow of the hut from which it had emerged, and for a long moment looked fearfully about.

Nothing stirred, and silent as a ghostly shadow, the figure crept along the village streets.

Tarzan had been awakened by the savage cries from the council-house; and he had lain sleepless for some time because of the discomfort of his bonds, but presently he dozed again.

He was not yet fully asleep when something awakened him—a sound that you or I, with our dull ears, might not have heard—the sound of naked feet creeping slowly and stealthily toward the hut where he lay.

Tarzan rolled over so that he could see the entrance to the hut, and presently it was filled by a shadowy form. Some one was entering. Was it the executioner coming to destroy him?

The next thrill-packed installment will appear, of course, in our forthcoming November issue. Don't miss it.

The Windmill Mystery

A specially interesting exploit of that picturesque gypsy detective Isaac Heron—by the author of the famous Red Wolf of Arabia stories.

By WILLIAM
J. MAKIN



A strange figure! She wore an evening gown of blue silk; on her head was a battered fedora; her face was of straw—for she was a scarecrow.

TWO strange figures stood in a Sussex field overlooking the Channel. It was a fine spring morning; and one of those figures, Isaac Heron—a wealthy man whose mother had been a gypsy, and who must needs, from time to time, heed the call of the open road—stroked his brown face in a puzzled fashion.

“I really can’t understand you,” he was saying to the other figure.

But she made no response. She wore an expensive Paris evening gown of blue silk that was now daubed with mud and streaked with rain. On her head, incongruously enough, she wore a battered

fedora. She stood in the middle of this Sussex field of sprouting corn, staring toward the sea. Her face, however, was expressionless, for it was made of straw.

She was a scarecrow.

“But why a scarecrow dressed in an evening gown designed by one of the most exclusive dressmakers of Paris?” pondered Isaac Heron as he twitched back the blue silk stuff once again.

“Good morning to you!”

A gruff Sussex voice broke in on his meditations.

The gypsy turned quickly. A burly, red-faced farmer had entered the field and was coming toward him.

“Good morning,” nodded Isaac Heron. “I couldn’t resist climbing your gate and coming over to see this scarecrow.”

The farmer narrowed his eyes suspiciously.

“You interested in scarecrows?”

Isaac Heron smiled pleasantly.

“I’m interested in most queer things,” he replied, “particularly when I find a scarecrow dressed in an evening frock, such as this one is.”

The farmer regarded this slim figure with the brown face—a foreign-looking type despite the sports coat, gray flannel trousers and stout shoes of an Englishman on a walking-tour, which is precisely what Heron was engaged in doing. Suddenly tiring of London and of his luxuri-

ous flat in Jermyn Street, he had taken a train to a Channel resort and was now walking back toward London over the downs. But the suspicions of the farmer were lulled by the pleasant and friendly voice.

"Aye, now you mention it," he said, "I reckon it must seem queer to see one of these fol-de-rol frocks in the middle of a field of wheat. But I was stumped myself, when I found it lying here one morning, all mud-smear'd and wind-torn."

"You found it in your field?"

The farmer nodded.

"Picked it up, all wet and torn. Reckoned it was no use to any woman in our village, so I thought I'd make a scarecrow of it. And a real good bird-scarer it is."

"And you don't know how it came here?"

"Danged if I do. Maybe it once clothed a Lunnon girl. But the wenches in these parts don't wear fol-de-rols of that kind."

"And I can't imagine a London girl walking across a field at night in a frock of that type," said Isaac Heron.

The farmer again nodded.

"No, it be a rare mystery. No one ever came to claim the frock, so I didn't bother my head about it any more. It makes a rare good scarecrow, and that's all that matters."

"I'm sure it does," smiled the gypsy. "Well, I'll be getting back to the road. Good morning."

"Good morning to you," responded the farmer, and continued an inspection tour of his lands.

AGAIN Isaac Heron had reached the gate leading to the field. He climbed it, and dropped back into the road. But for nearly half an hour he stayed there, leaning easily against the gate, and staring thoughtfully with his oblique eyes at that blue-frocked scarecrow.

"I can't understand it," he repeated irritably, to himself.

What queer tragedy lay behind that expensive Paris-made frock? Had some woman, pursued by a nameless terror, rushed across that Sussex field and shed the frock in her flight? Or had murder been committed, the corpse disposed of and only the evening gown left to tell the tale?

"There must be some explanation," his brain insisted. "A blue frock out of the blue—"

The phrase tapped his mind. A gleam of understanding came to those dark, oblique eyes. He lifted his head toward the clear and rain-washed sky. Away in the distance, a giant dragon-fly object droned toward the sea: an airplane.

Heron dived a hand into his pocket. He drew forth an Ordnance Survey map of the district. With a pencil he marked his present position, and then drew a line diagonally across-country from the blue smear of the sea. Then, with a nod of satisfaction to himself he walked along the road for a few yards, and calmly climbed a gate on the opposite side.

He began to trudge across a field, following the pencil line on his map.

THE battered windmill stood solitary and exposed on another ridge of the downs as Isaac Heron came to it later in the day.

Obviously the merry miller and his men no longer frequented it. The huge sails were silent in the fresh breeze, but the weather-boarded sides still stood firm and slanted to the cupola topping the structure; a crazy-looking gallery surrounded the mill several feet above the ground; to it led a ladder, of which more than one rung had broken away: a relic of an England that was fast disappearing.

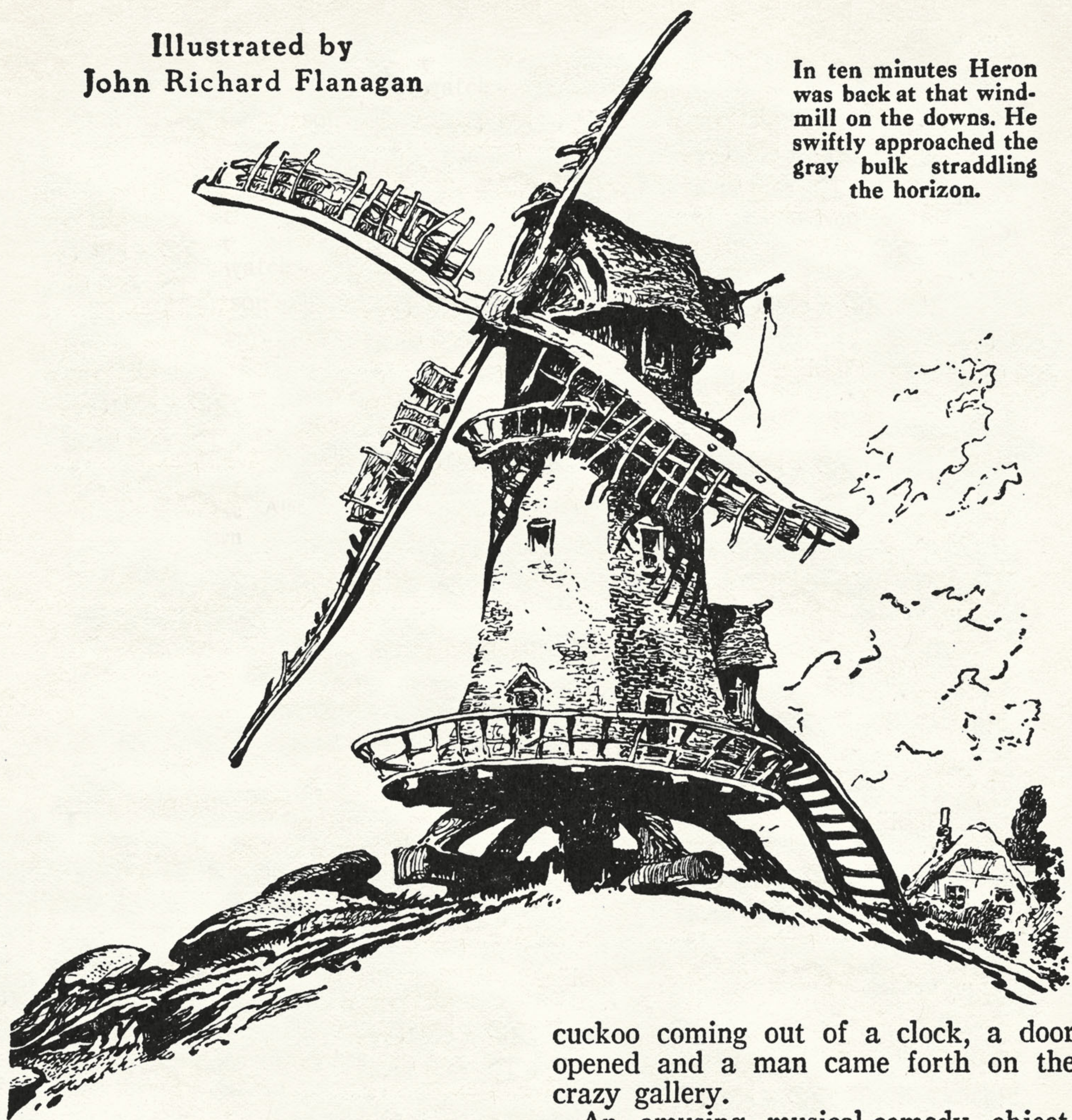


Isaac Heron had halted a couple of hundred yards away, the better to appreciate this solitary lighthouse on the land. This ridge of downs was unfrequented, except for a few sheep nibbling the tough grass—a lonely wind-swept spot.

Yet even as he stood there, something happened which recalled to him that odd scarecrow in a field which now lay several miles behind him. For a car had purred to a standstill along some hidden road. A gate had swung open,

Illustrated by
John Richard Flanagan

In ten minutes Heron was back at that windmill on the downs. He swiftly approached the gray bulk straddling the horizon.



and a woman was walking across the field to the windmill that stood on the ridge.

The woman somehow recalled the scarecrow. Yet instead of a blue silk frock she wore a shining black satin gown that fluttered in the breeze and revealed high-heeled shoes. A black fox-fur swathed her shoulders, and a little velvet hat was slanted across her head.

"Very elegant!" murmured Heron to himself. "In fact, she's too elegant to be walking across the downs. She suggests Bond Street, rather than Sussex."

He found a convenient thicket of gorse behind which he could crouch and observe the strange happenings at this windmill on the downs.

As soon as the black-satin-clad sylph had reached the windmill, she uttered a peculiar cry. In response to the hail, almost with the promptitude of a wooden

cuckoo coming out of a clock, a door opened and a man came forth on the crazy gallery.

An amusing musical-comedy object, himself! He wore gray silk corduroy trousers and a bright blue shirt open at the neck; his fair hair was beautifully smoothed over his head: a handsome-looking man, who if he had suddenly burst into song, would not have astonished the watching gypsy in the gorse. But instead, the man clambered halfway down the broken ladder and stretched out a hand to help up the sylph in black satin.

"This deserves music and limelight," decided Isaac Heron. "I can only imagine that I'm spying upon a week-end *liaison* between two people from the West End."

Yet even as the expensively dressed woman disappeared into the windmill, the gypsy did not move from his watching-place. His mind was still puzzling over the problem of that Parisian-gowned scarecrow in a Sussex field; and this glimpse of a living, expensively gowned woman in the same locality made him

suspect some connection between the two extraordinary incidents.

At last, however, he rose, retraced his steps and reached a twisty lane. Doggedly he followed it, until he debouched into one of those lost villages of the downs—a few scattered houses, a Norman-built church, and an inn with a bench under the trees.

WITH a tired gesture the gypsy seated himself on the bench. A rubicund, shirt-sleeved innkeeper materialized.

"I'd like some bread and cheese and a pint of bitter," said Isaac Heron.

"Surely," nodded the innkeeper. "A nice day for walking, sir."

"It is," nodded Heron, pulling out his map. "I've just been admiring that windmill on the downs over the way."

"The Crangate!"

"Is that what it's called?"

"Aye, it's a place of queer happenings," nodded the innkeeper. "It may look fine in the sunlight, sir, but none of the folks round here would go near it at dusk."

"Why?"

"They do say it's haunted."

"You surprise me."

The innkeeper drew himself up. Apparently this sort of conversation was to his taste. He bellowed the order for bread and cheese and beer to a woman at work in the garden, and turned again to the gypsy.

"Of course, it's only village gossip, sir," he resumed. "I don't say as I believe it myself. But in years past there have been some queer happenings in the Crangate mill. 'Tis said that the last miller and his wife were found murdered there; and only two years ago a wandering gypsy was found lying there, dead of starvation. The people of this village had refused him food, and he just managed to crawl on to the old mill before he died. . . . Ah, here's your bread and cheese and bitter, sir."

"It looks good," nodded Isaac Heron, stretching out a brown hand.

"'Tis said that the ghost of the starved gypsy now haunts the windmill," went on the innkeeper. "Not as I believe there can be much to the story, as a young feller from Lunnon settled in there some four months ago."

"Really! Must be a brave man."

"I dunno about that. I only know as he's an artist. Paints, you know. He often gets visitors down from Lunnon." The innkeeper's voice dropped to a whis-

per. "Fine-dressed women, too. He says they're models. I suppose a painter feller must have them, although I doubt whether they're any different beneath their fine clothes than our Sussex girls. And he's never painted one of *them*," added the innkeeper in an aggrieved tone.

"What's the name of this young artist?" asked Isaac Heron, idly.

"Mr. Walton—Frank Walton," replied the innkeeper.

Heron took a deep drink of his beer. He was beginning to realize that the apparently fantastic was very ordinary, after all. He had merely stumbled upon an amateur dauber from Chelsea playing the bucolic artist in a Sussex windmill. Probably a player at parties rather than a painter of pictures.

Heron sighed, and, losing interest, was about to change the subject, when the peace of the village was torn by the onrush of a handsome closed car. It stopped in front of the inn. A fair-haired man in a blue shirt, and a woman in black satin stepped out.

"Excuse me, sir," said the innkeeper, hurrying inside as the couple stepped into the bar-parlor.

So this was Frank Walton, the painter, and one of his "models!" The gypsy in Isaac Heron sighed at this invasion of the countryside by dubious Bohemia. He finished his bread and cheese, drained his pot of beer, and wandered inside in search of the innkeeper. He found him in the bar-parlor attending to the wants of the new arrivals.

"How much do I owe you?" asked Heron pleasantly.

"That'll be just one-and-sixpence, sir," replied the innkeeper.

THE gypsy felt that the young man with the fair hair was regarding him closely. The woman, too, had stopped chattering as he entered. He paid his bill, and ostentatiously drew the Ordnance Survey map from his pocket and spread it over a table. The musical-comedy couple watched him intently, but like true townspeople, did not offer to enter into conversation. Isaac Heron stubbed his finger on the map and pondered.

It was then that the fair-haired artist turned to the woman.

"But of course you're wrong, Dolly," he drawled. "When Utrillo painted 'The Sunflowers' he was only expressing in color and rhythm what we all feel—"



Boldly he seized one of the slats and slung himself from the gallery. His lithe body hung in midair; then he stretched out the other hand and carefully began to climb the sail.

With a sigh, the gypsy folded up his map, nodded to the innkeeper and resumed his trudge along the road. This time his brown face was turned toward the sea.

YET in ten minutes Heron was back at that clump of gorse near the windmill on the downs. He had run, and there was the tinge of color in his

cheeks. Without hesitation he swiftly approached the gray-painted bulk straddling the horizon.

Lithe as a cat, he clambered up the broken ladder until he stood upon the gallery where the young man had first appeared. Boldly he knocked at the door and waited. There was no response. He tried the handle. It was locked.



"Champagne, eh!" cried the blue-shirted man. "I think we'll broach a bottle, and drink to success." . . . "I shouldn't if I were you," said a voice quietly.

Quickly he padded around the gallery in search of some other entrance. There was none. He found himself standing in the shadow of one of the great sails that once caught the winds and sliced the air. It was then, looking up, that he discovered an open window just at the point where the crossbars of the sails joined. If he could reach that point, he would be able to squeeze himself in.

He stretched out a hand and tested one of the apparently rotting sails. To his surprise, the slats were quite firm. A second glance showed him that several had been repaired. This time he did not hesitate. Boldly he seized one of the slats, and slung himself from the gallery. His lithe body hung in midair. Then he stretched out the other hand and carefully began to climb the sail.

It was a perilous climb. Everything depended upon the condition of the sail near the meeting-place of the crossbars. Beneath him was a drop of many feet. And he was exposed to the full force of the breeze, which whistled eerily through the slats of the sails.

"Maybe they'll find another dead gypsy at the foot of Crangate mill," was the grim thought in his mind.

Yet, amazingly, the slats held. Hand over hand, he drew himself up, the whole sail shaking beneath his progress. At last, with a sob of relief, he reached the crossbars and the open window. A final effort, and he was inside.

HE paused for a moment to take breath. Before him lay the rolling expanse of downs with the steely glint of the Channel beyond: a magnificent and spacious view. And apparently one enjoyed by the present owner of the windmill, as Isaac Heron discovered when he turned to find what was prodding him in the back. It was a marine telescope, of the latest pattern, mounted on a tripod.

The gypsy pursed his lips in a soft whistle. For that was not the only strange object in that circular room beneath the cupola of the windmill.

The shaft and axle of the sails were well greased and in perfect condition. The mechanism had been enlarged, and seemed of a strangely complex character. And against one of the curved walls was a powerful radio set of modern design. Further, a headlamp from a motorcar of expensive make lay upon the floor, its glassy face turned upward.

Calmly, Isaac Heron noted this array of mechanical contrivances beneath the cupola. Then he discovered the trapdoor leading to the rooms below. A ladder plunged downward. Quickly, he descended.

Another strange scene: The whole room was draped with expensive dresses: evening gowns, afternoon frocks, tea frocks, morning gowns, silks and satins and chiffons—a feminine paradise of dresses dangling from hangers all round the circular room. In a large basket was tumbled a collection of smart hats. And the whole atmosphere was drenched in perfume. Bottles of scent of every size and shape were carefully arrayed on the floor.

With a sniff of disgust, Heron descended through a further trapdoor into the third room. This was on a level with the gallery, and obviously the living-room—but the living-room of a sybarite. The gypsy marveled at the luxury of it:

A gorgeously cushioned couch, which could be turned into a bed. Heavy-pile carpets on the floor. Table and chairs of fine workmanship. And the walls lined with books and pictures. Instinctively Heron bent down to examine the books. There were many copies of the same editions. "Ulysses," by James Joyce, "The Well of Loneliness," by Radclyffe Hall, "Lady Chatterley's Lover," by D. H. Lawrence, and expensively bound editions of other books of so esoteric a character, that they had been interdicted by the censor.

Dragging aside a small rug from the center of the floor, the gypsy found still another trapdoor leading to the cellar of this strange mill. He pulled it open and descended. The dark depths were sliced by the electric torch which Heron produced from his pocket. The final marvel was revealed:

It was a cellar worthy of the finest connoisseur. Bottles of Tokay jostled bottles of Chateau Margaux. There was a fine array of Napoleon brandy, and of rare liqueurs.

"A catholic taste in wines, too," nodded Heron to himself.

BUT time was passing. At any moment, now, the blue-shirted artist and his companion in black satin might return. The gypsy switched off his electric torch and clambered back into the living-room. He proceeded to the front door and discovered that it was held by a good modern spring lock. He twisted

the knob and let himself out onto the gallery. The door clicked behind him. A moment later, and he was sprinting back to the shelter of the gorse.

Not a moment too soon. Even as he flung himself panting to the ground, there came the sound of that sedan being driven rapidly along the hidden lane. It stopped. Isaac Heron did not wait to see the two musical-comedy figures enter the windmill. Once again he hurried across the fields and made his way back to the village.

"What, back again, sir!" exclaimed the rubicund-faced innkeeper.

"Have you a telephone here?" Heron asked.

"Surely."

"I want to put a call through to London."

"Yes sir. It will take about ten minutes. What number?"

"Whitehall twelve twelve."

The innkeeper nodded. The number of Scotland Yard meant nothing to him.

TWILIGHT was ending rapidly. The bulk of Crangate mill with its huge sails straddling the downs was silhouetted against the darkening sky. In a few minutes the blackness of night would descend.

Stretched out at full length amidst the gorse, Isaac Heron watched and waited. He glanced at his watch.

"Must be nearly the moment," he muttered.

Even as he spoke, the thing happened: The four giant sails of the windmill began to move. Slowly, at first, they swept and cut through the air of dying day. And as the night breeze caught them, they moved faster and faster.

Any villager passing at that moment would have been startled at this sudden resurgence of life in the old mill. The sails swept round and round in the darkness, swishing through the air like giant bats in search of prey. And then, as though life were stirring in the old monster, a red light gleamed eerily from that window through which the gypsy had climbed a few hours before.

"Now we shall see," murmured Heron excitedly to himself.

The red glow seemed to develop into white heat. Now the cupola was revolving with the sails. A section slid back like the roof of an observatory, and a shaft of white light shot obliquely into the darkening sky.

"The generating plant in full swing," nodded the gypsy.

Then there came a low droning sound out of the sky. . . . It came nearer. The light flickered for a second, then went out. Simultaneously the droning noise ceased. There was a *swish—swish—swish*, louder than the still revolving sails of the windmill, and out of the sky came gliding an enormous black object.

It came within a few feet of where Isaac Heron was crouching. It bumped heavily on the ground, bumped again and then landed easily—a powerful little cabin monoplane.

The pilot pulled up about a hundred yards from the windmill on the level ridge of the downs. He did not open out his engines to taxi, but jumped from the pilot's seat and flashed a torch.

At the same moment the door of the windmill opened, and the fair-haired young man and the girl came onto the gallery. Quickly they descended the ladder, and ran toward the monoplane, where the pilot was already dragging little cases out of the cabin, helped by another man who had apparently traveled as passenger.

"Had a good trip, Michael?" asked the fair-haired young man.

"Easy going over the Channel," replied the pilot. "I guess this is our best cargo up to date. Come on, lend a hand, everybody."

They began to carry the cases toward the mill. The girl worked with them. A block and tackle were swung out from the gallery, and one by one, the cases brought by the monoplane were hauled into the living-room. In fifteen minutes the job was finished.

"You've pegged the machine down for the night, Michael?" asked the fair-haired man.

The pilot nodded.

"I'd better take off at five in the morning," he said. "These damned country-folk get up too early as it is."

"Well, let's have a look at the goods, anyhow," suggested the young man in the blue shirt. "Dolly is going to motor some of the stuff up to London tomorrow. Come in, Jepson, and close the door." They disappeared inside.

ONCE again the lonely windmill was silent. The sails had stopped revolving; the blackness of night was over the downs. Eagerly the three men and the girl bent over the cases on the floor.

"Most of it's liquor," said the pilot.

The blue-shirted man nodded.

"Good for you, Michael. It sells better than most things, though those cargoes of frocks are bringing us a nice profit." He bent farther toward the case. "Champagne!" he cried. "*Veuve Clicquot*, eighteen ninety! I think we'll broach a bottle, and drink to success."

"I SHOULDN'T, if I were you," said a voice quietly.

Quickly the group straightened themselves and swung round. They were startled to see a slim, dark-faced man dressed in gray flannel trousers and a sports coat regarding them with a gleam of amusement in his oblique eyes.

"Who the devil are you?" demanded the pilot. "And how did you get in here?"

"I walked in after you obligingly left the door open," murmured Heron. "I was interested to see a gang of modern smugglers at work. I must congratulate you on your enterprising methods. A windmill, which is not only a lighthouse on land for airplanes, but also a storehouse for Paris frocks and wines, and for books upon which there are heavy tariffs in this country. Very clever indeed."

"I remember this fellow," burst out the fair-haired man. "He was snooping round in the village pub when Dolly and I went down for a drink. A police spy, eh?"

"Not at all, Mr. Walton," replied Heron imperturbably. "To tell you the truth, I'm just a wandering gypsy."

"A wandering gypsy!" A menacing glint came into the steely blue eyes of the young man. "Then perhaps you've heard the legend that this windmill is haunted by the ghost of a gypsy who died here?"

"I heard something about it in the village," nodded Heron carelessly.

"Then, by heaven, there's going to be a real dead gypsy haunting this place," shouted the young man, suddenly leveling a revolver at the slim figure facing him.

The girl in black satin gave a stifled scream. The young man's finger was on the trigger. But at that moment there came a thunderous knock at the door of the windmill, and the shuffle of footsteps on the gallery outside.

All eyes glanced toward the door. Everybody hesitated momentarily. It was Isaac Heron who took command of the situation. Calmly he walked across the

room and stretched out a brown hand for the knob.

"No use adding murder to your crimes," he said pleasantly to the fair-haired young man. "I'd better open the door, as I am expecting a few friends."

And with a jerk he swung it open.

The familiar face of Inspector Graves of Scotland Yard, and a group of plain-clothes men, appeared in the light.

"Come in, Graves," said Isaac Heron. "I'm really glad to see you. You arrived just in time. Our young friend Walton was just about to make dead meat of me."

There was the glint of handcuffs in the light. Heron stretched out a hand and brought forth a bottle from that case on the floor.

"Yes, you're right," he nodded to the now livid young man. "*Veuve Clicquot*, eighteen ninety. Inspector, I think I deserve a drink."

With a quick twist of his fingers he released the cork. There was a loud pop. The liquor frothed forth. Calmly the gypsy reached out for a glass and gave himself a drink. Then he filled it again and offered it to the young man.

"Try it, Walton."

"Go to the devil!" growled the smuggler savagely.

"AND you say the scarecrow in a blue-silk frock in a Sussex field really led you to this smuggling gang?" asked Inspector Graves.

He and Isaac Heron were seated in the bar-parlor of the village inn.

"I admit that Paris frock on a scarecrow puzzled me for some time," admitted Heron. "It was only when I thought of a blue frock coming out of the blue that I instinctively stared at the sky and happened to see an airplane in the far distance. In a flash, the possibility of that frock having fallen out of an airplane into the field suggested itself. The tears in the frock, and its general appearance, emphasized the idea. They were probably getting the cargo ready to land when the airplane passed over the field and the frock blew out. It was found there the next morning, by the farmer."

"And then?"

"Well, I recollected that you once told me a clever smuggling gang was at work, and that you had not been able to lay hands on them. Of course the evidence

of the frock was very slight, but it was worth following up. And I followed it up on a map by drawing a straight line such as an airplane would take coming from the Continent."

"But you say they nearly bluffed you, even then?"

Heron nodded.

"It was only here, in this bar-parlor when Frank Walton made a remark to the girl Dolly, that I realized he was not the young artist he pretended to be, and really appeared to be. He said: 'But of course you're wrong, Dolly. When Utrillo painted "The Sunflowers," he was only expressing in color and rhythm what we all feel—'"

"It sounds the usual artistic jargon to me," said Graves.

"But I happened to know that the picture, 'The Sunflowers,' was painted by Van Gogh, and not by Utrillo. It's not the sort of mistake likely to be made by a modern young artist. It decided me that Frank Walton was not a painter. I climbed into the mill to see what he really was, discovered the signaling-light for airplanes in the cupola, and that vast array of loot ready for disposal in London by Dolly, in the rooms of the mill."

"Well, it's a fine capture," chortled the Scotland Yard man. "I'm glad you telephoned me to come down in a fast car. Can I give you a lift back to London?"

"No, thank you," replied Isaac Heron. "I'm on a walking-tour. I'm staying here tonight and going on tomorrow morning."

And leaning back in his chair, he sang softly:

*Oh, what care I for a goose-feather bed,
With the sheet turn'd down so bravely,
O!*

*For tonight I shall sleep in a cold open
field,*

Along with the wraggle-taggle gypsies, O!

Graves sighed a little enviously.

"Well, I must be getting back to the Yard with my prisoners," he murmured. "I'm leaving two men on guard at the mill tonight." He moved toward the door. "By the way," he said, turning as though a sudden thought had struck him, "where can I see that picture, 'The Sunflowers,' by that fellow Van Gogh?"

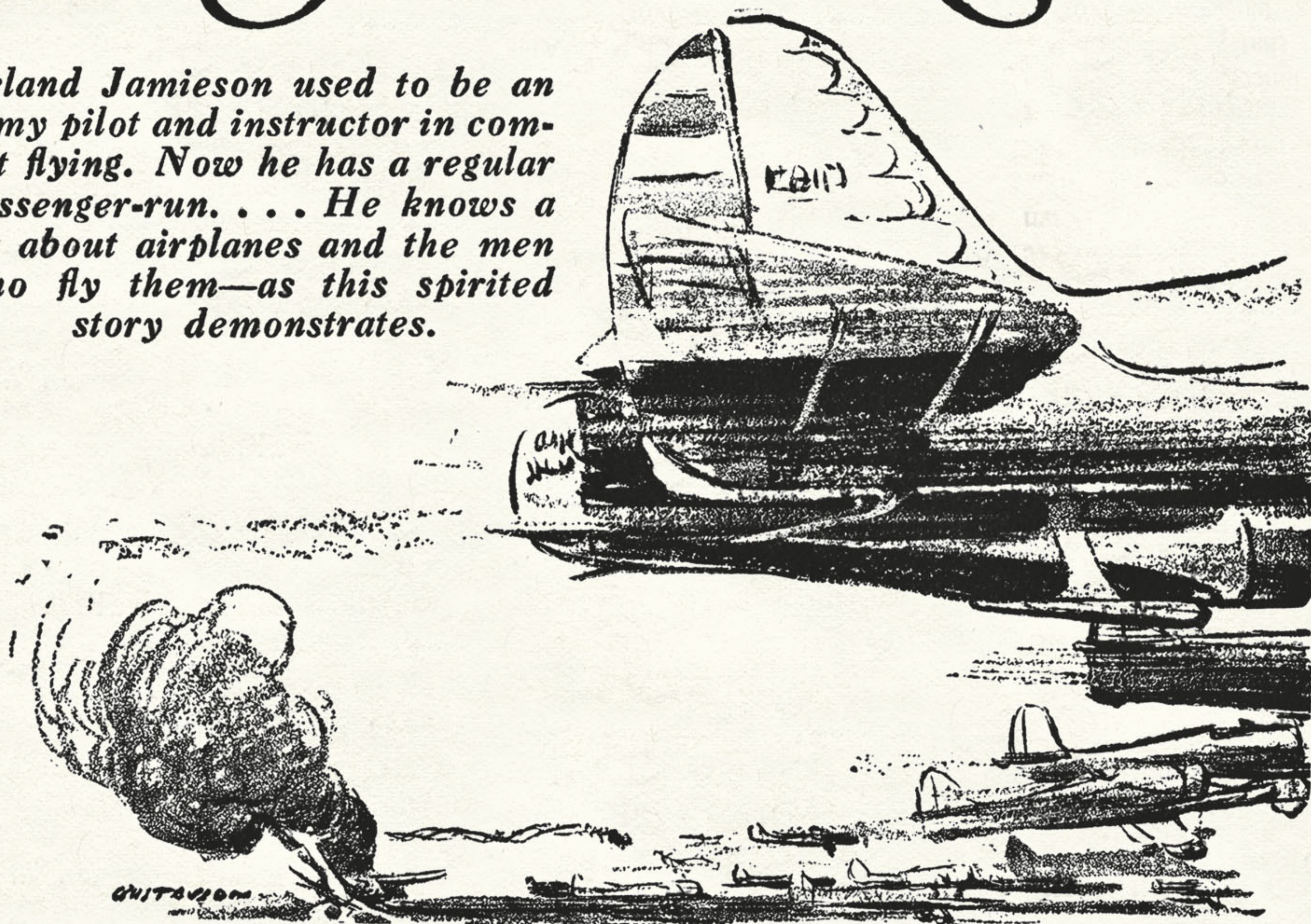
Isaac Heron laughed.

"Try the Tate Gallery," he replied. "Good night, Graves."

Another colorful adventure of this "brother of the black tents" will appear in our forthcoming November issue.

The Speed King

Leland Jamieson used to be an army pilot and instructor in combat flying. Now he has a regular passenger-run. . . . He knows a lot about airplanes and the men who fly them—as this spirited story demonstrates.



USUALLY Tommy Harris flew his races in a hot foment of excitement, his smooth, dark face tense with the fervor of the contest—because it was a contest. Usually, no matter if he won or lost, he climbed from the cockpit with a blithe wave of his hand, swearing genially at any who had beaten him, offering condolence to those who themselves were in defeat. But this race had not been like other races, and now Tommy found himself completely out of character.

The engine died with a series of sharp back-fires, and the crowd came surging up around the fuselage. Tommy relaxed in the cockpit, still hearing the echo of the shrieking wind that for five hours had accumulated in his ears. He had lost, and this time, instead of a shrugging realization, there was heartbreak in the thought. More than heartbreak. Bitterness, and a sickening feeling of inferiority. He had never beaten Hollinway at anything since that day two years ago, when Speed had sliced his tail off in a pylon turn, and he had jumped, while Speed had thundered on to take first place.

There was apparently no end to Hollinway's success. Almost a dozen races since that near-fatal day; and now—

Phyllis. Sitting there, Tommy thought of Phyllis soberly. The last time he had seen her had been at Sea Island Beach thirty days before. He pictured her, a pang of melancholy tugging at his heart: her soft brown eyes and oval face, her hair tucked into a diving cap; an unbelievably, a fabulously beautiful figure in a bathing suit.

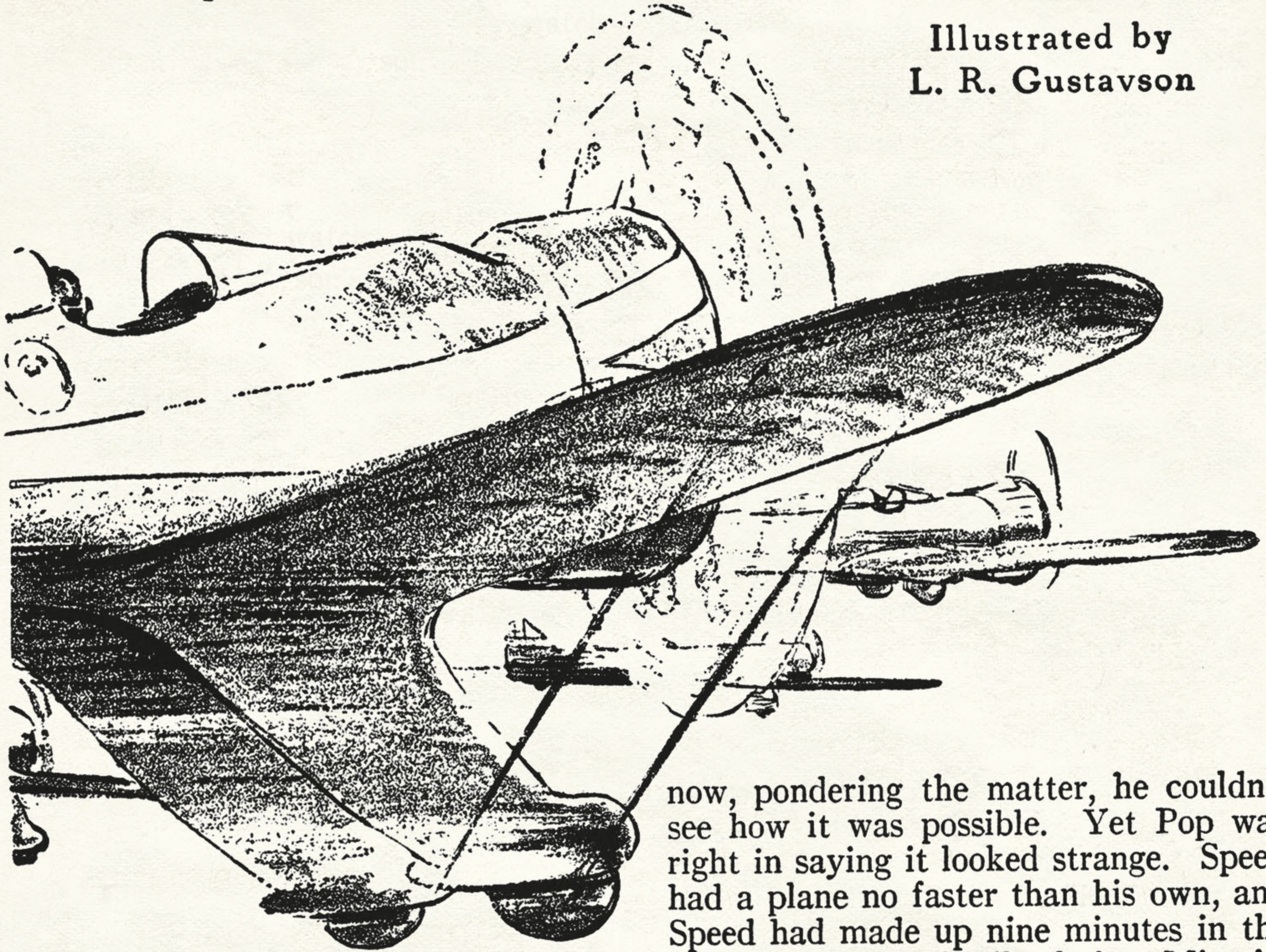
Phyllis, more than anything, was the drama in this race which he had lost. Phyllis, who had, apparently, sent them both telegrams last night, jocularly replying to wires both of them had sent, and saying cryptically: "*Alone to you my presence only if you win that race.*"

Of course, Tommy Harris realized, one more evening would not bring her back to him. And he cursed himself for letting it affect him as it did. He should be thinking of the free-for-all tomorrow, and the process of elimination that would make the winner of that trophy the entrant in the Melbourne Sweepstakes—which, in turn, would put the final victor on a pedestal of ease.

But he couldn't erase Phyllis from his mind, or stop his brooding apprehension. With a weary movement of his hands, he raised his goggles, and strain ebbed back from his deep-blue, tired eyes. A sea of faces pressed close about the cockpit.

By LELAND JAMIESON

Illustrated by
L. R. Gustavson



Up close, he saw Pop Herschell, and Pop was trying to grin, and saying: "Well, kid, you *almost* went and killed yourself a bear. What happened? You were leading, out of Jacksonville."

Tommy Harris forced himself to smile. He said hoarsely, "Nothing happened. He just wore me down and eased me out, I guess." He shrugged, and the smile was a little more the way it should be, now; but it was just a mask.

Pop Herschell, faithful always to him and to that sleek red crate, returned: "There's something funny somewhere, kid. He hasn't got a mile an hour on this job, and you were ahead—and then you weren't. I don't trust that guy, and you don't either—and there's something funny here. . . . Let's get inside."

TOMMY climbed down, and his parachute thumping at his thighs, pushed through the crowd to race headquarters. People gave way easily. There was no slapping at his back and dinning at his ears, as there would have been if he had won. But he was glad they didn't bother him, for he was trying to think. He knew Speed Hollinway; knew the ship Speed flew, and knew his own was just as good. Until Pop mentioned it, he hadn't thought about the possibility of trickery. Even

now, pondering the matter, he couldn't see how it was possible. Yet Pop was right in saying it looked strange. Speed had a plane no faster than his own, and Speed had made up nine minutes in the last three hundred miles before Miami.

It was difficult to think. His head ached violently from fumes, and his ears buzzed crazily. They got into the office, and inside, a dozen men and women pumped his hand with a kind of strained solemnity. There were words of sympathy, and of regret; and questions. He heard Slim Sanders ask: "Where did he pass you, Tommy? You were leading, out of Jacksonville."

Tommy shook his head. "I didn't see him pass. I didn't see him any time, from Jacksonville."

Pop Herschell vociferated with a note of triumph: "Oh-ho! There *is* something damned peculiar to this, if you didn't see him pass!"

"There couldn't be," said Slim. "He checked over Palm Beach four minutes and twelve seconds ahead of you, so he didn't cut straight across the Glades to pick up time. We thought of that."

Tommy said, "Theories won't prove anything." And he thought: "I'm washed up on this race, and I'm going to be washed up with Phyllis if I don't watch out." And then, as he turned slowly in answer to his name, a lithe, brown-haired girl with a pretty, oval face was standing close in front of him, and Dewey Harwell's voice was saying in words that reached his ringing ears but thinly: "This

is Dora Jervis, Tommy. She writes the aviation column for the *Beacon*. I promised you'd talk to her for just a minute. She's a friend of mine."

Tommy wiped his oil-stained face with an enormous handkerchief. He looked at Dora Jervis, saying ruefully: "Wrong pilot, I'm afraid. I didn't win the race. People want to read about the man who did."

The girl returned in a clear, slow voice that reminded him of Phyllis: "Perhaps you'd like a shower and a beer or two, before we try to argue that. I can run you into town—without a single question till you've had them both. We might," she added tentatively, "have lunch."

Tommy pressed thumbs against his temples, to stop the throbbing there. "I thought you were a reporter," he declared. "Come on."

THEY had lunch in a beer garden off First Street, sitting in the shade of palm, talking the generalities of aviation, of the races that were taking place tomorrow. His thoughts continually returned to Phyllis and Speed Hollinway.

"Tell me about Hollinway," said Dora Jervis, seeming, almost, to penetrate his mind. She looked at him, her gray eyes probing.

He pushed his glass around a time or two, staring down at it in silence. He didn't want to talk about the man, much less the race. When he thought about that race, it made him just a little sick. "What about Speed?" he returned.

"Is he a better flyer than you are?"

"You saw him win today."

She shifted her small, square shoulders forward, and somewhere beneath the soft mold of her lips a look of resolution formed. "Yes," she said. "But I don't understand. You had identical planes. Dewey Harwell says there's no difference in them in performance. You were three minutes in the lead, from Jacksonville. You didn't see him pass you—yet your courses were supposed to be the same. I know how intensely you had hoped to win. Today's race, and tomorrow's free-for-all, will select the Melbourne Sweepstakes entry between the two of you. And besides that"—her voice softened, and she looked out across the garden—"besides that, there was Phyllis Gay. . . . What was the matter?"

With a quick, sharp sidewise glance he said: "So you're in on Phyllis, are you?" His eyes went hard. He should, he sup-

posed, resent her for bringing Phyllis into this. A reporter gathering copy for her column. But he didn't, somehow. "I had no idea that that was public property."

Her voice had turned a trifle thin. "I think I have a right to be. I was Dora Gay, before I made a mess of being married. Phil's my sister—and I can see what's going to happen to her if we don't do something. My meeting you there today wasn't accidental."

CHECKING his surprise, holding all his feelings in curious abeyance, he returned, "And so what?"

"She's throwing herself at Hollinway. It's a mess. He's been married three times—he picks women up and uses them and then discards them. But Phil's dizzy over him because he's glamorous and handsome. She won't believe that she can't hold him—that no woman could ever hold him, and that he'll only break her heart and leave her flat some day—" Her voice broke sharply, and agitation brought color to her cheeks. Tommy listened, strangely touched, sensing the forces that were moving her; and she went on in a tone almost imperative. "If you think anything at all of Phil, you've got to help. She's planning to run off with him tomorrow night, and—and I can't stop her!"

Tommy said with a slow intake of breath, "Well, I'll be damned!" and for a moment that was all. This struck him deeper than he had thought anything could ever do, and left him numb and wordless, floundering emotionally. He went hot with anger, hating Hollinway; and then cold with a nameless sense of loss. Raggedly he said: "I don't know what the devil I could do, before tomorrow night; but let's do something." Then he added, his voice grating, "I might do things with Speed. . . . But if she's in love with him, I don't know what good breaking him in two would do."

Dora returned, strain showing in her eyes: "She's seen only one side of him—the winning side. If she could see him lose once—something important, like this free-for-all tomorrow, and see that part of him, she might realize how silly she has been. But words won't do it. She must see it for herself."

He nodded, deep in the problem of beating Speed tomorrow. If he couldn't do it in a straight-away, as today's race had been, what chance would he have



Speed went on: "Whatever ambitions you may have tomorrow will be ruined in the first two turns."

against the man on a small closed course, on pylon turns? Somehow, since that day two years ago, he hadn't had the cold-steel nerve to go into a pylon fight with any man. In a race, Speed Hollinway seemed to go completely crazy, and did crazy, idiotic things, things no pilot who valued life would try to do in competition with him. Every pilot in a race with Speed soon learned to swing wide on the turns and let him through—and thus Speed made up seconds on each lap.

Those tactics, Tommy knew, might be purest strategy. But having jumped once as a result of them, and having gone through that agonizing eon of existence—which he thought would be his last—while his parachute was opening just a bare split-second before he would have smashed into the ground, he could not forget, when Speed was crowding in behind him—every race since then had been lost because of it. Here with Dora Jervis, he resolved grimly to override his fear; but he suspected that on the first turn tomorrow he would swing out just the same and let Speed pass.

"Does it mean anything to you," said Dora, "to know that there's another

plane down here, exactly like Speed's? Same color, same number but the last figure. It is NR 39 465, and Hollinway's is NR 39 466."

"NO," said Tommy, shaking his head. "My own number is NR 39 477. The factory assigns them in sequence as the planes are finished."

"But look," she exclaimed, "what that could mean! Suppose Speed cut through from Jacksonville to Miami—and saved twenty miles or so. Suppose he had this other plane, exactly like his, check over Palm Beach just ahead of you—by prearrangement—and had whitewashed the last figure, 5, to look like 6. While you went around the coast, Speed could have cut across the Glades and gained ten minutes. It fits. He did gain nine!"

Tommy Harris, grim about the mouth, returned: "He may have done it. I wish I had some proof. Usually, if he tries funny stuff, he'll do it while you're looking at him. This is barely possible—"

"It's darn' probable!" Dora said insistently. "I saw this other plane take off about thirty minutes before you landed here."

"That's not proof he went up to Palm

Beach. You can't accuse them of having worked this out."

"No! But knowing this much, and still not knowing how you lost this race today, it ought to be enough to put you on your guard tomorrow afternoon. When so much—so very much—depends on it." She looked at him with pleading eyes, and she was very lovely. "You are my last resource in the world, and you *have* to beat him in that race."

He said softly, "I'm going to. . . . Let's see if we can locate Phyllis. I want to try to talk to her."

But they did not find Phyllis Gay. The winter air-meet was in blatant progress, and they searched the field; but neither Hollinway nor she was anywhere in evidence. If he had found them, Tommy knew that there was little he could say.

THEY found themselves at Tommy's hotel shortly after dusk, and Dora, plainly showing strain, demanded: "Do you feel equal to confronting Speed and her tonight, before other people? I know where they will be. There's going to be a party. I can switch my dates around."

He sensed instinctively that Phyllis would be impervious to words, when in a party mood. He said, "I'll probably feel like a fool, but let's bust in."

"Get dressed," Dora returned. "We'll meet downtown for dinner. The party's at the Alcazar."

Dressing slowly, he tried methodically to plan a formula for his conduct and his words tonight; but at the continued thought of facing Hollinway in this situation and before an audience, he went hot with violent hatred. Hollinway had won most of the trophies. He was the King of Speed. He had won Phyllis. Tomorrow he might win a place in the grand finale of the year—the Melbourne Sweepstakes. Things must be pretty far advanced, Tommy mused bitterly, if Hollinway had prevailed on Phyllis to elope.

He joined Dora when she pulled in against the curb. She was wearing a black lace frock that heightened her and made her face seem even paler than it was. Odd, he thought, how much she looked like Phyllis, yet how unlike they were. She asked brightly, "Ready for the wars?" and swung out into the lane of traffic. He said, "Yes. The last skirmish of a long campaign."

Waiting for a traffic light, she asked, "Do you love her very much?"

He stared ahead. "Enough to come up

here tonight and be a fool. I know it isn't any use. I never was a showman. I sometimes wonder if I love her more, because I hate him so."

The roof of the Alcazar was decorated with a canvas beach scene on the walls. The members of the orchestra were dressed like Islanders, and the chorus, going off the floor as the elevator opened, were flaunting grass skirts at the guests. "The same old show," said Dora, and led the way toward one corner of the room.

With a faint arrogance she smiled at the four people grouped around the table, and made casual introductions before sitting down. It was evident by their greetings that this was not her customary crowd. Hollinway and Phyllis were not here. Seated, Tommy Harris saw them dancing. Speed was in a mess jacket, and Phyllis wore a pale pink organdie that flowed around her as she moved. She was all beauty and vitality, her soft lips parted, smiling at Speed, her eyes holding his in a prolonged, wordless interchange. Watching them, Tommy wished suddenly that he had not come.

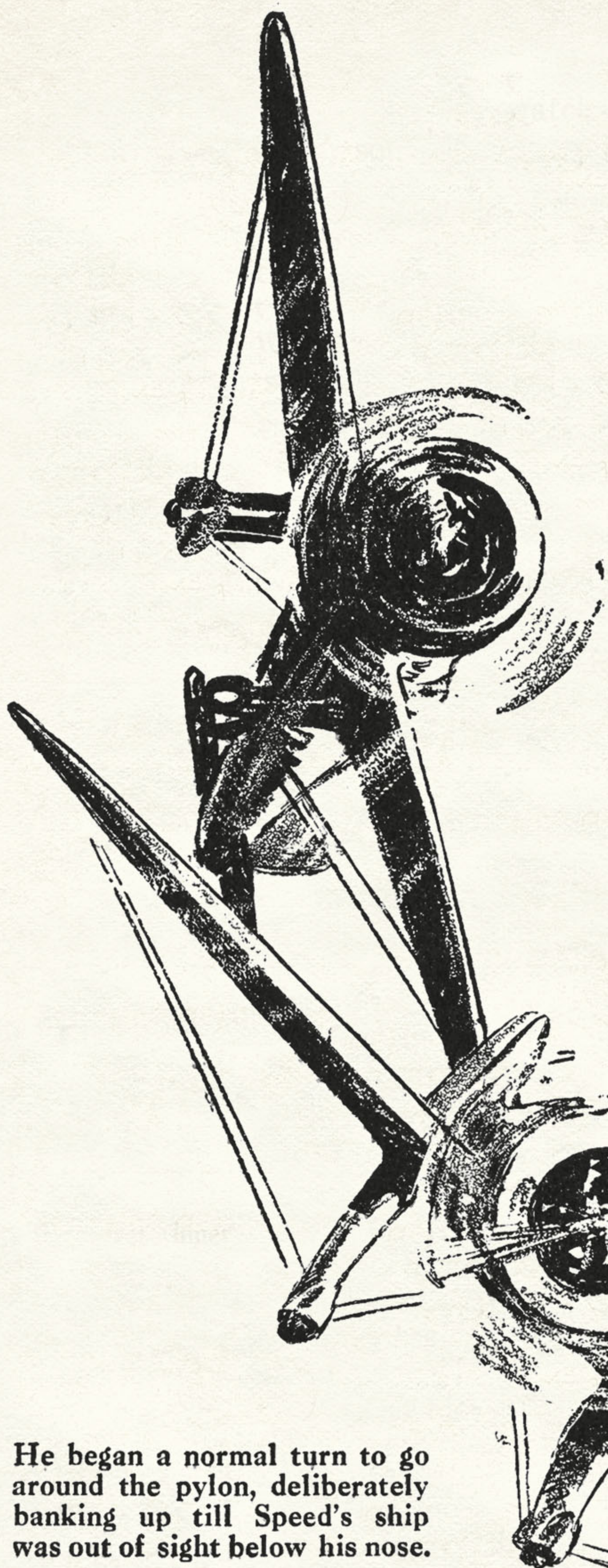
The dance ended, and they laughed together and turned back toward the table. Tommy braced himself unconsciously and glanced at Dora, who was watching them with a curious tensivity that showed itself around her mouth. He arose, as Speed drew out a chair for Phyllis; and for an instant they stood confronting each other across the width of table while an expectant hush descended on the group. Hollinway's cheeks flattened perceptibly, and his eyes went bleak. Phyllis Gay looked speculatively at Tommy, and then down across the table at her sister, and then slowly up at Speed. Speed said with slurred words filled with hidden animosity: "I see you found Miami, finally. I congratulate you, Harris!"

PHYLLIS GAY said, "Speed, *darling!*" But Hollinway, still holding Tommy's eyes, went on: "Whatever ambitions you may have tomorrow will be ruined in the first two turns."

"You mean you're warning me?" Tommy snapped, realizing too late that Speed was only baiting him. "You must think I'm an amateur!"

Speed Hollinway pulled down one corner of his mouth a very little. "Well?" he returned slowly. . . . "Phyllis, shall we dance?"

Despite his effort, all the old feeling of inferiority came boiling up in Tommy,



He began a normal turn to go around the pylon, deliberately banking up till Speed's ship was out of sight below his nose.

leaving him floundering in a blank and almost childish rage. Giving Hollinway an opening like that, before this crowd! He almost shouted, "We'll take that up tomorrow, and you'll pull in those big ears!" Behind him he heard some one calling him, felt some one plucking at his sleeve; but that was all a distant, slow impression, and in the meantime he was rushing on.

He never remembered fully everything he said then, and he was unconscious of the people all around who stared. He heard Phyllis say, "Come on, Speed—we don't want to get mixed up in a scene," and saw them move away, and knew that she was lost forever, no matter what he might do now. He had made himself ridiculous, he knew, and didn't care.

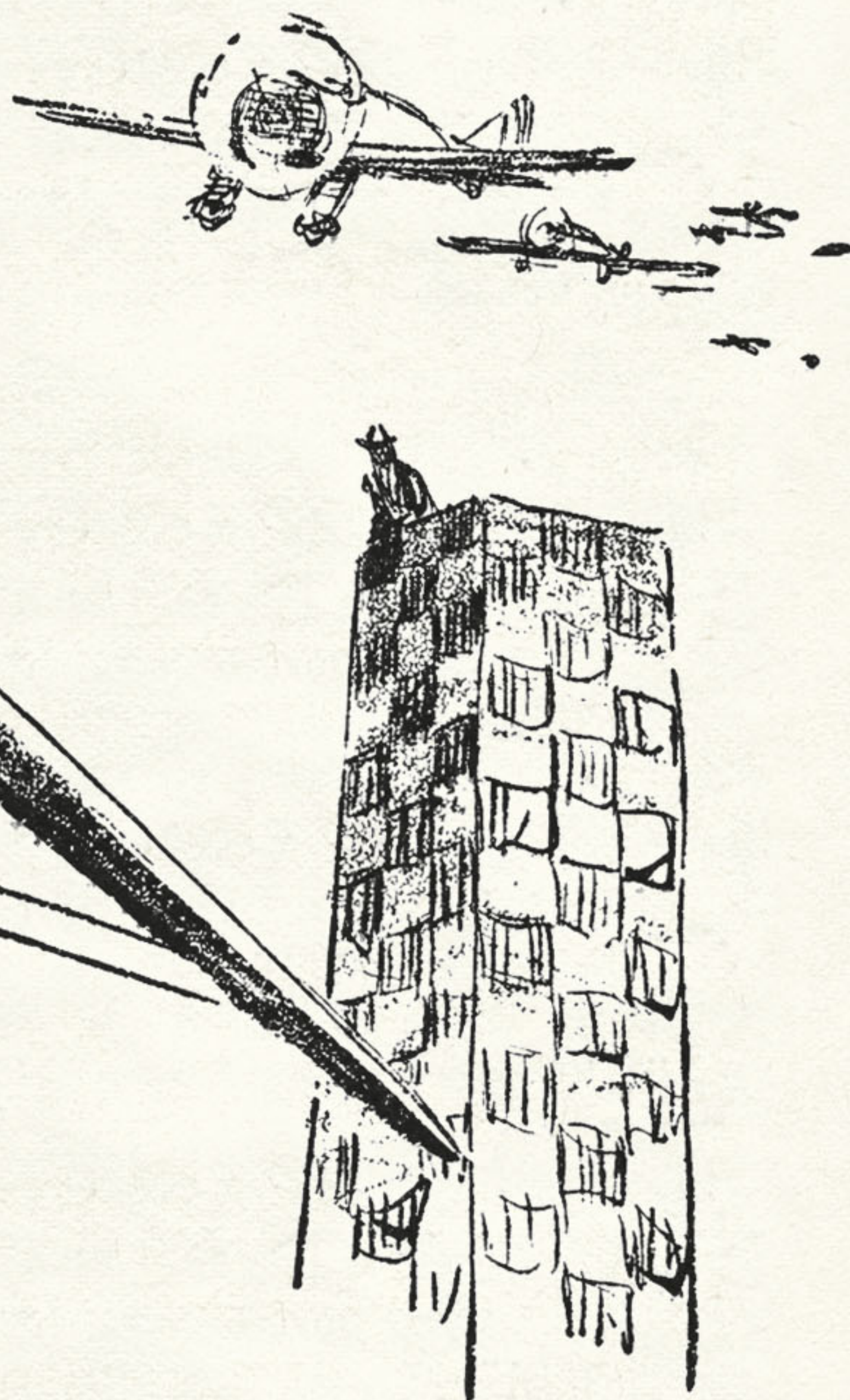
And then Dora was standing there beside him, tugging at his hand and begging him to dance with her.

"I'm sorry," she said, when they were lost among the other couples. "Mr. Harris, I'm so sorry!"

He was stiff and rigid for a long time, his mind seething with a hundred thoughts. Presently he said raggedly: "You needn't be sorry. But tomorrow I'm going to beat him or I'm going to kill him—one. Come on—you're going home."

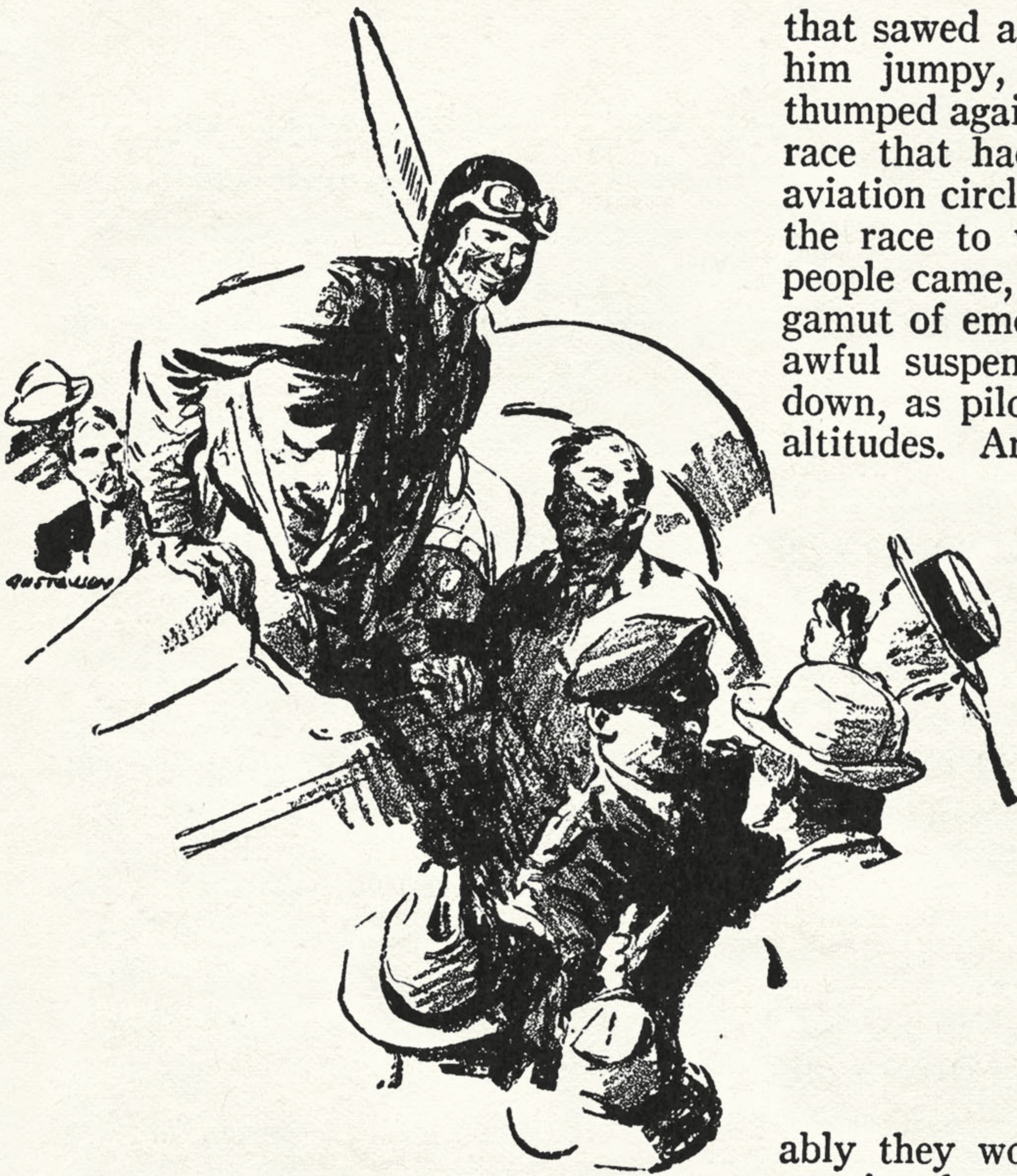
She looked at him in wonder, saying softly: "You couldn't do that, Mr. Harris. And you might get killed yourself, if you set out to try. You can't start a race in such a frame of mind!"

His voice was cold, relentless as the fires that were eating at him. "I'm starting it!" He led her to the elevator, pausing for her wrap. His face was blank, reflecting nothing, but it was also hard as stone. They went out to the car, moving in a rigid silence, and Dora drove to his hotel.



"You mustn't let this hurt you so," she said at last. "Even though Phil is my sister, she's not worth the thing you said you'd do tomorrow. Don't you see that? You must see it!"

After a minute he returned: "This is something between Hollinway and me. Listen—you suggested something about that other ship like Speed's. You get hold of Dewey Harwell on the phone to-



that sawed against his nerves and made him jumpy, lifting his pulse until it thumped against his brain. This was the race that had been a national topic in aviation circles for six months; this was the race to which a hundred thousand people came, expecting to run a morbid gamut of emotions, expecting to gasp in awful suspense as ships went crashing down, as pilots jumped from dangerous altitudes. And Tommy knew that prob-

Pop Herschell stuck his ugly face across the cowl and yelled: "Did you see what Morgan did?" "Sure, I saw it," Tommy shouted. "Didn't you say to watch him?"

night. You get Dewey to tie a very small red cloth around the tail-skid of this second ship. The rest is up to me."

At the curb, the motor off, she began: "I don't see what good a red cloth—"

"Identity," he answered roughly. "I want to know which ship is Speed's. I don't want to smack the wrong one on a pylon turn."

She would have restrained him longer, fearful of the thing he planned to do. But he got out, adding tersely, "You'll do that? Have Dewey call me back. You have it straight?"

Dora Jarvis nodded, and her words were spoken to the empty air, for Tommy had turned briskly in to his hotel. . . .

Ropes held a hundred thousand people back, and out here on the field were twenty planes with motors ticking in staccato discord, or blaring out as pilots gunned them for a final run-up. Pop Herschell stood beside the cockpit of the trim red monoplane, his bulbous features thrust across the cowl. And he was saying, "Watch him, Tommy! He was inside a while ago, bragging what he'd do to you."

The biting tension of these few last minutes while they waited for the take-off showed itself on Tommy Harris' lips. Inside him was a seething restlessness

ably they would not be altogether disappointed. One slip, one moment of holding on too long around a pylon, one second in a prop-wash when up vertical around a turn—and some one would go in.

But all that was in the background of his thoughts. He said, "You got the red cloth on Morgan's tail-skid? Does he know it?"

Herschell grinned uneasily, his leathery face wrinkling in deep concentric lines around his mouth. "It's there, and he hasn't an idea. Now kid, get in there and do your stuff! But watch that guy!"

TOMMY nodded, and Herschell turned away. Across the field, an official waved a flag, and from the ramp one plane after another blasted into motion and taxied out, to take position on the starting line. This was to be a "race-horse" start, with all planes taking off together, jockeying for position as they thinned out on the course. Fifty miles—five laps around the pylons—fifteen dangerous turns.

One at a time, they bobbed across the field. Haggerty, in a Lockheed, was on the end, and then Ryan in a special job; then Morgan in the ivory-white crate which, at any distance, could not be told from Hollinway's. Breen was beside Morgan, and then Hollinway. Tommy,

waiting, checked his belt, adjusted his goggles carefully, glanced over his instruments and gas valves, and then gunned his engine and heeled one brake and moved along behind a Comet that was kicking up a lot of dust.

QUEERLY, this race was like no other he had ever entered. Usually his mind was steady, his hands capable; usually he went in with a previously calculated plan for his attack. But this time he was nervous, in a way that he could neither understand or overcome. His hands were damp with perspiration, and his fingers trembled on the stick. Thinking of it, there were just two entrants—Hollinway and himself, and perhaps Morgan, if Morgan meant to try some trick with Speed. Carefully he pulled up on the line, and sat waiting, tense and straining, for the starter's flag.

It came, cutting short a chain of random, hurried speculations. The flag flashed down, and twenty motors blared in unison, and twenty planes moved off, separating even on the take-off run, charging out across the field. On the left one pilot veered a little as a wheel went into a sandy place. Tommy saw it from the corner of his eye, but there was nothing he could do. The two ships came together with an awful impact, with a detonation that was audible even through the crashing snarl of engines all around. A dust cloud bloomed there, obliterating what had happened, and a crown of black smoke burst above.

He went a little sick, knowing what was happening out there; and then it was behind. The Comet swerved into the air, swinging off its line of take-off across Tommy's path. With a jarring reaction and a surge of muscles he held his own ship down, and the Comet careened into the air, its wheels brushing past two feet above his head. He ducked involuntarily, swearing; he waited, and then eased his stick back and felt his own wheels leave the ground.

They streaked away to the northeast, toward the first pylon. At least that was the appearance from the stands. But up here in the cockpit it was different. They got into the air in ragged, hazardous formation, bobbing in the coiling prop blasts. Bunched, they leveled off at fifty feet, almost wing-to-wing; and for twenty seconds it seemed that some of them would come together. Then quickly they dissolved that dangerous cluster, and two white ships and a red one stretched

themselves ahead and took the lead, thundering down upon the pylon, flying not a hundred feet apart.

Tommy was inside, for this first turn; and he remembered Herschell's warning, and Speed's words the night before. Hollinway had gained a ship-length on him, and was level with him now, so close that he could see the helmet strap that held Speed's goggles on. Morgan, pinched off in that first stubborn struggle for position, had climbed and was between them and two hundred feet behind.

Every nerve keyed taut, Tommy waited, expecting Hollinway to edge slowly over and drop down below his nose, trying to force him to swing aside to make sure they would clear each other at the pylon. He knew what he would do in answer to that move. He would not deviate his course, and would go down at the same rate too, keeping Speed in sight, until his prop was slashing air a foot behind the other's tail. Then if Speed insisted on going through with it—

But Hollinway did not do that. For a minute they flashed on, accelerating, making better than two hundred now, still flying below a hundred feet. Trees and fields swept past below with incredible rapidity. Three and a third miles to the first pylon—one minute between turns. Morgan very slowly fell behind, and it was apparent that this race would be between Speed Hollinway and Tommy Harris from the first.

ALL the time, waiting for a move that did not come, Tommy's mind kept saying, "Watch him—watch him—he's got something up his sleeve! He cut your tail off once, remember, and he'll try to get your nerve again. . . . Not this time, buddy; no, not this time!"

The pylon was a quarter of a mile ahead when Speed turned in his cockpit and looked across and calmly lifted fingers to his nose. Tommy saw it, but there was no time then to resent that flagrant gesture. For Speed, just then, banked swiftly and started sweeping inward for the turn, cutting directly across Tommy's line of flight.

In a flash the strategy was plain. Speed meant to start the turn and catch him unaware by one split second, forcing him to turn inside the pylon or pull sharply up to prevent a collision then and there. Cutting the pylon meant that he would have to circle back and go around it properly, and that would put

him in the rear of all those other planes which now were coming up behind—and he would never come near Speed from that time on. Pulling up would throw Speed in his blind spot, and it would cost precious seconds to pull aside and locate him.

Speed did such things, before your eyes, to see if he could get away with them. Crazy things that looked spectacular. He stayed within the rules, but frightened other pilots and unnerved them just the same.

BUT this time Tommy Harris did not react according to Speed's plan. He did not pull up, and he did not cut inside. Instead of that, with rigid jaws and calculating eyes, he began a normal turn to go around the pylon, deliberately banking up until Speed's ship was out of sight below his nose!

For three seconds he couldn't see what happened, and his heart seemed to leap into his throat. If Speed had gone too far, they would both end on the ground, dashed along a swath torn in the pines. After he had done it, after it was too late to play the thing for safety as he had always done before, he was frightened breathless, his diaphragm completely paralyzed.

A fast turn at high speed will seem to tear the stomach out of any man, will throw blood downward from his brain, and he will have a period of temporary blindness. During that short interval he is conscious, but before him is a vista of black night, for the optic nerves refuse to function. A weight seems dragging down upon the vital organs, and he flies the plane through the remainder of the turn by what little sense of muscle balance he retains. Whipping through a turn at two hundred miles an hour, at fifty feet above the ground, has killed a lot of men. It is at this time, when robbed of sight, that most race accidents occur.

Tommy Harris went blind in that turn before he saw where Speed had gone. He knew Speed, too, was blind, and knew if Speed pulled up, as pilots almost always do reflexively when blind in such a turn, that they would crash right there. Three seconds dragged into three eons of terrified existence, and mechanically he rolled his plane out on the new course, and his sight drained back across his eyes.

Cursing Speed with dogged violence, he looked around, and saw the other plane

just off the course and fifty yards behind.

He thundered on, sweeping through the next turn, going blind, and coming out of it. Hollinway was still there on his heels, neither gaining or losing, holding his own at this terrific pace. They came down the stretch before the stands, to take the pylon on the field. Down there the column of black smoke was billowing upward from that blazing wreckage. Tommy couldn't see if the pilots had jumped clear. He put it from his mind, and swung into the turn; his eyes went blank, and came back as he eased the wing up from the bank.

One lap! This was anybody's race. Hollinway gained twenty yards with a quick turn on the northeast pylon. Tommy got a little of it back the next time, but Speed was dogging him. Across the triangle of the course, the other planes were bunched, with Morgan far ahead.

Two laps! He had gained but imperceptibly on Speed, if he had gained at all.

Three laps! Never were two ships so evenly performing. The turns meant everything. Tommy tried to urge his snarling engine to more revvs by the very tensivity of his high-strung nerves. He was one leg of the course behind Morgan now, having lapped each one of the other planes; and still Speed Hollinway was on his heels.

FOUR laps! And they whipped around the pylon and started on the final circle of the course. Down there, before he turned, he saw for one brief instant a panoramic view of a hundred thousand people going wild. Across the course, the cluster of persistent pilots took a pylon in a bunch, fighting for position. One man, crowded in, cut inside and whirled around and circled to avoid the penalty. Tommy went into blankness, came out of it, and streaked away, with Morgan just ahead and Hollinway behind.

The northeast pylon, and he was almost on top of Morgan now. Speed was somewhere underneath his tail, hidden in the blind spot. He passed Morgan, with the pylon coming up—then swung into the turn at a terrific pace, and sight was blotted out.

Then, rolling up from vertical, seeing things again, he saw a white ship there ahead; and a kind of cataleptic frenzy took possession of him. Somehow Speed had passed him in that turn! He

couldn't understand it, and there was nothing he could do, for throughout this entire race the turns had been the only place where he could gain on Speed, or Speed could gain on him. It couldn't happen! Yet it had happened, somewhere in that turn.

Desperately he followed, not watching for the pylon now, but calculating how to make this next turn, and pass Speed in it. It wasn't any use. The distance was too great.

And then he saw something that jerked him upright. That plane up there had a red cloth on the tail-skid—and it was Morgan and not Speed. He understood. Morgan had cut inside the pylon back there, disqualifying himself purposely to get ahead. Hollinway was still behind!

But why? He pondered that, looking for the pylon. And then he understood. For now Morgan passed the pylon and went straight ahead beyond it, expecting Tommy to be watching him and waiting for the turn, expecting Tommy to follow him until Speed, behind, could flash around and take the lead before Tommy discovered what had happened. Rules? There were no rules to cover that. Morgan would say he had accidentally overshoot the bunting-covered tower. It wasn't his fault if some one followed him beyond.

Tommy swept around the turn, caromed across the finish line and zoomed and stood his red ship on its tail exultantly for eighteen hundred feet, and then cut back the throttle and came in and eased the wheels down on the runway. All of it was clear. Speed *must* have used Morgan to check across Palm Beach; nine minutes' gain could be accounted for no other way. But it didn't matter, and they had no proof. He'd won this race, and that gave him points enough, in any case.

He taxied in, a flood of jubilation and triumph racing through his veins. The Melbourne Sweepstakes, now; and he might win it, with a little luck. A chance at a hundred thousand grand—and he was only thirty-one.

Pop Herschell stuck his ugly face across the cowl and yelled: "Did you see what Morgan did? If he'd hung that trick on you, Speed would have cut around behind you and you never would have caught him, coming home!"

"Sure I saw it," Tommy shouted.

"Didn't you say watch him?" It was difficult to talk, with all the dinning in his ears. He stood up, to climb out; cameras clicked on every side, and faces pressed in around the fuselage. The excitement was like an effervescent drug upon his senses, but it wasn't from the adulation of this mob. He didn't care for pictures, or the pounding and acclaim he got while on the pinnacle. Down among them, he ducked and plunged ahead and found the office door.

DORA JERVIS was in there, and after ten minutes of congratulations from the others, he got her outside to her car. He told her what had happened, thanked her for the help which she had been. But she seemed subdued and listless. She said, "Mr. Harris, it's no good. Phyllis saw what happened, saw Speed lose. She's out there now trying to cheer him up. I'm afraid it's the real thing."

Curiously, that didn't seem to have the least effect on him. He looked at Dora steadily. How fair she was; her profile, when she looked up at a passing plane, was almost classic. Her lips had the softest mold that he had ever seen.

"I guess it wasn't Phyllis, anyhow," he said. "It was Speed—I had a complex, built up through two years. Anything he had—well, I guess I wanted it. Fame, or Phyllis. But that *mêlée* out there today has changed it, somehow. Phyllis doesn't seem important any more. Something happened to me. . . . Now, with the Melbourne Sweepstakes coming up next year, and Hollinway dethroned as King of Speed, I don't hate him anymore, and I don't imagine I'm in love with Phyllis—and everything is pretty grand. I'm unattached—and free!"

"That's—that's nice," said Dora, and her voice trailed off. . . . "I suppose you'll take off in the morning, and—just fly away."

He looked at her again, and somehow now she did not remind him at all of Phyllis. "Not in the morning," he returned. "I'm taking a vacation down here, for a month. Swimming, and lying in the sand. And"—he grinned at her, his wide-set blue eyes wrinkling at the corners—"do you suppose, if I spent all my time at training you, you could remember that my first name isn't 'Mr. Harris'?"

"I think so—Mr. Harris," Dora Jervis smiled.

Another of Leland Jamieson's authentic and thrill-crammed stories will appear in an early issue.



EVEN in the Fourteenth Century, the Italians had their eyes on North Africa—as this colorful story of their first cannon in Africa shows. . . . One of the best in this series which is based on the evolution of mankind's weapons.

Illustrated by
John Clymer



As the brazen tubes vomited smoke and flame, iron balls were shot forth into the mass of running captives.

MY old friend Martin Burnside, who not only collects arms and armor, but who lives, thinks and breathes in terms of his hobby, peered at me over his spectacles. I caught a crafty, gleeful twinkle in his eye.

"What's up?" I asked. "Any news?"

"A lot of news—the immortal rhyme for *hypothénuse*, my son," he said with a grin. "An unknown Frenchman, unearthing jewels from the forgotten history of Morocco, has dug out of musty religious records the tale of an Italian missionary to Africa in the closing years

ARMS and MEN

IX—Guns for the Sultan

By H. BEDFORD-JONES

of the Thirteenth Century. Sound interesting?"

"Not a bit," I rejoined. "The present-day Italian missionaries to Africa are more up to date. Do you think the bare-footed Abyssinian blacks can hold out against modern artillery and bombs?"

Martin Burnside winked solemnly, reached for his pipe, and began to stuff it.

"Those barefooted blacks have everything from sub-machine guns to aërial bombs; do you think the honest munition-makers have been wasting time and chance? However, let's come back to Morocco, to the first real use of cannon in Africa, which is tied up with their introduction to Europe."

"But it's not," I said, irritated by his air of assurance. "Martin, we've argued over that ground a score of times! There are all sorts of fanciful but unproved yarns about the Arabs bringing cannon from Africa into Spain—"

"Please be exact, my friend." Martin Burnside assumed a pained air, as he held a match to his pipe. "You know very well that the Arab rulers had vanished from Africa and Spain alike by the Eleventh Century or earlier. Their place was taken by the titanic Berber migrations of conquest—the Moors, as they're called. And we both know that the first indisputable mention of cannon in Europe lies in a document from the archives of Florence, still in existence today. It is dated February 11, 1326, and authorizes the manufacture of brass cannon and iron balls for them."

"Granted. The fact is mentioned in the Britannica," I said. "Why bring it up?"

Martin Burnside grinned happily.

"Did you ever see that Florentine document?"

"Of course not. But as you say, it's well known and on record—"

"Here's a photostat of it." He tapped an envelope. "I want you to notice par-

ticularly the Latin words crowded in on that marked line; you'll find a translation on the other side. However, this comes first," and he slapped his hand on some printed sheets.

"Well, what is it?" I demanded.

"The report of Fray Geronimo, transcribed into French. A bloody, gorgeous riot of color, my lad! Historically, it checks up; Christians in Morocco were no rarity at that period. It calls the ruler a sultan instead of an emir, but that's a small point."

"Well," I said resignedly, "suppose you tell me what you're driving at?"

BURNSIDE turned to a map of the world that hung on his study wall. He put his pipestem on China, and swept it westward in a long, sweeping curve.

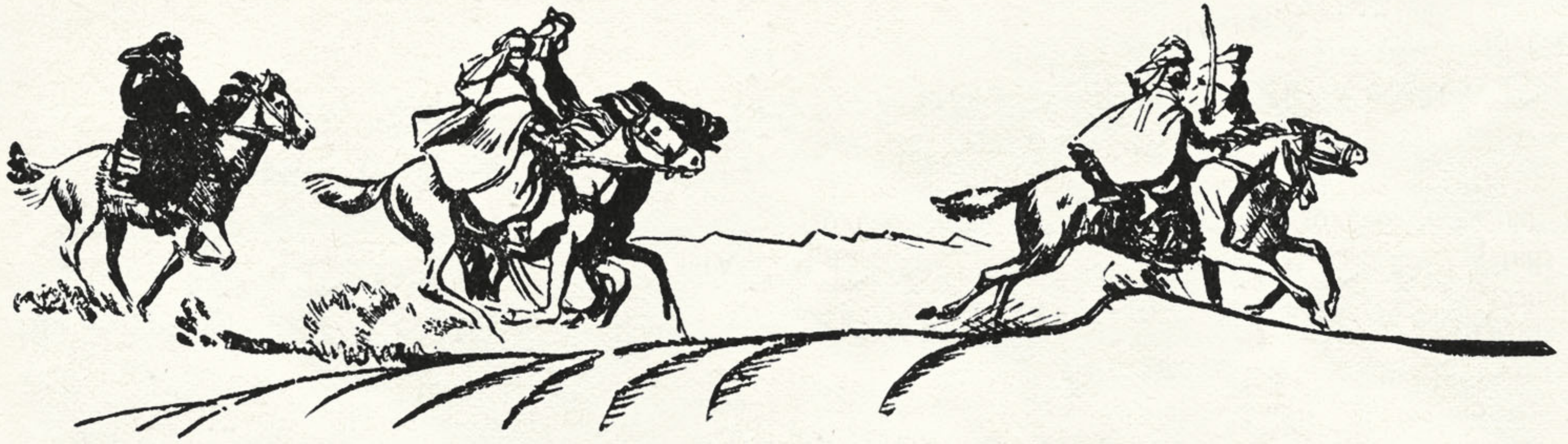
"Gunpowder, cannon, started here. Powder came west, being known long before cannon. The Mogul hordes swept Chinese artisans and Chinese knowledge in their train—the Arabs and Turks got cannon from them. Not all at once. Gradually the idea crept through northern Africa, until it blossomed in Morocco. From there it suddenly scattered, like an explosion. The first actual use in Europe? I'll have that for you in two or three weeks—I'm at work on the question now. But here we have the first recorded use in Africa."

"I presume you've got one of the first cannon made there," was my sarcastic comment.

Puffing his pipe alight, Martin Burnside shook his head.

"No. But I have that photostat—you'll see, after you work over the story!"

I sniffed at this, having legitimate doubts. Few points are so controversial as the introduction of cannon to Western warfare. But when I got into this tale of gore and splendor and passion, I forgot everything else. It was absorbing.



Sir Roger and Miriam rode ever side by side, and talked low-voiced.

FRAY GERONIMO, you see, was a Franciscan missionary in Fez, whose sultan ruled Morocco and Spain. East across the desert, where the glorious city of Tlemcen lifted towers to the sky, the Zenate Berbers ruled all of what is now Algeria, and warred on Morocco.

In his brown cowled robe, the bearded friar was not unlike the Moors around him; but he was girt with the Cross. He was young, he was new to this country, he spoke Arabic poorly, but he had won the favor and liking of the Sultan Yusuf.

A glorious place, this two-fold city of Fez! Old Fez to one side of the river, in the valley, New Fez reaching up along the northern hillsides, crowned by the tomb of Yakub the Conqueror. Yakub's son was now sultan; and here to Fez were gathered all the wonders of the world. Spain was part of Yusuf's realm; Sancho of Aragon was his vassal; Arabia, Egypt, even far Byzantium, were his friends, his ports were open to French and Italian traders. To Fray Geronimo, born of Florence, he had with open-handed gestures given a house for Christian establishment here in the capital. Truly was Yusuf named the Magnificent! He had but one enemy. . . .

In Dar Hassan, the Palace of Hassan that now was his, Fray Geronimo moved with childlike wonder. Anticipating poverty and martyrdom, he found himself amid splendor, riches, grave courtesy and a civilization that put Italy to shame. Fez was the universal center of learning, of the arts, of science and glory and trade. Italian marble went into her palaces. Every manuscript to be found in Spain had been searched out and deposited in her schools and libraries.

The fairy arabesques, delicate plaster carvings and painted cedar ceilings of Dar Hassan now looked down upon kneeling Christians; the great hall had been made into a chapel. Sometimes bearded Moors came to watch the serv-

ices. Sometimes they took Fray Geronimo to their mosque. Sometimes he argued theology with their teachers in the schools.

Yesterday, in the gorgeous palace grounds, he had debated Christ before the Sultan Yusuf himself, winning fresh favor and gifts—interpreters shouting forth the arguments, mailed warriors listening with eager attention, a hundred severed heads from Tlemcen piled in the sunlight to buzz with flies and stare from sightless eyes of corruption. For Tlemcen was the enemy unto the death—Tlemcen the glorious, the half Christian!

NOW, with morning, Fray Geronimo was at prayer in the little bare room he himself occupied, when his bell tinkled to announce that he was wanted. He came forth and found a Sicilian trader, who spoke all tongues, and whom he knew.

"Father, I bring you two errands: one from a woman, one from a man."

"Which has greater need?" asked the Franciscan in his simple way.

"That's to argue—but not with you," and the trader winked broadly. "But I know which errand I'd go first, were I the man! To the house of Abdallah the Egyptian, the Dar ben Daoud, in the Street of the Leather Workers."

"That man of blood!" whispered Fray Geronimo.

The Sicilian tossed a golden coin and caught it nimbly, with a suppressed leer.

"Aye; but not to see him. Here's my pay; would I had yours! It's his daughter who sends. Her woman will be watching the entrance for you, and there's some haste in the matter. On the way here I picked up the second errand, but no pay for it. Al Malik the slave dealer wants to see you. It's something about a slave who needs help."

This errand called first. Fray Geronimo girt himself and headed for the

lower city and the markets outside the walls. The other mission caused him wonder and some fear. Abdallah the Egyptian was leader of the sultan's chosen warriors, a scarred and merciless veteran who had once slaughtered five thousand captives in order to create an actual river of blood before the eyes of old Sultan Yakub. Not a pleasant fellow. Of his daughter, the friar had never heard.

Through the narrow, twisting, shaded streets he went, making no haste, for they were crowded. Mailed knights from Spain, both swart Arab and blue-eyed Goth, stared curiously; merchants from all over the world; trains of mules or camels from the Sudan, with black slaves, gold, ivory; an occasional Greek or Norman from Sicily; Venetians who saluted the friar as he passed; a Persian on a glorious barb, aglint with golden mail; scurrying townfolk, loitering soldiers, black-robed Jews from their separate city.

He passed the enormous gates which closed off the quarters and the two cities at night, he crossed the bridge by the roaring flour-mill, he came past the gates of the old palace of the Merinide sultans, and so through the western gate of the city. Here under the walls were markets of incredible extent, markets of beasts, horses and mules and camels, and slave marts. The crowds were thick, the dust was stifling, the sun was hot.

Al Malik sheltered his human wares with great awnings. In this gasping shade the friar greeted the one-eyed, caustic slave-dealer, who beckoned him to a tent apart and paused at the entrance.

"Here is the man; speak with him, then talk with me."

Fray Geronimo bent and entered, alone. A man rose to greet him; young, gray of eye, wide of shoulder, with yellow hair and beard. He might have been a Berber from the hills, those fierce, wild, fair men, but he was not.

"GREETING, Father," he said in Latin. "I am Sir Roger de Garde, a knight of Sicily." He showed a great scar, still fresh, down his thigh. "I was caught and sold for a slave, but made pretense that this wound injured the leg-muscles; so they hold me cheap. I have kept my name secret, the better to play the part. Ransom me, buy me from this infidel with the one eye, and I'll pay you back doubly when I win home."

Curt and to the point, this knight of the Norman realm in Sicily.

"God help me!" and Fray Geronimo sighed. "If I had all the gold in Africa, I could not hope to free all Christian slaves—but wait, wait!"

He hastened out and found Al Malik.

"I have no money," he said. "This man is hurt and will bring no great price—"

"No?" Al Malik laughed shortly and stroked his beard. "But he speaks Greek and Arabic and other tongues. In the arms he is strong as ten other men. By Allah, he saved me from being trampled by a horse, therefore I favor him; otherwise, I'd get a great price for him, maimed or not!"

"I have no money," repeated the friar. "But yesterday, the Sultan sent me a gift of a handsome riding mule, with trappings. Take it, and free the man."

"A mule, from the stables of Yusuf? May his name be blessed!" The one eye glinted greedily. "It's a bargain. Take the man; I'll have his papers made out instantly. Where is the mule?"

"At Dar Hassan. Send for it in an hour or so. You may trust me."

Al Malik smiled grimly. "I know that; you have a reputation. Agreed."

ASCRIBE made out the papers of manumission. Al Malik signed and sealed them. Fray Geronimo took them and went to the tent, and struck hands joyfully with the captive, his features beaming.

"You are free, Sir Roger, free!" he exclaimed. "Now come with me. I may or may not need an interpreter; at all events, you shall remain with me until you're able to reach the coast and take ship to Palermo."

Sir Roger embraced him, tears of happiness and gratitude glittering on the bronzed cheeks; then he gathered his rags about him and went with the friar, limping no longer but striding freely.

They went to Dar Daoud in the lower city, in Fez Bali. To the friar, this House of David bore auspicious name. They passed through the Street of the Leather Workers, amid the smells of leather and burning hair, where artisans tooled or sewed or dressed leather in curious fashion with tamarisk juice. They came to a furtive, dirty entrance where a blind beggar sat whining for alms. At their knock, a Nubian slave-woman admitted them past the unpromising exterior. Inside, everything was different.



Here were markets of incredible extent: markets of beasts—horses, mules and

Lacy stalactite carving, pillars and screens of marble, plashing fountains and vistas of trees and spacious gardens. But the Nubian woman led them to a plain little room where sat a veiled woman reading a book. She stood up and greeted them, sent the slave away, and then spoke in Greek.

"You are Father Geronimo? I am Miriam, daughter of Abdallah; my father is in there," and she gestured to a door. "He wishes to see you alone. Your companion may wait here."

Fray Geronimo passed on into the next room.

Here sat Abdallah—Slave of God, as the name testified—a huge and gloomy man of haunted eyes, his shaven head bearing the scalp-lock of the Moslem. Beside him was a rough, soiled, stained old leathern sack, exuding an odor of manure. The rest of the room was literally heaped and covered by weapons, mail, helmets, shields—spoil of his cruel hand. His heavy lids lifted, and he stared at the friar, who spoke in Arabic.

"No need of that tongue," said Abdallah in Latin. He smiled grimly at

the surprise of the monk. "Yes, I speak your language. Sit down. Why are you alone in this city?"

Fray Geronimo blinked. "Sir, our order is poor. I hope to bring other brethren of the order, and sisters, but thus far the expense—"

"There it is." Abdallah flung a heavy purse on the table. "Gold—plenty of it. The sultan favors you; the road is clear. In return, do me a favor. Do you agree?"

"I am not to be bought," said the astonished but sturdy friar. "What is it?"

"There is a man in my command who is a renegade," Abdallah replied slowly. "Once he was a Christian of good birth and family. He was captured by the Moors, converted to their faith. He married. He became a warrior of Islam. He was cruel; a man of great sins. Now he is about to die."

Abdallah paused, smiled grimly, and went on.

"The Vizier has prevailed against him with lies and false witnesses, calling him a traitor and plotter. Tonight or tomorrow he is to be seized and slain, his



camels—and slave marts. Al Malik sheltered his human wares with awnings.

wealth and property and slaves confiscated. There is no escape; he is too well known. The very beggar at his gate is a spy set upon him by the Vizier. Further, the man is weary of living. Facing such a fate, this man's heart has turned again to the true faith. Does your religion offer him forgiveness of his sins?"

The story was not uncommon; there were many renegades in Fez.

"If the man truly repent of his sins," said Fray Geronimo, "that is a matter between him and me; he will die happier than he has lived."

"Very well. Tonight, before the gates close, he's sending his child away with two sure men, and with certain treasure. Will you ride with the party as far as Taza, to see them away safely? Your presence will avert suspicion; also, you have a safe-conduct from the Sultan himself that will quell any objections."

The friar hesitated. This was no light matter; it might well be ruinous.

"A child, you say?"

"A grown daughter. The Vizier seeks to place her in his harem. She desires to escape, and to become a Christian."

"Ah!" The eyes of Fray Geronimo lighted. "That's different; agreed! But why does she not go to Salé in the west, or to a port on the north?"

"That would be suspect. It is only eighty miles to the coast, true; but a perilous road for fugitives. Two hundred miles to Tlemcen, but a desert route. At Taza, an escort can be hired. At Tlemcen are five thousand Christians. The bodyguard of the sultan there is Christian. She would be in safety."

Fray Geronimo nodded thoughtful assent. A good plan indeed. A hundred miles or so to Taza, but good horses could cover it in two days or three.

"Very well. You spoke of a treasure? And who is the man?"

Abdallah slapped his hand on the leathern sack beside him.

"Here are the jewels, concealed in manure. And I am the man."

The friar sat absolutely stupefied by this intelligence; he had not suspected it. Then he leaned forward and spoke, but as to what further passed between him and Abdallah the renegade, no man knoweth.



The blades struck fire, and interest waxed keen as the fight grew warm.

After a long while, a very long while, he came into the outer room, and his dark features held a glowing light of fervor and exaltation. He found the veiled daughter in low-voiced converse with Sir Roger. Out in the street again, the great-thewed Norman gathered his rags about him and plucked at the sleeve of the hastily striding friar.

"Good father, you should have spoken with her! She has the face of an angel, and the spirit of one."

"Hm!" grunted Fray Geronimo, giving him a sharp glance. "A Moslem woman?"

"Nonsense; she seeks baptism, as you know," said Sir Roger eagerly. "She told me her story. I told her mine. She's no more than a girl—one in ten thousand! We had time enough. Do you know that the morning's gone? Listen!"

True; the streets were nearly empty, and from the mosques went up a murmurous hum of thousands of voices engaged in noonday prayer. The morning had fled away.

"So you know what lies ahead, Sir Roger?"

"Aye." The knight laughed softly, deeply.

"Then for God His love speak no word of it, think nothing of it, or we are dead men—and she is lost!"

At the urgent words, Sir Roger whitened a little and fell silent.

THEY reached Dar Hassan. Inside the door, aware of many in the garden, Fray Geronimo turned to one of the two freed Christian slaves who served him, and motioned to Sir Roger.

"Take this man to the guest-room. See that he is bathed, fed, clothed—"

"No need of clothes," said the Norman. "She is sending them."

Fray Geronimo suppressed a groan. "Very well. What's that? A messenger from Al Malik? Very good. Give him the mule and the trappings; let him take them and go. Bring me some food in the garden."

In the cool, pleasant garden where fountains played and orange-trees scented the air, visitors awaited. Since yesterday, when the favor of the sultan had fallen upon this Christian monk, there were many to seek him out and beg favors. Armenian traders, Greeks from Sicily, a proud Venetian, two Moorish knights from Seville, swaggering courtiers, an obsequious slave from the Vizier with a purse of gold.

Fray Geronimo dealt with them one by one, pleasantly or curtly, swiftly or with patience. Last of all he hearkened to the Vizier's slave, who offered him a bribe if he would ask the Sultan to give the Vizier charge of all foreign trade. The slave spoke Greek, and Fray Geronimo weighed the purse in his hand and mused aloud in that tongue.

"Money I seek not, nor powerful friends. The Sultan is a just man; he has given me leave to work here. My work lies among slaves and humble folk, among the sick and hurt, among those who suffer and have need of me, among those in prison—no matter their faith, if they will accept my help. I bargain not, and am not bribed; I buy no one and am not bought with gold. Take the purse. Tell your master what I have just said."

The slave took the purse and departed. Fray Geronimo sighed a little, knowing that now he had made an unwelcome enemy. Sultan Yusuf was just, tolerant, wise; but in many ways the Vizier held the actual power—which might be stripped from him in one instant. Yet, while he had it, he assuredly had it.

FRAY GERONIMO sat by the fountain, nibbled fruit, and meditated.

Taza was a desert outpost city holding the caravan route. Beyond it lay savage wastes, on to the fertile fields of Tlemcen. Between this vast and lovely city, and Morocco, lay a consuming hereditary hatred, sundered only by a strip of desert and augmented by the years. If Taza held the caravan routes, the raiders from Tlemcen levied upon them, and the war was merciless, without quarter.

"If I return alive, it'll be with a galled skin," he reflected unhappily, "—not being used to the saddle. And we must leave before sunset, eh? The gates will close then. That means, to travel most of the night, tomorrow, next day—hm!"

Already he had forgotten that possibly the Vizier would bear him no love.

A visitor came; the old Persian scholar who was teaching him Arabic in daily lessons. Fray Geronimo dismissed him, against the journey's end. He wanted no lesson today. Then, rising from the fountain's edge, he stopped short in amazement, staring at a figure approaching from the house. One of those princely cavaliers from Cordova or Granada, he thought—but no!

A trimmed, short yellow beard, gray eyes in youthful face, heavy fair hair

and silken turban twisted about a light steel cap. Wide shoulders, deep chest, encased in a glorious rippling mesh of Damascus steel, over which were flung Persian garments; a scimitar flashing with jewels—

"Why, Sir Roger!" exclaimed the monk, staring. "I didn't know you in that garb!"

"The garments she promised me." Laughing, the knight came up to him, and touched his weapon's hilt. "A Toledo blade, this; nothing like a good Norman sword, but I know the trick of slicing with it, and the other would attract too much attention."

"Hm!" said the friar. "A good deal must have passed between you and that lady."

"A good deal did!"—and the gray eyes twinkled. . . .

The sunset prayer was sounding from the high minarets, the gates were closing, when Fray Geronimo and his party rode forth of Fez by the little northern gate on the hill. The friar showed his safe-conduct, signed with the golden seal of Yusuf, and was sent on his way with grave salutes. But as he looked at his companions, he was fearful and filled with apprehensions.

Sir Roger of the twinkling gray eyes; two veterans of the Spanish wars, mail-clad Berbers with red hair, fierce eyes, and strange blue crosses tattooed on brow and cheek, but by no Christian hand; and the maid. Maid? Fray Geronimo swallowed hard as his eyes fell upon her.

A lovely youthful face with wide blue eyes; yellow hair replaced by a silken turban fastened with a jewel; a fine white burnous with Berber knife hanging from the throat. No maid, but a handsome youth with a lute slung over one shoulder. They all five bestrode high-saddled horses, desert barbs of sleek tapering heads and wide nostrils. The sturdy pack-mule bore the manure sack, food and water; nothing else.

SO they rode out and down amid the olive orchards and orange groves of the rich valley, and on by the trail that wound away and away into the blue distance. When they came to the river whose waters tumbled on into the city, the two warriors were left with the horses. Fray Geronimo went down through the willows and halted, while the knight doffed his turban and signed himself, and knelt.



The Sudanese rushed angrily; but the beam-like Norman sword parried his blows.

"You must be her godfather," said he. "And marriage is forbid between such relations, for I see this thought in your mind."

They spoke in Latin, which the maid did not understand.

"I will not be her godfather," said Sir Roger, very steadily. "If you like it not, then do without; for I tell you that at the first glance and the first word between us, there was only one end to this journey."

Fray Geronimo sighed. "Well, I must do without, it seems. Your name, my child?"

"Miriam, the daughter of Abdallah," she said.

"Not so, for I baptize you now with the name of Maria"—and so in due form he went about his business of baptism; but as the two names were the one and the same, the difference was not in the seeming but in the substance. When they were done, the dusk of evening was falling; they mounted quickly and rode on.

Sir Roger and Miriam rode ever side by side, and talked low-voiced. The two hawk-eyed Berbers rode in front.

Fray Geronimo rode with his beads, and rejoiced that he had saved a soul.

The night passed and the day came again. As they cantered along, they came upon men digging holes to right and left of the road, and setting by the holes great pointed stakes. One of the two Berbers called a jovial question to the captain of those men, who made answer:

"Know you not that by mercy of Allah the Sultan rides this way with his host? Therefore we set stakes ready, that prisoners from Tlemcen may be empaled and rejoice his eyes with their humility before his august presence. May he be blessed!"

Fray Geronimo shivered within himself and fingered his beads the more. There were some matters in this land to which he would not easily be reconciled. As for the Sultan and his host, this brought no notion of peril into his head. The Sultan rode fast and far when it suited him; his clouds of horsemen scoured the earth hither and yon.

They rode on and on. They were past Meknassa and heading across the desert trail.

With the evening of the third day, Taza loomed ahead, breaking the horizon in the sunset, ten miles away. Then, abruptly, a dozen horsemen rode into the trail from shelter of high rocks. The two Berber warriors, who were well ahead, drew weapon and flung themselves at the horsemen in wild ferocity. They were cut down.

Sir Roger waited with the friar and Miriam, as the leader of the other band rode at them with upraised hand.

"By order of Yusuf, may his name be blessed!" came the harsh voice. "I have here his order to stop you."

"Impossible!" Fray Geronimo bristled. "Here is his safe-conduct, his own seal."

"True." The other saluted the document. "Yet here is his order, sent to Taza by carrier-pigeon. Resist and die. Yield and await his mercy!"

PERFORCE, they yielded. Their escort turned off the route with them. Three miles away they halted in a great encampment, hidden there in the desert and guarded by far-flung outposts. They were unhurt, their belongings untouched; but they were caught. . . .

That evening, Fray Geronimo thought it just as well to marry his two companions. They so besought him, indeed, and under emergency, he made no ob-

jection. As the three were quartered in one tent, without suspicion of Miriam's sex, the ceremony was but a matter of words and vows designed to set at naught the chances of death and sundering.

For death, it seemed, was certain; the shadow of the Vizier lay upon them all. Strangely enough, Fray Geronimo had become serene, confident, unafraid. Both Miriam and Sir Roger, cheated of life and love and future, were hopeless and despairing; but the friar reassured them with what he thought to be comforting words.

"Martyrdom?" repeated Sir Roger angrily. "Well enough for you, if you like it. I don't. You prate so much of God—why not bring a miracle to pass? Your pardon," he added quickly. "I forgot. I did not mean my words."

Fray Geronimo smiled. "Both miracle and martyrdom lie within the mercy of God, my son," he replied calmly. "A miracle? Why not? Pray for it, then, as I shall pray for it. What we call a miracle, after all, is only a matter of the unexpected. And to God, the eternal, nothing is unexpected."

WITH morning, he left them and wandered out through the camp, followed by a guard but unhindered. Thus he came to a place where a curious spectacle was proceeding, and he left off telling his beads to stare at the scene, bloody though it was.

Here was a wizened old man with yellow skin and oblique eyes, a Mongol from far Eastern lands. He seemed in complete command here; even the officers obeyed him humbly. He was working over a number of brazen tubes securely clamped to heavy standards, and men were working under his orders.

Some kind of fireworks, thought Fray Geronimo, for into one of the tubes was being poured the powder commonly used in displays. He noted the form and fashion of these tubes, being curious. One end was open, the rear was solid. Near the rear was a little hole into which powder was poured. A light was set to it, and the powder inside rushed out of the tube with much smoke and hissing.

When the Mongol seemed satisfied, he had more powder measured and put into the tubes, and cloth was then rammed in tightly; after this a small iron ball which fitted the bore of the brazen tube was rammed home. Then the Mongol signed his men to stand in readiness, and ordered a trumpet to sound.



"She has the face of an angel, and the spirit of one," Sir Roger had said.

Two hundred paces or more across the sand were waiting a large group of captives under guard; men of Tlemcen, according to the talk of those looking on the scene. These were suddenly freed and ordered to run by a line marked in the sand. They broke into motion. The Mongol, excited, cried out to his men, and a frightful thing happened.

The brass tubes vomited smoke and flame as the light touched powder. More, they roared like thunder, leaped on their standards, and the earth shook. But the iron balls were shot forth, invisible. Some of them missed; some of them struck into the mass of running captives, so that many of these were killed or maimed and lay shrieking until a scimitar dispatched them.

The wizened old Mongol capered about in excited jubilation. Fray Geronimo, amazed and appalled by what he had witnessed, sought shade, and cast himself down there. This was an invention of the devil, most certainly. Now he perceived the reason for this lonely camp outside Taza. A weapon which could use powder to cast forth iron balls! Yes, he saw the reason of it clearly enough. The powder, compressed, was fired and sought an outlet with terrific force.

And the heathen had invented this weapon!

All that day, Fray Geronimo remained lost in thought, abstracted, apart. When the afternoon waned, he secured a reed and made a pen, obtained ink and parchment from a scribe in the camp, and set himself down to write—not in Latin, but in the common tongue of Florence which none other than himself hereabouts could read or understand.

LATE that night, Yusuf arrived; sunlight beheld a sea of tents about the place, while trains of camels came from Taza with water and supplies. The morning passed. The brass tubes roared. It was past the noonday prayer when Fray Geronimo and his two companions were summoned, and led among guards to the widespread canopy and the tufted Berber rugs covering the sand, and into the presence of the sultan.

In the finest of white robes was Yusuf, a tall man of middle age, dark complexion and grizzled beard. At one side sat the Vizier; about were grouped warriors and scribes, the captains of the host, the keepers of accounts, and slaves.

"And now where's your miracle?" muttered Sir Roger, as they were led forward.

"God knows," said Fray Geronimo serenely. "Wait and see."

Yusuf eyed them impassively. A strange man, this Sultan, not given to haste, cloaking his intent behind twisted words, but prone to bursts of passion or greatness. He plucked at his beard, listened while the Vizier whispered, then spoke abruptly:

"A woman clad as a man is an abomination in the sight of Allah. She is the daughter of a traitor whom I slew. She is forfeit as a slave; I give her as wife to the Vizier."

"Are the leaders of Islam adulterers, to take the wives of other men?" spoke out Fray Geronimo harshly. "These two be husband and wife, Lord; I made them so."

"Dreading not my wrath?" demanded Yusuf, looking at the friar and frowning.

"Less than God's."

"This husband, then, is the slave you had from Al Makil. I know all that passes in my dominions."

"Less than you should, then," the friar said stoutly. "When you slew Abdallah, you slew a man who served you honestly, at bidding of a rascal who lusted after

his daughter and his wealth, and would have bribed me to speak in his favor."

Now the Vizier darkened with wrath, and called Allah to witness that this Nazarene was a liar and a scoundrel. But the Sultan still met the serene gaze of Fray Geronimo.

"Harken, Nazarene!" he demanded. "Have you proof of your words?"

"I speak truth that needs no proof, Lord," said the friar.

"Indeed!" sneered the Sultan angrily. "You'd prate of Allah and conscience and the evil of lies. How do warriors know you're no liar?"

"Because I have no scars," and Fray Geronimo smiled. "A lie is like a saber-cut, Lord; the wound passes, but the scar remains."

There was a murmur of generous applause, of appreciation, but the Sultan frowned.

"This slave shall die, and die now!"

"I am no slave," cried out Sir Roger. "I've been freed; I'm a warrior. If there's to be killing, give me a weapon and I'll uphold the true God against any of your men!"

TO this, the Sultan lifted his head. He beckoned to a slim and supple cavalier from Cordova, wearing very beautiful chain mail.

"Hither, Hexim! Give this Christian a sword, then kill him."

"By Allah's help, Lord!" cried the Cordovan gladly, and he saluted Sir Roger. "Name what weapon you would, Nazarene."

"The scimitar that was taken from me," said Sir Roger, and stepped forward. Fray Geronimo turned to Miriam; she said no word, but her eyes were stars in a dead white face.

A space was cleared. Sir Roger was given the jeweled scimitar of Toledo that Miriam had picked for him from her father's spoil. The two men saluted courteously, and without further ceremony the Moor attacked. The blades struck fire, and when it was seen that Sir Roger knew how to handle the curved weapon, with the peculiar drawing stroke for which it was made, interest waxed keener.

Warm grew that fight, circling about, with flash and glitter of blades. But suddenly Sir Roger stepped back. Something had fallen to the sand—a hand, still clutching hilt. Men rushed to catch the Moor and dip his arm-stump in pitch; and Sir Roger stood grimly.

"Is there no better champion in the host of Islam?" he said bitingly.

An eager roar went up, and the Sultan beckoned. "Hither, Khalid!"

A stooped, grizzled veteran leaped into the clear space, cried aloud to Allah, and hurled himself at the Norman. Then he drew back, smiling. A wary man this, very skilled with the sword, apt at tricks and cunning, and one of Yusuf's greatest captains. Twice his edge touched the Norman's mail-coat, but did not cut the links. Suddenly, a notch in his blade caught Sir Roger's scimitar, twisted it violently, sent the weapon flying afar.

With eager panting breath, Khalid swooped for the killing blow. Sir Roger ducked, caught his arm, met him breast to breast, put hand to throat. In that terrific grip, the Moslem was helpless. He was bent back and back. His eyes started from his head, his lips opened and he croaked hoarsely. Sir Roger paused, and looked at the Sultan.

"Do you wish his life? Then promise my wife liberty, to go where she will."

The Sultan signed assent. "But," he added, as the half-throttled Khalid was led away, "I did not promise you life. Hither, Selim!"

Forth stepped a huge black, wearing plate mail captured from some Spanish knight, and a square helm with vizor. He laughed aloud and swung a long, light axe in one hand, holding a dagger in the other.

"Unfair!" cried a Sicilian Arab, who carried a great Norman sword. "Here, Nazarene! Take this!"

The Sultan looked on in ominous silence. Sir Roger took the wide, heavy blade offered him, and shook it delightedly.

"By Allah, here's something I understand!" he exclaimed. "Thanks, friend. To work, Eblis, to work!"

AT this gibe, laughter arose, but the Sudanese rushed angrily, furious at being compared to the black devil of hell. His axe whirled—and fell like a feather. The beam-like Norman sword parried, averted its blow, again and again. The dagger slipped in, only to be avoided or struck aside.

The dexterity of Sir Roger had those watching warriors in wild acclaim. Bets were made on every hand; when, suddenly, the axe drove down to its mark, there went up a low groan to cover the stifled shriek of Miriam. The steel cap of the Norman was crushed and swept



In that terrific grip, the Moslem was helpless.

away, blood sprang from his head, he staggered back, dazed by the blow.

The Sudanese stepped in to finish him. The broad straight sword parried the dagger. Then, gathering himself, Sir Roger leaped backward, halted abruptly, hurled himself into the rush of the black. The great blade swung and clashed. It was made to break armor; and steel rang upon iron with mighty strokes. Twice the axe drove in, though it did not cut through the mailed links; the dagger slipped in and came out red-stained.

The plate mail of the black, however, suffered. The corselet was sundered and rent. The steel helm was smashed in at one side. Careless of the dagger-thrust, Sir Roger put both hands to the hilt and smote full force. The axe-haft was cut in twain. The blade went on, smashed through gorget and throat, sank into shoulder and chest beneath; and with a gush of blood, the Sudanese clanged down into death on the sand.

Now there was yell on yell, while Sir Roger, leaning on the heavy blade, stood panting; from his mail-coat sleeve blood dripped.

"The Prophet Muhammad—had twelve companions," he gasped out. "If you have nine more—bring them on—"

"Allah be praised!" Forth stepped a noble from Andalusia, a merry handsome Moor of knightly bearing, throwing aside his caftan and robe, and drawing his sword. "I stand with you, Nazarene, for the glory of all good warriors and true

knights! Lord, give me leave to fight beside this man."

At the generous, impulsive words, wild applause went up, but Yusuf stilled it. He stood up, his eyes shining, and held out his hand.

"Enough!" lifted his voice. "Nazarene, I salute a soldier. Will you take service under me? Say: Allah is Allah, and Muhammad is the prophet of Allah! And to you shall be gold and position and the command of many men."

"You call me Christian, Lord," said Sir Roger, still panting. "If I may not seek home again with my wife, then let me die as a Christian."

Yusuf motioned a secretary.

"Give this man a safe-conduct under my seal, a purse of gold, and an escort of twenty men, to go where he will. As for you,"—and he launched a black look at Fray Geronimo,—“see them away, then come back to me. One who makes false charges against true men, deserves death. There is a man to be crucified in this place today, and I think the matter will interest you."

The words, the look, were ominous; a mortal pallor came into the features of Fray Geronimo, and for an instant his eyes closed. Then guards led him away to his tent, where Sir Roger and Miriam came. The Norman took the brown-clad figure in his bandaged arms.

"Good father, my heart is sore," he said, with tears. "This miracle came for us, but for you—no! I won't have my liberty at the price of your torture!"

"You've nothing to say about it, my son," Fray Geronimo said gently, and smiled a little. "If God appoints safety to you and martyrdom to me, that is His will. I accept it gladly. But there is something you may do for me, and for all Christendom. A little thing that may have great results. Take this. Send it securely to the Council in Florence."

He pressed a sealed letter, a little flat packet, into the hand of Sir Roger. Then he blessed the two of them, and with the tears of the girl on his brown sleeve, rejoined the guards.

THESE led him back to the Sultan's presence. There, close by, men were fashioning a cross of beams. Sultan Yusuf met his serene gaze and frowned a little as though in wonder.

"What, Nazarene!" he mocked. "You have no fear?"

"Yes," said the friar. "But only of God."

"Well, Allah is the Compassionate, the Merciful!" the Sultan said grimly. "You made charges against my Vizier. If they were false, as he claims, you deserve death."

"That might be so, Yusuf ben Yakub." The friar smiled, but the fingers clenching his rosary were white and strained. "My words were not false, however."

"I know it." The Sultan turned abruptly to the Vizier. "Hearken! When Haroun el Raschid crucified his vizier Ja'afer, he first had him beheaded; but I am not so minded. You caused me to slay Abdallah with your lies and false witnesses. I discovered this after Abdallah was dead. The confessions are on record against you. May Allah curse me if I do not unto you as the Caliph unto his vizier, and more! Guards, take him."

When Fray Geronimo understood these words, he fell to the sand in a faint.

DAYS later, he stood beside Yusuf ben Yakub when the charging horsemen of Tlemcen came pouring over the sands—and the serried ranks of Yusuf opened out and melted away to expose brass tubes in a long line. He saw those tubes vomit smoke and death, he saw the cavaliers of Tlemcen shattered and the ranks sundered by the iron balls.

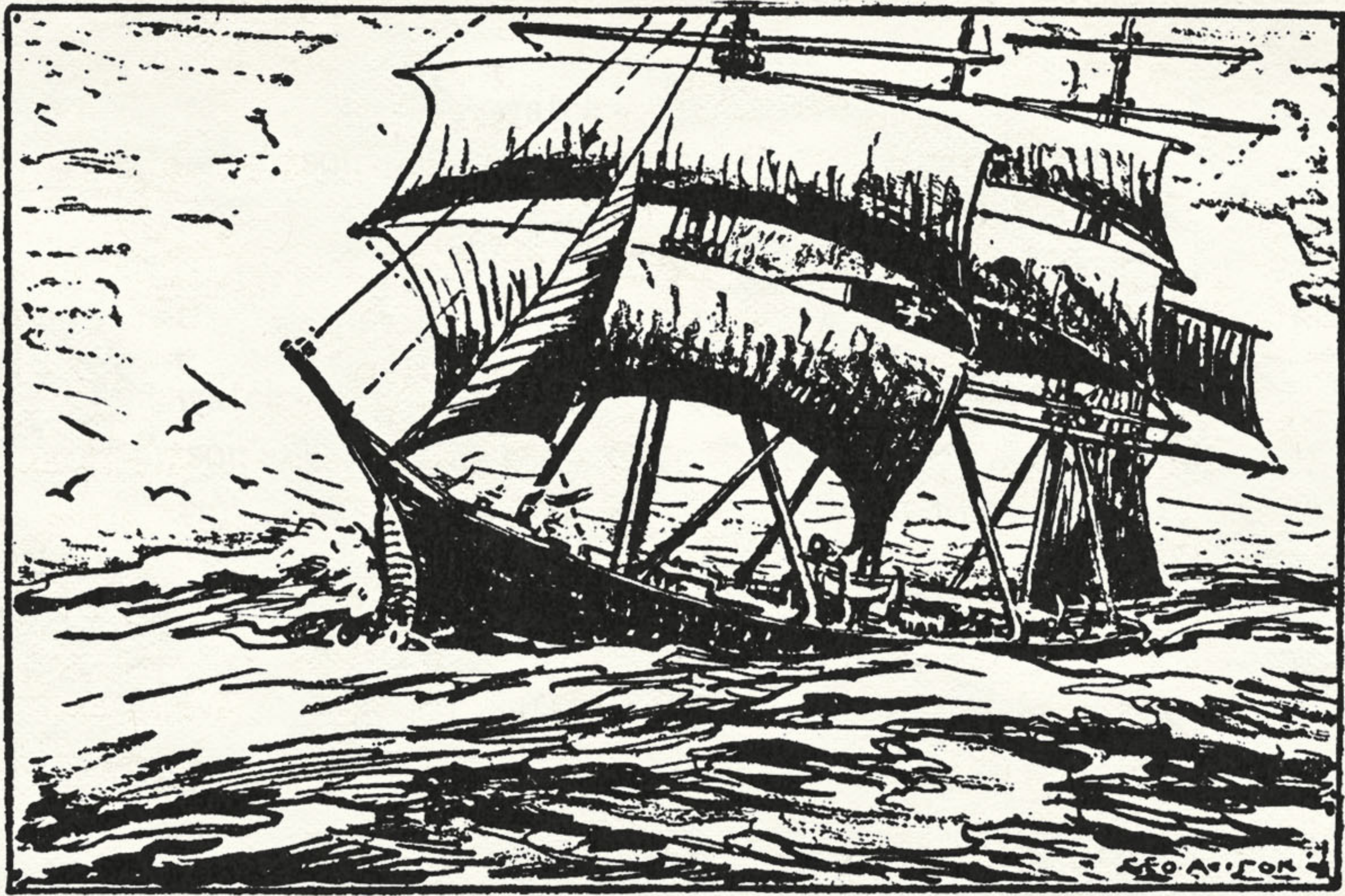
But later, when Yusuf and all the host of Morocco moved upon Tlemcen, and about that glorious city built another city in a siege that was to last for eight years—Fray Geronimo was not there. He was back in Fez, with other brown-robed men who worked among the sick and the slaves, and whether the message he had sent to Florence by Sir Roger ever got there, he knew not. . . .

This was the story that enthralled me. Only when I finished it, only when I began to doubt it and to criticize it as absurd, did I remember the photostat of that Florentine document. I picked it up. The crabbed antique Latin was almost impossible for me to read, but the place indicated by Martin Burnside was marked.

The document authorized the manufacture of brass cannon and iron balls "*secundum id quod scripsit Pater Hieronimus*"—according to the information furnished by Fray Geronimo.

And that, as Martin Burnside caustically observed, was that!

"The Long Yew Bow," another stirring story in this remarkable series, will appear in our next issue.



The Winds Are Free

By WARREN HASTINGS MILLER

*A distinctly different story of the sea today—
and of a new idea which may bring back the
gallant days of sail.*

CAPTAIN ASA WEATHERBEE smiled a bit indulgently over a last-minute telegram from old Josiah Weatherbee, the former clipper-ship captain:

LOOK SHARP FOR WEATHER IN LAT. 25
LONG. 50.

From the long bridge that crossed in front of the mizzenmast Asa looked confidently over his ship. She was something entirely new on the sea: She was as clean of rigging as an airplane; she had tall tripod masts of steel, very like those of a battleship. The classic yards were there—main, topsail and topgallant—but they were of hollow steel, and inside them were rolled sails of thin elastic sheet steel. They were all set and trimmed and reefed by electric motors up on the yards. One man alone managed them all, by the row of electric controllers on the bridge; and that man was the Captain—just as if he were the skipper of a small racing yacht. Power, handling the sails that caught the mighty winds—that had been Asa's vision.

And here she was now, being towed out to sea past Montauk Light by a tug

—the first modern clipper to take to the ocean.

He had named his vision *Silver Wings*. She was a revolutionary contrast to Cap'n Josiah's old *Queen of the West*, with her mess of shrouds and backstays and running rigging, her canvas and ropes, her crew of sweating sailors who were the "hands" of the Captain. Asa had no crew at all save the six men required by law as watch lookouts. The old *Queen* would be a picture of human toil and misery during such "weather" as would likely be encountered in Lat. 25°, Long. 50°—that storm-caldron east of the Antilles. But *Silver Wings* would make nothing of it, Asa was sure. He could reef her down in five minutes by the mere turning of controller handles.

He opened the second telegram brought out from shore by the tug's captain.

UNIVERSAL CARGOES, LTD., ARE AFTER
US. WATCH YOUR OFFICERS FOR DIRTY
WORK.

BRINKERHOFF.

That was from his business partner, the shipping-man who had put up the

money to make *Silver Wings* a reality in iron and steel.

Asa set his lips in a tight New England smile. He had taken a cargo of vine-roots for Casablanca away from one of Universal Cargoes' steam freighters when no motor-ship, even, could meet the foreign rates. Universal, by every means fair or foul, would fight this new clipper of his that was bringing back the great days of sail. The winds were free; they cost nothing, compared to a steamer's coal-pile. But the big crews required by the old clippers cost more, in food and wages, than did that same coal-pile. It had doomed the clipper-ships. It had not been a question of speed; they could and did make as good passages as the average low-powered tramp nowadays. *Silver Wings* was a promise that the good old times would come back and the steam tramps would in their turn be driven off the ocean. . . .

The tug hooted thrice in a signal that it was time to get sail on the ship, so she could cast off her hawser. Asa turned the main-topsail controller handle. A steel sheet, cut in the classic form of a topsail, came unrolling out of the yard up there. Steel sprocket chains drew it down till sheeted home on the main yard. One little three-horsepower motor up there was doing with ease and swiftness the work of twenty men hauling on sheets and clews. The fore- and mizzen-topsails followed. Asa swung more controller handles—very like those of a street-car—and the three sails swung to trim to the wind. Geared quadrants and struts were moving them, rigid as an airplane's wing. The ship took wind and began to lean, to pick up speed. The tug's hawser slackened. Asa unrolled the jibs next, by the sheet motors up on the forecandle; he then set the spanker.

"East by south, quartermaster!" he gave the course quietly to the helmsman. A wash of foam was audible under the bow as *Silver Wings* swooped after the tug, overrunning her hawser. Lord, she was fast! She had nothing to hold her back; there was no loud strumming of wind through shrouds and backstays, though it was blowing smartly from the southwest.

ASA was thinking of the second half of Brinkerhoff's telegram—"Watch your officers"—as they passed the tug, waving farewells. Whom could he trust if not those men? They had been with him since the first blueprints had been rolled

out on the tables and detail-work begun. Jim Briggs, the first mate, who was at that moment up on the forecandle running in the hawser by the electric capstan, had been Asa's classmate at the "Stute." They had been shipmates together as naval reservists on an old square-rigged sloop-of-war. Jim held master's papers in steam, but he had been driven inland by the postwar depression in shipping to take the managership of a large forge-shop. Asa had called Jim in as his first move, and had given him charge of all the mechanical engineering involved in this new rig for a sailing clipper. Jim was as square a man as ever walked, a big homely Pennsylvanian, with a thick furry growling voice and a cynical, sardonic attitude toward men in general; but he was loyal as steel to the "Chief," as he termed Asa—or sometimes "Skip," in reference to Asa's former reputation as a yacht designer.

EVANS, the young second mate, was their electrical expert. He was an exuberant youth, and was at that moment doing a war-dance at his post back by the spanker-sheet motors, over the way *Silver Wings* had nearly run down that tug. Asa had been attracted by Evans' wholesome and candid face. He did not know much about the lad, save that he was a first-class electrician; but Asa could not conceive of Evans' listening to any treachery, no matter what bribe Universal Cargoes, Ltd., might have offered.

Briggs reported off the forecandle while Asa was setting the big courses, then the topgallants: "Hawser's all in and stowed, Chief."

"That's well. You go below, Jim. You have the twelve-to-four, and will need a bit of sleep."

"She's making over eleven knots, sir," Evans reported, having taken a look at the taffrail log over the stern rail.

"Okay. Thought she would!" Asa glanced at the wind-gauge. "Force Eight blowing. You have the eight-to-twelve, Evans."

There was nothing further to do. The two lookouts were sent to their posts; the rest went below. Asa paced the bridge, reflecting upon how this type of ship had changed the whole technique of handling a full-rigged vessel. In the old days the Captain stood aloof and gave orders; the mates, the "hands," carried out what he wanted done. They sweated constantly at sheets and braces, as the wind shifted, till the Old Man was satis-

fied. Here, Asa had but to touch a controller, to adjust those yards to the wind. And no captain would let others do that if he could do it himself, any more than would the skipper of a racing-yacht. *Silver Wings* was a wonder, an epoch-making ship; she cost little to run; and economically, fleets of her kind would soon be sweeping steam and motor tramps off the ocean. She had justified his faith in letting modern science take a hand in the shipping world and wean its sailors from their ropes and canvas; she was justifying Brinkerhoff's faith in putting his money into the venture. . . .

"*All's well!*" the lookout hailed as the ship's bell struck. But at just that moment of sunset, somewhere out in the smoky Gulf Stream, old Father Neptune rose out of the sea on his throne of kelp. He stared and fingered his ropy beard.

"Well, well, well! What have we here!" the sea-god roared indignantly. "I've taken apart about every contraption that men have put together on the sea since the world began. . . . Let's see how good she is, nereids!" The throne sank; his messengers raced south into the Caribbean, that hotbed of storms. . . .

"Glass falling, Skip!" Briggs announced with his usual cheerful unconcern, about eight o'clock that night.

Asa and the first mate were sitting over postprandial glasses in the roomy quarters below the poop deck. Briggs had

risen to have a look at their swinging standard barometer.

"Let her blow!" Asa said. "I'd rather like a good storm. We have had nothing but coastal try-outs so far. And what's a hurricane, even, but a wind of Force Eighteen! Knowing the stability of the ship, it is easy to calculate the amount of sail to leave on. It is the sine of the mast and yard weight, plus the cosine of wind-pressure on the sail area—"

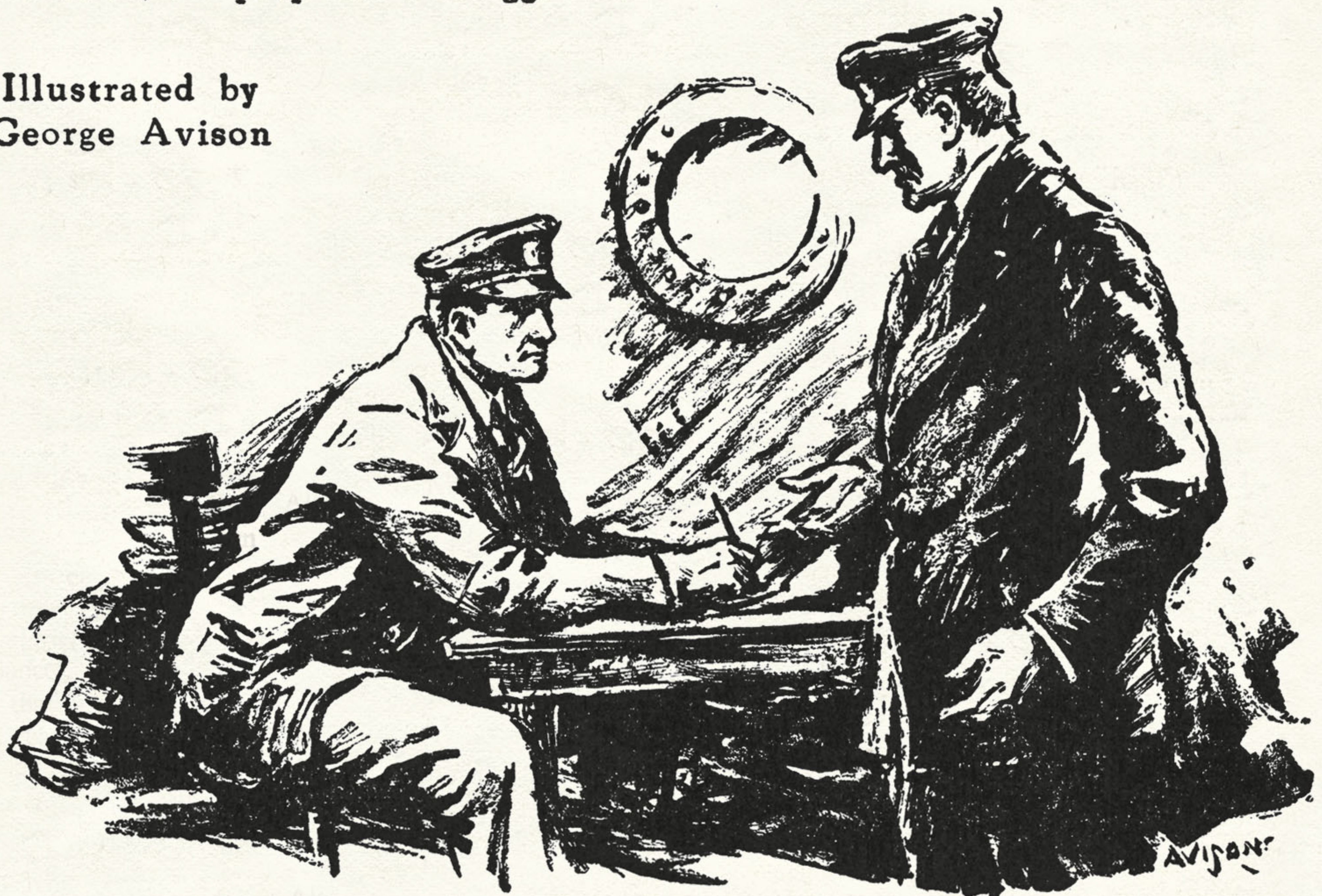
"Listen, Chief!" Briggs interrupted the mathematical exposition to raise a hand and cock his ear. "What's he using our wireless for?" He was referring to young Evans, who had the bridge. The wireless motor-generator was mounted just overhead, at some distance from the sending-key in the chart-desk hood. Nevertheless, those below could read the message Evans was sending, by the *Wee-you! Wee-you-you-you! Wee-wee-you!* that interrupted its steady whine. All three were indifferent operators, but the ship carried no professional Sparks.

"Code-word," Briggs said after some listening. "It doesn't make sense."

Asa shoved over to him that telegram from Brinkerhoff. Briggs read it and whistled.

"Some of these big steam-freight lines would feel better if this ship was *spurlos versenkt*, hey?" he inquired sardonically.

Illustrated by
George Avison



"Some of these big steam-freight lines would feel better if this ship was *spurlos versenkt*, eh?" Briggs inquired sardonically.

A grim curl of irony twisted Asa's lips. To destroy this ship would be a logical counter-move by the vested steam-freight interests. If she were lost at sea, the experiment would be a failure; that was all there was to it. Brinkerhoff would be ruined, Asa himself discredited. It would be years before anyone would ever again take an interest in those blueprints of his which would be all that was left of *Silver Wings*. . . . A legend of a great dream—

"Who's thinking anything of that sort about young Evans?" Asa said. "But he's up to something, that's sure. . . . Maybe private business."

AS the code-words continued, both men at the saloon table fell busily to scribbling down the dots and dashes. Evans was evidently unaware that the motor-generator was giving him away. He thought he had the bridge to himself. At last he stopped.

"*Sho!* It needs a key-word," Briggs snorted with annoyance after translating the dots and dashes into letters. "Search *me!* Well, you never can tell about these young fellows nowadays, all fed up with movies and crime magazines as they are! I wouldn't put it past him!"

Asa refused to believe any such thing. "He's been with us since the first, Jim. He's crazy as any kid about this ship. Universal Cargoes, Ltd., may have approached him with some bribe; but I bet you he's telling them to go to hell right now."

"In code?" Briggs asked cynically. "Well, yes—seeing that it's 'private business,' as you say."

"What could he do to harm this ship, anyhow, and us not be able to stop him?" Asa argued heatedly. "It cuts me up, the bare idea of it! We've got to have a loyal crowd or nothing, in the big fight against dirty work of all kinds that is coming. This voyage to Casablanca is only the beginning of it, Jim. She'll be copied, snooped around, and tampered with by every limey and squarehead and Greek in the shipping business!"

Briggs waved aside all that future shipping war and got down to what young Evans could do, here and now. "Why, it's easy, Chief!" he announced after some thought. "All he has to do is to put our dynamo on the bum. We couldn't move a sail up there! It would all become a mass of inert steel."

That thought did indeed cause Asa a shock of uneasiness! His ship was high-

ly vulnerable to human rascality. The little ten-horsepower dynamo that furnished the power for all this was indeed the heart of his ship. Stop that, and it all stopped!

"We have the hand-gear on the motors, and our bank of storage-batteries to fall back on," he offered unhappily.

"Yeah? All it needs is a good storm, and you and I on deck seeing her through her trouble," Briggs retorted. "The hand-gear would be too slow to reef her in time. And the storage-batteries,"—he jabbed a pungent forefinger at Asa,—“he won't bother with either them or the dynamo, Chief. One good wham with a hammer at the switchboard that controls them both, and we are sunk, in a mess of burned-out copper leads and bus-bars. We couldn't do a thing with her on deck."

"Bet you he *couldn't* do it, if it came right down to it!" Asa challenged rebelliously. He was loath to believe in the dishonesty of anyone, and he liked young Evans immensely. "Or even suppose he does?" he went on, thrashing it out. "Would the kid risk his life for a mere wad of money? We'd all have to take to the boats. She'd go over like a shot."

Briggs grinned. "He'd be helping us with those boats! Rather would like the excitement, I take it. . . . He's safe enough; he's had an accident with the dynamo, and stood by it till the last minute. . . . We'd be picked up by some South American tramp. He goes home rich, you and I penniless and fools, with our ship that wouldn't work!"

"Not I," said Asa firmly. "I'd stand by her till the end. If we couldn't do anything for her, it would not be my fault."

They both got up and looked at the glass. It stood at 29.7; not much of a drop, but it had been steady and slow and ominous.

"Two days yet," said Briggs. "I'll try to guess out his key-word with these; then we'll know something about all this." He stacked together the sheets of note-paper on which they had copied Evans' code messages.

THE sea was dimpled with a mild northwester next morning. Neither man let Evans know that they had been listening in. Asa studied him furtively as the second mate paced the main deck in his eight-to-twelve constitutional. There was no sign of any mental struggle in that

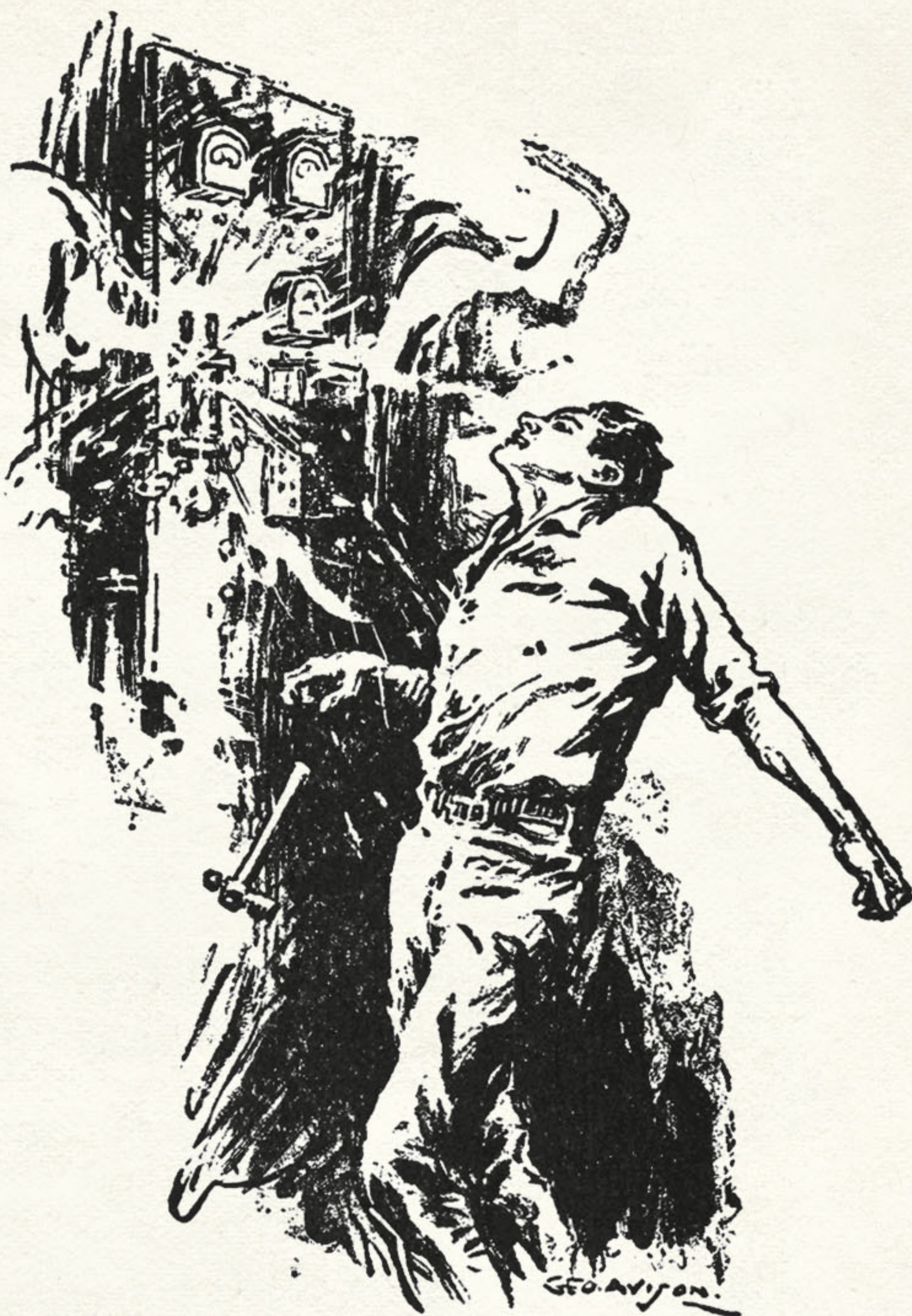
smooth and open young face; no knitting of the brows, no wincing in meeting a man's eye. If he was having trouble, he was keeping it to himself with rugged indifference. Asa could not believe that he was "up to" anything serious, anyhow. Might be some bank code, about investments of his earnings. . . .

The ship was following the great circle down to Lat. 26°, Long. 39°, where they would pick up the northeast trades to Casablanca. The course had been taken off one of Cap'n Josiah's old clipper-ship sailing charts. The winds then were more important than any refinements in saving distance made good, and they were just as generous with their motive power now. *Silver Wings* was making a record passage of it, due to her efficient steel sails and clean spars, with not a rope on them. She would get there quite as fast as the average steam tramp. There would be gnashing of teeth in the London United Cargoes, Ltd., office when news of her arrival was cabled—if she got there at all!

Asa went below into the hold, as soon as he was off watch, with uneasiness nagging at him. He had some idea of locking up the dynamo, since he could not altogether trust young Evans. It was installed on the orlop deck in the old sail-room, a small and compact machine not three feet long, including its engine. The bank of storage-batteries was feeding the ship's motors at present. The dynamo was stopped and silent. It was, in truth, the very heart of his ship. It cost but a trifle in fuel-oil to make it beat; but without it, nothing could be moved aloft and they would be back on man-power. Even the large motor that drove a propeller to kick her along through the doldrums depended on that dynamo.

Asa shook his head over the miniature slate switchboard that distributed all the current. As Briggs had said, one blow of a hammer could demolish it in a mess of burned-out copper leads. The orlop deck could not be shut off, either. It extended clear across the ship, in a wide area for the laying out and mending of sails. This hull was the old *Queen's*—Captain Josiah's contribution to the venture—a fast steel hull in the old days, and faster now under the new rig, but arranged for the handling of canvas.

"Not a chance here to padlock that poor kid off from any foolishness!" Asa muttered. "I'm not going to part with him, anyhow!"



"I was fooling with that hammer; then the ship gave a lurch and I fell against the switchboard. In spite of me, I'd done it!"

The ship gave a distinct roll as he spoke. It was different than her long, steady pitch. He balanced against it. "Hum! Whatever that is, it's not far off. You can trust the glass, every time!"

He went up on deck through the door leading from the old sail-room into the saloon. At that door he paused a moment. Lock it? Evans might have to come down here, anyhow! The steward had a master-key that would let him in. A futile sort of gesture, locking that door would be. And on mere suspicion—No. . . .

Smooth, rounded swells were rolling up out of the southeast in endless windrows as Asa came on deck. Briggs, who had the bridge, thumped the aneroid there and announced cheerfully: "Glass 29.2, Skip! Old Pa Neptune is sure raising hell somewhere down there!" The sky overhead was full of tiny flocculent clouds, blown to shreds by some mighty wind in the higher stratosphere. Asa looked up at the clouds and said:

"They'd be lashing down everything and taking in the kites by now, in the old days. We'll carry on awhile. Won't take me five minutes to reef her down."

"Yeah? If you've got power," Briggs retorted. "Where is he now?"

"He, if you mean young Evans, is getting in some sleep off watch, like any

good boy," Asa laughed. "His stateroom door was on the hook as I passed. I took the precaution, though, of locking it—and kept the key."

"You needed to, Chief! We'll have the ship to ourselves when this thing hits us," Briggs said, relieved. "Afterward, he can do what he likes and we'll make out somehow."

"What's all this?" Asa inquired sharply, disturbed by the tones in Briggs' voice. "Found out anything definite?"

"You bet! I found his key-word. Happens to be the name of this ship. . . . Here's his messages!"

He shoved at Asa the sheets that they had laboriously taken down from the whines of the motor-generator. Translated by the key-word underneath the letters, they told Asa of a young soul in torment. His first ejaculation was one of pity. "The poor devil!" he muttered, reading over those brief lines:

CAN'T DO IT. GET SOME ONE ELSE. AM
CABLING BANKERS AT CASA TO RETURN
YOUR FIFTY THOUSAND.

The second was still more defiant:

TO HELL WITH YOUR INCREASE. I'M
THROUGH. NO MAN CAN MURDER A
SHIP.

"Good lad!" Asa commented. "Who is the party bedeviling our poor kid this way?"

"Brundage, New York office of Universal Cargoes, Ltd. Read the next one, Chief! They've got him buffaloed."

AGREED. CALL OFF LIFE-TERM SEN-
TENCE PROCEEDINGS. STORM COMING
NOW.

"*Sho!* They scared him to death, didn't they?" Asa laughed. "Some hocus-pocus about exposing him in an Admiralty court, hey?"

"They could," Briggs reminded him. "He agreed to go into this, in the first place, and took their money. You can bet they made him sign something that clears their skirts of any complicity! The point is that they've got him scared to death now. He thinks he has to go on with it, or the prison bars will get him for life. What you going to do about it, Chief? You're captain of this ship. . . . I'd put him in irons, right now, on the strength of this evidence."

Asa faced the facts unhappily. He had a frightened and desperate youth down below, one who had agreed to the criminal offense of tampering with a

ship's gear—an act which was in the same class as mutiny. The white arch of a hurricane was now poking up over the horizon to the southeast and his ship was laboring heavily in the light breeze. That thing would hit them suddenly, brutally, in an enormous wall of wind. Whatever was done in taking sail off the ship would have to be done while they could still see it coming. And all Evans had to do now was to look out his port-hole to realize that his big chance had come—with full sail still on the ship. He could get out by simply ringing for the steward, who had a master-key. A dash for the orlop deck, and—

ASA stepped to the topgallant controllers to roll them up, right now. For all he knew, Evans was awake at this moment, and no one to stop him. He turned on a controller one notch, then the full swing—and nothing happened up there! For a moment the two men stared dumfoundedly up at those immovable topgallants; then Asa said bitterly:

"By God, Jim, he's done it—already! . . . Call all hands!" He stamped his foot as Briggs cursed aloud. "*Don't stand there swearing! Send them all aloft to the hand-gear! We'll have to do what we can for her.*"

Briggs turned and shouted through cupped hands those shouts of long ago—"*All hands on deck! Away aloft, you sons! Man topgallant motor hand-gear!*"

Asa grinned at that last order, that was so very different from those of long ago. His motors were each provided with a hand-crank that could be shipped over the free axle end. Men could turn them, could develop the full torque of the motor; but only at about sixty revolutions a minute instead of fifteen hundred. It was a slow and toilsome business, but it was all that they could do for her now. Asa watched the men going up the mast-irons like sweepers up steel stacks. He felt hopelessly that long before they could get even the topgallants in by hand, the wind would strike. In desperation, he tried the topsail and course controllers. They were all dead. . . . Solemnly he cursed that young fool. The fellow would probably show up on deck, with some story about an accident to the switchboard that was past repairing, and want to climb up to his post with the men, to help the ship. Asa could not imagine why he did not; but he had no time for young Evans now; his own place was here, standing by the ship.

Father Neptune was not giving them much time. The horizon to the south had vanished in a white wrack that stretched from east to west and was covered with a wall of black clouds, darkening the sky overhead. A sullen and breathless calm was all about the ship. She pitched and rolled violently in the heavy seas that were seething with boiling suds. Up there on the topgallant yards men were turning, turning, turning at the cranks in a furious desperation of hurry. They had reefed in maybe two yards of those vast steel sheets. The topsails had not been touched yet. Up on the forecastle, Briggs, with the steward and cook, were toiling frantically to get the jibs off her. Then, with a roar like an express-train, that long line of white wrack, that black wall of clouds, came swiftly down upon them. . . .

Its yelling fury of wind laid *Silver Wings* flat over like a yacht. She would not steer, she would not come up to it, she would do nothing but stubbornly, gallantly, lean over, over, over. . . . A frightful rumble of shifting ballast smote the ship like an avalanche, down below; then it stopped, held by those thousands upon thousands of vine-roots packed in bundles under the decks. Asa caught his breath again. His ship was nearly on her beam-ends, and the masts stood out over the waves in immensely long tripods of steel, but she would not go over further. The sails, trimmed sharp to the wind, were half submerged; those steel sheets, slanting out of water, were being punished and buckled by the seas sloshing over them in great gray hillocks. The men, like rats leaving a drowned ship, started crawling in along the mast-irons. Asa grabbed up the megaphone and yelled at them:

"No! No! Keep at it! I'll shoot the first man to leave his post. Get those topgallant sails in!"

THEY crawled back through a smother of wave-tops gnashing under them. The wind roared in a savage shout over the weather rail. It showered Asa with spray from the waves hammering on her exposed bottom. He endured it, and continued coolly watching his ship. The deck was at so steep a slope that he stood with one foot on a bridge stanchion for support and an arm around its rail. She would go no further over, with the cosine of wind-pressure on those sails reduced almost to zero, he calculated. Nor would she sink, so long as the hatches

held. It was a matter of time and endurance. . . .

Jim was now waving at him energetically from the forecastle. He had got the jibs rolled up. With them off her, the spanker, which was still set, would bring her head to the seas. Jim gesticulated at him with a ball of hand-line; then he threw it across the submerged main deck. The wind hurled it down so it caught around the mizzen tripod strut and rolled into the sea. Asa climbed down precariously after that thread of line it had left; there was no way to get Jim and his men off that forecastle save by that hand-line. He hauled it in; then gripped the bight of heavy rope tied to it, secured the rope, and over it they came crawling, like monkeys on a string.

"Aint so bad, Skip!" Briggs said ruggedly, on reaching the bridge. "Get power on her again, and there's nothing to it! Wear ship with the fore-topsail and she'll pick up! . . . Seen anything of that young devil yet? Ship fooled him, didn't she—if he counted on us taking to the boats!"

BRIGGS looked cheerfully out over the ship. He was a proper seaman, neither scared nor excited. Do something for the ship, and do it with a will, was his sole thought, so long as she floated. In contrast, Asa was thinking of that wretched young fool who had brought this upon them. What was he up to now?

"You take her, Jim," he said. "Keep them at it out there. It's all we can do for her at present. I'm going to try to get power on her again. We have a dynamo and a storage-battery, anyhow! He'd be a long time doing any real damage to them."

"Watch yourself, Skip! Better take a couple o' men along! He may be wrecking them, in a large way, and not act nice."

"I'll deal with him!" Asa said grimly—but just then Evans himself appeared in the saloon hatchway. His face was puffy and bloated and contorted—his hair awry, ghastly ridges of wrinkles knotting his forehead and cheeks. At that perilous angle of the deck, he looked like some mediæval gargoyle of a condemned soul. His voice came to them in a thin screech above the roar of the wind and multitudinous noises of agitated seas:

"Judas! . . . Judas! . . . I've sunk her! . . . Judas!" His arms flung out in a dive that would cast him overboard.

Asa got to him in one jump. "Steady there, son!" His fist grasped a handful of jacket cloth. "You've sunk *nothing*, yet! We're holding our own, all right. Look at her!"

Evans caught his breath in an arrested sob and stared out over the wreck that he had caused. It did not seem to be going over any further. The masts dipped and swayed, lifting and dropping the drowned sails as the hull rose and fell in the seas; but she seemed to have a kind of equilibrium. That a ship on her beam-ends would not incontinently sink was beyond his experience of schooner yachts! Then:

"Let me go!" he broke out afresh, and wrenched at Asa's grip. "I did it all, I tell you! I deserve hanging! Let me go!"

"Steady! . . . Just what did you do to our dynamo and storage-battery, Evans?"

"*Don't!* . . . I sold myself for them," he said in a low hoarse whisper. "I'm done for, anyway! . . . Thirty years in prison—" He tore at Asa's grip in a violent effort to fling himself into the sea.

"*Hold on!* That's all right, son; we'll fix it. . . . Let's see if we can get power on the ship again, first. Any way we can do it? You ought to know, Evans. It's your specialty."

The youth quieted down somewhat. "Come, how much damage was actually done?" Asa urged.

"I—don't—know, sir. . . . You see—when I really came to do it—"

ASA noted that *sir*; the ship's discipline was taking hold of Evans again.

"Let's go below and have a look at it," said Asa. "—Oh, Briggs!" he called over to the mate. "Take out those controller-fuses for the port side. They may be water-tight, but they've been under for a long time now."

"Glad you thought of that, sir!" Evans said. He was taking an interest in the ship now; he had been admitted back into the fellowship of her people again. Briggs was frankly skeptical about it. He shot a look over-shoulder, while attending to the fuses, that told Asa, plain as words: "Watch yourself with that guy!"

The boy was beginning to talk, as he followed Asa down into the pitch-dark saloon; he was eager to unburden himself to some one. Asa caught most of the story while groping over swivel-chairs and tables standing out nearly

horizontal on the steep floor; it followed him, in a ghostly confession, as he climbed into the pantry, seeking candles.

"I *was* going to smash the switchboard with a hammer, first. . . . And then I knew I couldn't do it—not after the first blow! It would mean so much to this beauty ship. . . . No, not for all the money in New York!" Evans was silent for some time, having difficulties with a stanchion and a swivel-chair. "Then I thought of the bus-bars. You know, sir—the main leads behind the switchboard: Touch the hammer across them, and—*pow!*—everything melted to hell in a mess of burnt copper and iron! I could do that and get it over with, in one instant. No use regretting anything *then!* . . . Well, I pushed the hammer in there . . . wooden handle, y'know, so I wouldn't get shocked, or burnt badly. . . . Even then I swear I couldn't make the grade, sir! There was you and Briggs, who have been so fine to me. And this wonder ship that we've all worked so hard over—the first of her kind. . . . You couldn't move a sail up there; you'd have to take it on the chin. She'd go over, sure. . . . And all for a lot of damned limeys who don't want her to succeed! But they had me cold, I tell you—"

"Have a light," said Asa. The lad was getting out of hand now—he would be no good for mending bus-bars! Asa shoved a cigarette at him as the match touched their candle-wick to a flame.

"Thanks, sir." Evans dragged at it in rapid, hungry puffs.

"So you decided to short-circuit the bus-bars?" Asa prompted, after a time.

"Yes; but I couldn't make it . . . deliberately murder a ship. There is something about it—'Let 'em go ahead with their damned proceedings!' I said. '*I'll be the goat!*' You see, sir, they'd fixed it so they could be the informers, and it was I who was the party of the first part that had offered to do it, for so much money. You get into these messes somehow, without knowing just what you're signing. . . . All this time, sir, I was fooling around with that hammer. And then the ship gave a lurch and I fell over against the switchboard; in spite of me I'd done it! Melted copper and iron spilling all over everything; green flames, smoke, fumes. . . . I got a lungful of that copper gas and passed out completely. . . . Some burned, too. Look, sir!"

Asa could see by the candle that those welts, that puffiness, were all due to burns as much as to mental distress.



Jim threw the hand-line to Asa, across the submerged main deck. There was no way to get the men off the forecastle, save by that hand-line.

"How about a dressing for those burns? You need it after an accident like that," he said.

"Nix, sir! It was all intentional, I tell you! The ship just came along with her lurch. I'd have got around to it, sooner or later. . . . She was lying on her side when I came to. I'd done it—sunk her! I'd betrayed you fellows, and *her*—"

"Not just yet, Evans!" Asa interrupted that outburst hastily. "Come on, let's get power on her again."

He led on through the orlop deck door. A suffocating coppery smell greeted them. Fumes filled the room in a stifling haze. The dynamo-set stood out at the same steep angle as every stanchion and knee. A dribble of acid water leaked down from the battery bank. They slid down and knelt over the dynamo. Evans felt in behind the board.

"They're gone, sir . . . But we can have light. There's a little strip of bus-bar left at that end."

"That's fine. Go ahead."

Evans tentatively tried the circuit-breaker. As soon as he had closed it, the pilot-light on the board went on. The storage-batteries were still in commission, though the dynamo had stopped and was silent. Up on deck and in the saloon they now had light also. It was a harbinger of hope to those men up there in the dark, on a drowned ship, in a howling fury of wind.

"Good. Anything I can get you?" Asa asked.

"Some triple-wire, if you would, sir. I'll make new bars of it. There's a coil up in that locker."

Asa climbed up and found it. "Here you are," he said and tossed it down to Evans' eager catch. "Call the bridge, when ready. . . . So long—and good luck to you!"

It was best to leave that young man alone with himself for a while, Asa thought shrewdly. He had a job in hand for the ship; he would do some thinking it over, while engrossed in it.

THE situation had changed slightly when Asa reached the bridge. There was no abatement of the gale, but the topgallants had been rolled up at last. The ship showed it by a distinct rise of her masts, a rise of some ten degrees. She was eager to get up. The men were now toiling at the topsail motor cranks.

"I've sent the cook and steward up there to help, Chief," Briggs said. "Anything doing down below? We've got light, anyhow." He gestured at the one in the chart hood as if it were a kind of miracle.

"Better call your men down, Jim." Asa grinned at him enigmatically. "I'll want those jibs set, pretty soon. You might as well be getting up on the fore-castle."

"*Oho!* Think he's going to give us power again?"

"I know he is," Asa said firmly. "Call all the men down, while you're at it. I want one at the wheel, and four standing by with the spanker."

"Yeah? You've got your nerve, Skip, trusting him thataway!" Briggs grumbled; but his shouts of: "*Lay below—a-a-all hands!*" called them in. In pairs they fought their way along the masts, through smothering deluges of violent waters, against a wind that nearly tore them bodily from the mast-irons. They reached the bridge by Briggs' life-rope and gathered on the poop deck, in a group awaiting orders. All six were wet and weary, but quietly confident in their ship and her master. They were picked men, the kind Asa had a knack of gathering about him; weatherbeaten young sea-dogs, recruited for the most part out of Gloucester. They were as much interested in the new ship as anyone.

"We could ha' got them tops'ls in for you, sir." . . . "Some accident to our power, sir?" . . . "She's sure holding up handsomely, sir!"

"Mr. Evans is taking care of us," Asa said. "Steward, you and Cook can go below now. Wilson and Tarr, you'll get up on the fore-castle with Mr. Briggs. I want two at the wheel. Marshall and Wonson, you stand by to take in the spanker. Watch yourselves, for some heavy rolling!"

He dismissed them to their posts and stood by, waiting. Fifteen minutes more passed; then the telephone buzzed in the chart hood. "Ready, sir!" he heard Evans' voice. "Dynamo's on. Go easy with it, though. One commutator-bar's burned out."

Asa gingerly turned on the main course controller. That great sail began to move. Swimming in a huge sheet of steel, half-submerged, its motor grunted and labored as the waves smote upon it. But it was rolling in, foot by foot, its steel sprocket-chain sheets following the taut clews. Asa let out a pent breath as the last of it rolled into the yard and that yard stood clean.

"Go easy, sir!" came up young Evans' voice. "I've had to close the circuit-breaker four times!"

"O.K.! Stand by for the fore-course," Asa replied.

That sail was catching the full smash of the waves. It came in jerkily, and more than once it stalled its motor entirely. But the ship responded gallantly when its yard was clean of sail. She tried to get up. Her masts lifted twenty degrees; then they went over flat again as the wind stamped on those three top-sails rising out of water. But she was buoyant, balanced, with the leverage of her many tons of ballast prying at her unremittingly.

Asa rolled in the main and mizzen top-sails and left but a ribbon of sail on the fore. He then megaphoned the fore-castle: "Get those jibs on her, Jim—handsomely!"

They came off the stays in narrow silver triangles that grew and grew under the tug of the sheets. The wind leaped at them, stood them out taut as carved metal with the tremendous pressure.

"That's well! 'Vast hauling!" Asa megaphoned. "Is she paying off, you there at the helm?"

"A little, sir."

IT was terrifying to see her beginning to move. The masts went flatter than ever. Bulging seas ran up her main deck and crowded back in seething suds. Her long bowsprit, with tons of pressure

on those jibs, was being dragged across and across the advancing slopes of gray and gnashing seas by a furious wind. Asa turned on the fore-topsail brace motor. That ribbon of sail squared around slowly, doggedly, against the water-pressure on its submerged half. It came flat into the teeth of the wind, the ribbon of steel shivering and slatting with the metallic rattle of a tin pan—and then the ship lurched violently to her feet. Her masts swung up in great flashing arcs of steel. The rising deck brought up a Niagara of waters that belled and thundered down over her rail. She kept on rolling over to windward with the momentum and all the main deck was one surging lake that cascaded over the weather rail and was hurled back by the wind in blinding showers and sheets, in a smother of spray that covered all the ship.

"Hold her! Is she steering yet?" Asa shouted through the smother. "Helm hard up! In spanker—*smartly!*"

MOTORS rumbled on deck. The spanker brailed in. The fore-topsail now taking the wind was aiding the jibs in dragging her around. Asa eyed it anxiously, in the terrific rolling of the ship, and wondered if it would stand it. There must be at least seventy thousand pounds of wind-pressure on that ribbon! But he had allowed a safety-factor of ten.

She was picking up speed. She still flung water in cascades off every deck and shelf that could hold water, but over-side there were boiling eddies along her iron sides that raced astern in the wash of chasing seas.

Asa watched till the helm had brought the wind on his starboard quarter; then he said:

"That's well. Steady as she is. Watch out she don't broach to!"

He had done it—dragged his ship up off her beam-ends by her sail power alone—assisted by his motors! A thing that was not done in the days of sail save by prodigious human toil and the miseries of a long wait till the gale abated. She was running out of this as fast as that ribbon of topsail and the three jibs could drive her.

Briggs joined Asa on the bridge, after crossing the drained main deck. "You picked her up nice, Skip," he commented professionally. "—What ho! Is this a ghost that I see before me? Let me clutch thee, ghost!"

He was mocking at some one; and Asa turned to see young Evans standing in the saloon hatchway, staring, speechless; he could not believe that the ship was standing up on her own bottom once more, was racing the heavy following seas in long, bounding scends. He had probably witnessed that titanic upheaval, brought about through control of sails by power—but no one had so much as looked his way.

"Hullo there!" said Asa. "Everything all right now, below?"

"Yes, sir." Evans still could not take his eyes off the ship.

"Good lad! You go 'tend to those burns now, son."

It was too much for Briggs. "You aren't going to let him off, are you?" he inquired indignantly.

"Off what?" Asa asked testily. "He had an accident with the switchboard down below, it seems—"

"Oh, nonsense, Chief! How about all those cablegrams! He gets the caboose, even if you don't log him. They'll stage an exposure, and we lose a good electrician."

"Oh, will they?" Asa retorted with heat. "Take a wireless, Mr. Briggs!" he ordered officially. "To this Brundage swine: *'You keep your dirty hands off my people, if you don't want a ruinous rate-war on your hands! The ship is doing nicely, in spite of a trifling accident that put her on her beam-ends for four hours in a gale of wind. Neither you nor Old Man Neptune can stop her.'* Got that? All right; guess that will fix it up with our kid! Sign it, *Asa Weatherbee, President Silver Wings Freight Line.* That ought to give him something to think about, hey? We'll cable Brinkerhoff to go right ahead. He'll be able to raise a million, after this story!"

"O.K., Chief." Briggs eyed him admiringly. "We'll be right with you!" . . . He grinned quizzically at young Evans. "He aint worth a rate-war, of course; but you always was a fightin' fool about hanging onto your men."

ASA smiled slowly and looked up at his ship. Power, controlling the sails that caught the mighty winds; that was what they all stood for. *Silver Wings* had proved herself; but it was the loyalty of men he would need, in the long fight ahead against the envy of vested interests in steam and the stubborn conservatism of seamen, that would greet any new thing upon the sea.

SHOCK TROOPS

Special Agent Ashby of the Federal Bureau of Investigation handles a kidnaping case by 1935 technique—and cave-man courage.

II—Scarlet Hands

THE eastbound transcontinental plane was twenty minutes late when it circled above the lights of the airport at Syrport, and then glided down to an easy landing. Almost before the wheels came to a stop, the two pilots quit their posts and made their way back among the passengers, where the hostess was waiting for them.

What otherwise would have been a pleasant trip had been marred by the presence of a "stew." He was a tall, thin, rather handsome chap, probably in his early thirties. He had been more than slightly under the influence of liquor when he boarded the plane. Frequent recourse to a silver-mounted flask had not improved his condition.

The result had not been pleasant. His eyes, which might have been keen, kindly and intelligent, now were glazed so that they held a vacant stare. What could have been a firm jaw, had dropped so that it added to the picture of complete hopelessness and helplessness. His clothing was sadly awry.

Both the clothing and baggage of this young man proclaimed that he was a man of wealth. As the contents of the flask decreased, he was not content to allow these outward symbols to be the only things to indicate his station in life.

He volunteered the information that his name was George Chidister. This announcement drew scant notice from passengers or hostess, all of whom had some time previously listed the young gentleman among the disagreeable things connected with travel by air.

After a particularly long pull at the flask, Mr. Chidister volunteered the information that Mrs. Montgomery Piedmont, of Syrport, was his sister.

"My mosh dear sister," he added.

The result was all that could have been desired. The passengers sat up and took notice. They regarded the young

man in a different light. The hostess made her way forward and went into conference with the pilots. . . .

For two days the Piedmont name had been much in the headlines. Sonny Piedmont, aged eleven, and the heir to more millions than the average man can discuss with any semblance of reality, had disappeared in the short distance between his home and the exclusive school he attended.

Montgomery Piedmont, Sonny's father, and the owner of the huge Piedmont interests, was confined to his bed with a heart ailment that might prove fatal at any time. For that reason all news of his son's disappearance had been kept from him.

So the full burden of the tragedy rested upon the frail but patrician shoulders of Sonny's mother. The sob-sisters found that fact tailor-made for their purposes. The news that a brother was rushing to her side merited additional headlines.

And here he was!

The hostess, bending over the shoulder of the pilot, put into words what soon was to become public opinion.

"Just a waster. Can you imagine how that poor woman will feel when that drunk rains in on her?"

The pilot nodded grimly, a look of sympathy softening his tanned face; then he devoted all his attention to bringing the ship to the ground.

MR. CHIDISTER'S arrival was not accomplished without event.

"This is Syrport," said the hostess.

A vacant stare rewarded her.

"You get out here," said the pilot, a harsh note in his voice.

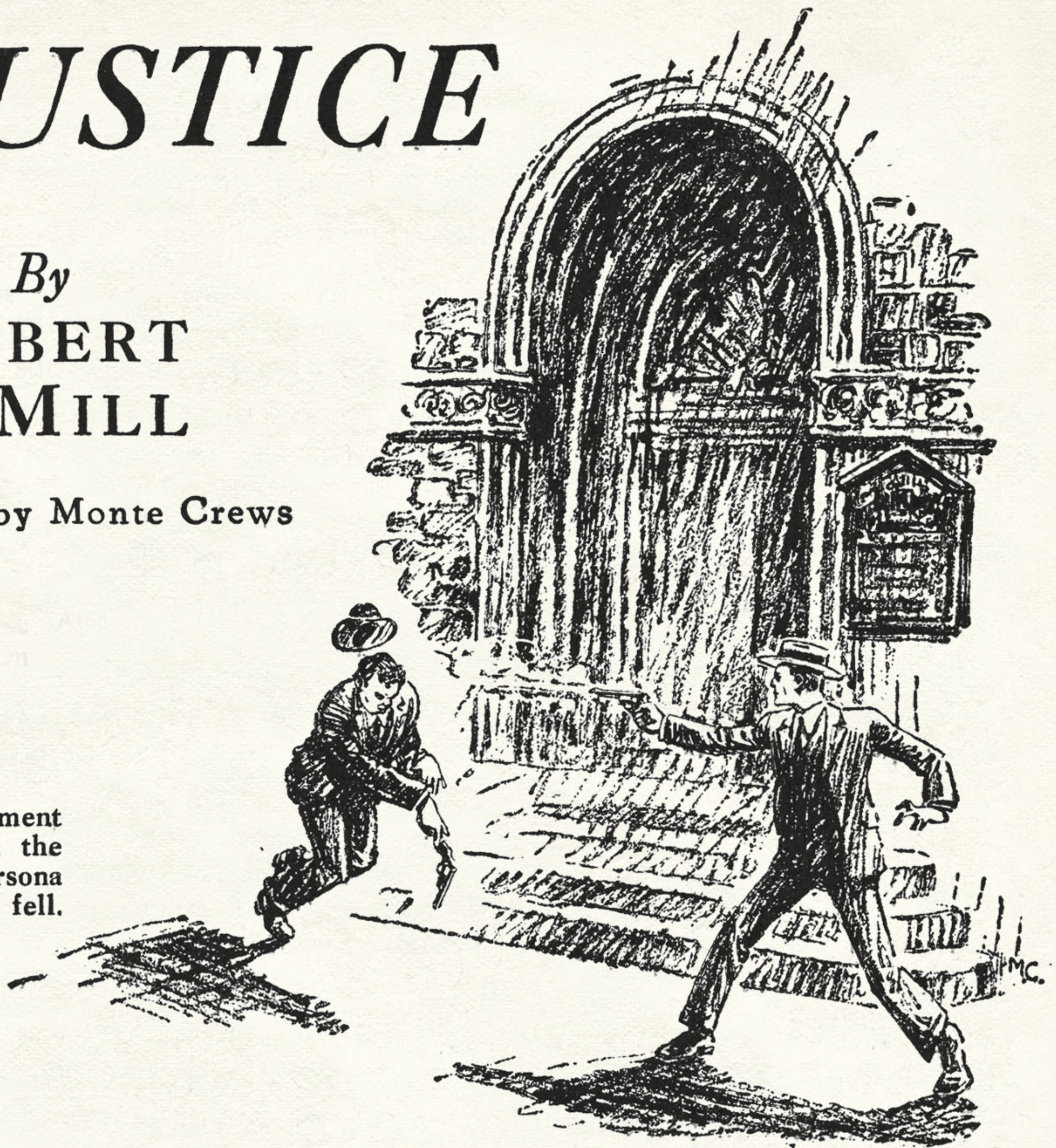
The young man staggered to his feet. The co-pilot, whose manner screamed aloud the fact this task was not to his liking, picked up two bags. The two men, the one leaning heavily upon the

of JUSTICE

By
ROBERT
R. MILL

Illustrated by Monte Crews

There was a movement so fast it baffled the eye, . . . Ju-Ju Carsona staggered, then fell.



other, wove their way out of the plane and toward the hangar.

There, a group bore down upon them. Reporters shouted questions. Photographers touched off flashlight lamps.

"Will you act as a go-between?"

"Have the kidnapers made contact the family?"

"Will a ransom be paid?"

The young man brushed a hand over his forehead.

"Nothing to shay. Sorry. How about promoting a taxi?"

He drove off amid the expression of opinions that were far from flattering. The taxi-driver later announced that the trip to the Piedmont home was enlivened by bursts of song, none of which would find favor in establishments catering to the family trade.

The Piedmont butler accepted the burden from the taxi-driver with raised eyebrows. Then the door of the Piedmont mansion closed.

The vacant look vanished from the face of the young man. He tightened a loose cravat, and arranged his disordered clothing. It was as if a miracle were taking place in the reception hall.

This new young man was keen, alert and kindly. His features, formerly dis-

torted, now expressed refinement and intelligence. There was even more than that in the fine face—breeding.

He turned to the butler, a little smile twisting his upper lip.

"Please ask Mrs. Piedmont if she will see me now?" The smile became even more pronounced as he produced a card, "Tell her Mr. Ashby is here. I am James Ashby, a special agent of the Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice."

There was a thoughtful frown on his face as he followed the butler to the living-room.

"Be seated, sir."

Ashby nodded carelessly, but remained standing. His right foot moved caressingly across a rich rug spread before an open fireplace. He bent to examine the pattern.

Here was craftsmanship. His face glowed with understanding and appreciation. Master workers, toiling on looms spread beneath a desert sun, had woven their magic into this inanimate object, which seemed to glow with life and color. All the artistry in the soul of the man responded to it. He was still engrossed

when he heard a slight rustle of silk, and looked up to see a woman entering the room.

Mrs. Piedmont had been a beautiful woman. Indeed, the use of the past tense was hardly accurate, for traces of that beauty were still visible. Anxiety and sorrow had served only to heighten her beauty, rather than destroy it.

She walked steadily toward the man. She wasted no time in preliminary fencing. Just as a thoroughbred rushes toward a fence, she shot the question that was uppermost in her heart:

"Mr. Ashby, is my boy alive?"

The gaze of the man met hers without wavering.

"I firmly believe he is, Mrs. Piedmont. That is why I am here. It is my job to see that everything is done that will help to keep him alive."

Some of the tenseness vanished from the face of the woman, but it returned as she asked:

"What can I do, Mr. Ashby? I'll do anything in the world. But what can I do?"

There was infinite pity in the eyes of the agent.

"There is only one thing you can do. It is the hardest thing in the world to do—wait." He cast about for a means of relieving her tenseness, and sighted a picture. "Is that Sonny?"

"Yes. Isn't he a darling?"

REPLY would have been superfluous. He gazed at the picture in his hand.

"Mrs. Piedmont, while you are waiting remember this: Every man in the Department of Justice, from the humblest clerk to the Director himself, is at your beck and call tonight. All our laboratory men are at their posts—waiting; just as you are waiting."

An added note of reassurance crept into his voice.

"So far, everything has gone fine. Your brother left his home in Denver. We are not unlike in appearance. We changed places on the way to the airport. He will remain in seclusion at the home of one of our men."

The slight smile reappeared upon his face.

"The newspapers will report the arrival of your brother. I am afraid he will not relish the picture of him that will be given to the world."

His voice grew cold.

"But this places us in an advantageous position for the beginning of the game.

Mrs. Piedmont, I will make no attempt to deceive you: It is a dangerous game to play, even for a person familiar with it, and one that can be easily fatal when played by a novice. Will you trust me to play it for you?"

There was a long, poignant silence, during which the woman studied the face of the man. There was an hysterical catch in her voice as she spoke:

"Mr. Ashby, I never have banked much on a woman's intuition. But something—I am trying to make myself believe it is my love for Sonny—tells me to trust you."

Special Agent Ashby stood with bowed head. What looked suspiciously like moisture clouded his eyes for just a moment.

"That makes me very proud," he said.

JU-JU CARSONA read the morning papers with relish. He had been right from the start. This was a pushover. It was like a bottle of grappa, bitter at the start, but better as you went along. And Ju-Ju, despite his affluence, still listed grappa as his favorite drink.

Old Man Piedmont was flat on his back, and out of the picture. That was all to the good. He was a hardboiled guy, and liable to be tough to do business with.

A twist was running the works, and the twist was the brat's mother.

Ju-Ju's lips curled in derision.

The twist's brother had been a problem. The newspaper guys had got his number. Just a lounge-lizard, shoved into a good spot to get his name in the papers, and eating it up. You couldn't fool those newspaper guys.

Cops? Ju-Ju smiled complacently. Dime a dozen!

G-Men? The complacent smile vanished. They were tough babies. Plenty smart in some ways, and plenty dumb in others. Imagine birds drawing down light sugar—who wouldn't listen to a proposition! Not a peep out of them so far. Just a chirp from the head school-boy in Washington that he hadn't been asked to enter the case. Goofer dust! They were gum-shoeing around. But let 'em. Their wings were clipped.

The twist wanted the brat back. Easy enough to get busy and have another. A leer crossed his dark face. But twists were funny that way. That was their racket.

The G-Men wanted the guy that pulled the snatch. That was their racket.

He, Ju-Ju, would sell the twist on the idea that she better lay off the G-Men's racket and stick to her own, if she wanted to rest her lamps on the brat again. That was his racket. And it was in the bag, when the twist had only a dimwit of a brother to do her thinking for her.

He leaned back and checked his plans. Everything was perfect. This house had been rented months before. Those neighbors who knew him at all, knew



A crafty look crept into the eyes behind the mask. "You open the package; it might explode." Ashby ripped the coverings aside; sheafs of greenbacks were exposed.

him as an importer of olives. The shack in the country was so far off the road that it would take one of them guys that go frogging around the South Pole to find it. The place for the pay-off had been empty for months.

Only Muleface Kaneay was in on the job with him. That meant less split on the sugar. Less chance of a leak than if a mob was in on the know. Not a twist in the mob. That was good. Twists talk, even the best of them.

Ju-Ju picked up a mask and slipped it over his face. He walked to a door, shot a bolt and entered an inner room. The shades were tightly drawn. The light from a single bulb revealed a golden-haired youngster sitting on the bed.

"You look funny in that mask," said the boy.

"Can the chatter," ordered Ju-Ju. "Here. Write your name on this."

"What for?" demanded the boy.

"Because I tell you to," growled Ju-Ju. The boy obeyed.

"You aren't going to hurt me, are you?"

Ju-Ju grinned. "A smart guy don't kick holes in two hundred grand."

The meaning escaped the boy.

"Because if you do," he continued, "the G-Men will get you."

A snarl crossed Ju-Ju's face. He walked from the room and slammed the door. In the other room he sat before a desk and went to work.

It was time to strike. The twist would get a letter telling her just what was what. But he, Ju-Ju, wasn't going to be sap enough to write it by hand. And he wasn't going to be a fall guy for a typewriter, either.

Them damn' schoolboys had guys what could take writing and typewriting and make it talk. He knew their rackets. Well, let them try this on their piano!

Ju-Ju attacked the morning papers with a pair of scissors. Working slowly and carefully, he clipped the various letters of the alphabet and placed them in orderly piles. When the piles had reached considerable size he produced paste and a sheet of paper.

Letter after letter was pasted on the paper. When the message was completed, he folded the paper and placed it in an envelope. The envelope was addressed with letters taken from the various piles. Ju-Ju placed a stamp on the envelope and put it in his pocket.

That done, he made his way to the garage in the basement of the house, entered an automobile and drove to the outskirts on the opposite side of the city. He drew to a halt before a mail box surrounded by empty lots. A quick glance about assured him that there were no witnesses. He dropped the letter in the box.

"Love and kisses," he murmured.

LIGHTS gleamed from the windows on the upper floors of the building occupied by the Department of Justice in Washington, D. C. Routine closing-time was hours in the past. Technicians of various sorts, agents and executives had marked its arrival without interest. They merely put aside the normal work of the day—and waited.

Duke Ashby was working a case. Good old Duke! They all loved him. Even their nickname for him, derived from his manner and attire, had only affection in it. Any time now he would be calling on them. Well, they would be ready.

Carl Sherman, head of the vast crime laboratory, and an outstanding authority

on fingerprints, sat at his desk. He had keen, kindly eyes, though now they were clouded with anxiety. Late in the afternoon he had stolen a brief hour to visit his home. The trained nurse who met him at the door of his wife's bedroom had smiled, and said with an air of importance:

"Sometime tonight, we think."

That meant the expected arrival of the boy he and Lucy had longed for, but who had seemed far in the future during the days when he had been an agent, shifted from city to city. . . .

"I won't be home tonight," he had told his wife reluctantly.

Her face clouded. Then she forced a smile.

"A case?"

He nodded.

"Duke Ashby's case."

The smile became braver.

"Do what you can for him, Carl."

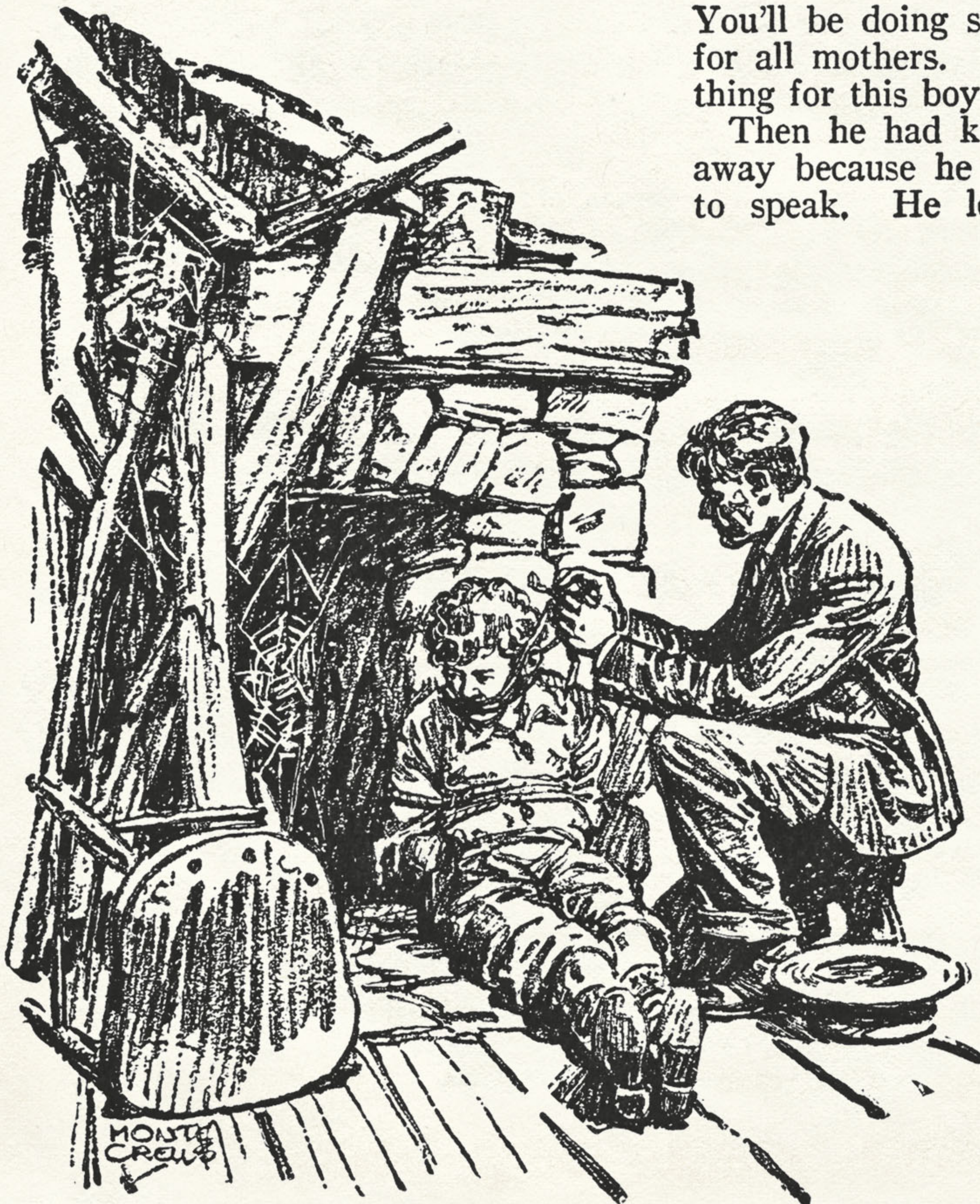
She liked Duke Ashby. Most women did.

"I surely will," said Sherman. "He is working the Piedmont kidnaping case."

His wife took his hand.

"Now I wouldn't *let* you stay here! You'll be doing something for me, and for all mothers. You'll be doing something for this boy of ours."

Then he had kissed her, and hurried away because he did not trust himself to speak. He looked up to see the



Inside the cabin was Sonny Piedmont, bound and gagged. Ashby tore at the fastenings. "Are you a G-Man?" was the boy's first question.

Director and the Assistant Director approaching his desk. They were carrying a sheet of paper and an envelope in tweezers.

"This ransom note arrived in Syrport this afternoon," said the Director. "Ashby took it from the postman. He called Thomas and Thomas drove a delivery-wagon to the house and picked up the letter. He also had Mrs. Piedmont order the bank to pay over to him the amount asked. Devlin flew the money and the note here."

Sherman, his white smock giving him the appearance of a sculptor, went to work. He examined the note:

WE HAVE THE BOY HE IS ALIVE AND WELL
HE WROTE HIS NAME FOR YOU \$200 000
GETS HIM BACK SAFE COPS OF ANY KIND
GETS HIM DEAD AND DEAD QUICK GET THE
MONEY IN FIVES AND TENS USED BILLS NONE
OF THEM GOLD ONES DONT TAKE NUMBERS.
THURSDAY AFTERNOON AT FOUR HAVE YOUR
BROTHER DRIVE EAST ON PARK BOULEVARD
DRIVE JUST FOUR MILES FROM LAST TRAFFIC
LIGHT AND STOP HE WILL BE MET HALF
HOUR AFTER HE PAYS MONEY BOY IS TURNED
FREE HAVE HIM FOLLOWED AND BOY WILL
DIE COPS CANT HELP YOU BEING SMART CAN
IF ALL THIS IS OK PUT IN HERALD THE WORDS
ROSE IS BETTER MOTHER BE SMART AND
GET THE KID BACK TALK IS CHEAP FOR
COPS BUT WE HAVE THE KID

Sherman worked his magic. He used liquids and powders. He snapped on a powerful light. The two officials stood to one side as he worked. Their faces were haggard from lack of sleep, but they leaned forward eagerly as he toiled on.

Gradually dark patterns formed here and there on the pieces of paper and the envelope. Sherman produced a microscope and peered at them. He placed the envelope and one piece of paper beneath a machine and peered through a lens. The lens transposed the picture so the various images appeared side by side, making comparison easy.

"The boy's prints are all over the paper upon which he signed his name," Sherman declared. "That paper also has the print of an adult's thumb. I find the same print on the ransom note. Also, the print of two fingers. The envelope is covered with various prints, many of which must have been made by the postal men who handled it. But I find the same thumb. We have enough to work with."

The officials nodded. Sherman scribbled cryptic numbers above the various

impressions, the ridge count between the delta and the core. He moved toward a case of files that covered space almost as great as a city block. The files were divided into small sections. Each section was presided over by a man, and each man was thoroughly familiar with his own files.

Sherman paused before one section.

"Let's see what we can do with this," he said.

FIFTEEN minutes later he stood up. "Card number 10897," he ordered. It was placed before him. "*Ju-Ju Carsona,*" he read. They bent over his shoulder, and he pointed to a line well down the card: "*Extremely superstitious.*" A slight smile crossed Sherman's face. "In that case," he said, "he should bite on Wilson's trick."

The Director nodded.

Sherman studied the ransom note.

"Two hours should be time enough."

"Play safe and make it three," ordered the Director. "I'll get the money."

They met in the workshop occupied by a chemist named Wilson.

"Three hours, George," said Sherman. The chemist smiled as he went to work. He mixed a colorless liquid in one pan. He mixed another that appeared similar in a second pan. He divided the money into three packages. One pile went into one pan, the second pile into the other, and the third remained on the table.

Handling the wet bills with tweezers, the chemist placed those from one pan on one line to dry, and hung the ones from the other on a separate line. They sat about waiting for the notes to dry. Then the package was rewrapped with the untreated notes in the center.

The two officials and Sherman returned to the Director's office. A colored boy awakened a man in flying-togs, who was sleeping on a bench. He struggled to his feet.

"Let's check," said Sherman. "The ransom note, the envelope and the note with the boy's signature. The cards on Carsona. A few notes I have made. The money." He added a bottle of colorless liquid to the pile. "And the control. There you are, Devlin. Tell Duke we are rooting for him."

The pilot picked up the packages. The buzzing of the telephone switchboard beside the desk of the Director sent a chill up Sherman's spine.

The Director seemed maddeningly slow as he answered.

"Yes. . . . What's that? . . . You don't tell me!" A smile crossed his haggard face. He stood up, and advanced toward Sherman with outstretched hand.

"Mr. Sherman, I have the pleasure of telling you that you are the father of a fine boy. The boy's mother is doing fine. She sends word that she is waiting for you. But she doesn't want you to come until you have finished what you are doing for other mothers."

The pilot raised an imaginary glass. He spoke with a rich Southern accent.

"To the boy! On my way back I'll drop a word or two in the ears of the gods of the clouds about him. I'll ask them to make him as fine a man as that daddy of his."

Unconsciously they glanced at the windows. Heavy drops of rain beat against the panes. The pilot shrugged his shoulders.

"Right nasty," he admitted. "But I'll get through." He made no mention of the fact that the weather forecast called for even worse weather, and that all commercial planes had been grounded. "And I'll find the gods and give them the message. I know where the little devils hide."

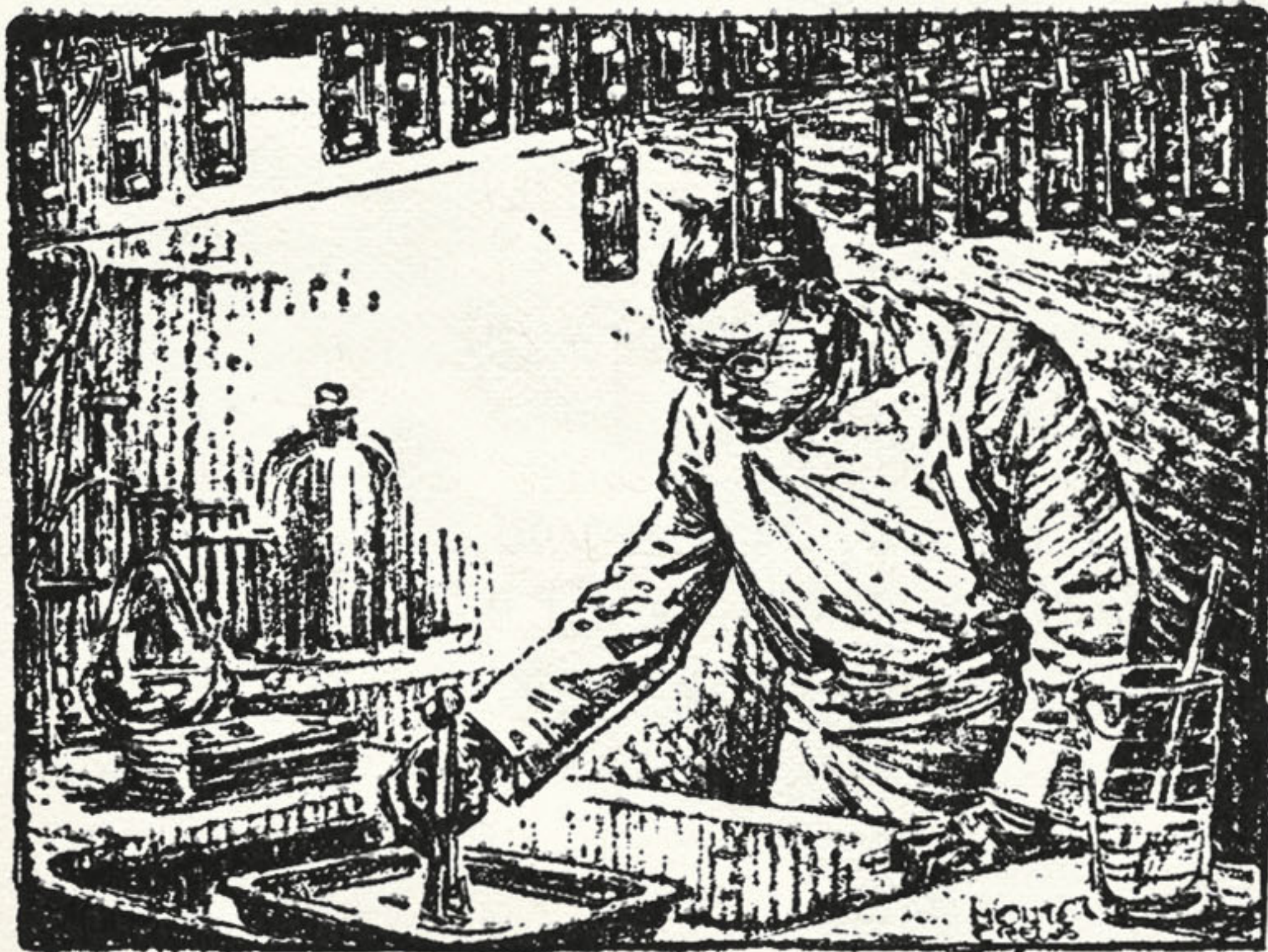
He pulled his jacket about him.

"Any message for Duke, Carl?" he asked.

"Yes, Dev," said Sherman. "Tell him to practice up on being a godfather. And ask those gods of yours to give the boy some of Duke's qualities, will you?"

The Director appeared, a hat in his hand. He placed the hat upon Sherman's head. His other arm went around the shoulders of the fingerprint expert.

"Get home to that boy, Carl. Some day, when he is a little older, he will be very proud to know what his father did



Handling the wet bills with tweezers, the chemist placed them on a line to dry.

for another boy on the night he arrived in the world."

They parted. The lights burned on. The officials and the experts continued their vigil. The pilot winged his way through the storm. Duke Ashby, in a distant city, waited for the climax of the game, when he would toss dice with death. A mother prayed through a sleepless night. And these men, in the lighted building, stood by, ready to do their part; and prepared to work more magic.

PROMPTLY at four o'clock on Thursday afternoon, Duke Ashby drove away from the Piedmont house in an open roadster. He wore the same rather foppish clothes that he had worn the day of his arrival. The same vacant stare was on his face. The package of money was at his side.

He piloted the car through the city traffic, and headed east on Park Boulevard. At Beech Street, where the last traffic light was located, he glanced at the speedometer. Exactly four miles away he pulled the roadster to a halt at the side of the road.

For fully ten minutes he waited. Conflicting thoughts raced through his mind. This would be hard. Every impulse fought against what he was about to do. But he had made a promise to a distracted mother.

At the side of the road was a high bank, and soon he heard a voice call from the top:

"Don't look up. Turn around and drive back for about a mile. Turn right on a road that has a gas station on the southeast corner. Keep going until you come to an old cider mill. Go in there and wait."

He obeyed the instructions, and found the road without difficulty. It was a little-traveled country lane. His speedometer had clocked off more than three miles when the mill was sighted. It appeared deserted. He parked his car and entered.

Some time later he heard the sound of another car outside. His muscles stiffened. He forced himself to relax. He was smoking a cigarette, and the vacant stare was more pronounced as a masked man entered the room. In one hand of the masked man was a revolver.

"You heeled?" A gruff voice asked the question.

"Heeled?" Duke Ashby glanced at his shoes. "A bit worn, but still good."

Ju-Ju Carsona snorted his disgust as his fingers searched the body of the agent. He found nothing, for the simple reason there was nothing to find.

"Got the money?"

Ashby pointed to the package.

"Care to count it?" he asked.

A crafty look crept into the eyes behind the mask.

"Nothing doing. I heard of them tricks. You open the package. It might explode."

Ashby ripped the coverings aside. The sheafs of greenbacks were exposed.

Ju-Ju nodded with satisfaction.

"Good enough." He rewrapped the package. He handed a piece of paper to the agent. "Follow this and you will get to the kid. Don't leave here for five minutes. Then get started—as quick as you can. Go alone, if you want to find the kid alive when you get there."

Ashby watched the gangster back from the room. He restrained the impulse to send his fist crashing into the eyes glittering behind the holes in the mask. He waited until he heard the sound of the motor, then he ran from the building.

A quick glance at the roadster confirmed his fears. Two tires had been slashed. The car carried two spares. But he wasted no time. He deflated the other two and raced on the rims toward the main road, almost four miles away.

He was out of breath, and every muscle ached when he arrived there. A friendly truck-driver answered his hail, and the magic words, "Department of Justice," sent the truck roaring toward the city.

They pulled to a halt at a certain corner, where Special Agent Thomas was waiting in an automobile.

"Give me the car and a gun," Ashby ordered. "Wait here for me."

He drove away, following the directions on the crude map, which led him to the opposite side of the city. Then a winding country lane. Minutes wasted finding a trail. His car was abandoned there. Half an hour later he found the cabin.

Inside the cabin was Sonny Piedmont.

THE boy was bound and gagged, but he watched with interest while Ashby tore at the fastenings.

"Are you a G-Man?" was his first question.

"Yes," said Ashby. "I am going to take you back to your mother."

They made their way back to the car. During the drive to the city Ashby



Red hands! Panic gripped Ju-Ju. A brand put upon him by some unseen power!

plied the boy with skillful questions. He had seen two men. One always wore a mask. The other had picked him up on the street near his school. He had been taken to a house on the side of a hill, which had a garage in the basement. He thought it was in the city. Last night he was taken to the shack where Ashby found him. During the trip he had been placed in the trunk-rack on the rear of the car. No, he said, they hadn't hurt him.

ASHBY stopped the car, and Thomas approached.

"This is Sonny Piedmont," said Ashby. He slipped from behind the wheel. "Drive him home. His mother is waiting."

"Aren't you going along?" asked Thomas.

"No. Ask them for my things, like a good fellow, will you?"

Thomas showed his surprise.

"Mrs. Piedmont will want to see you."

Duke Ashby shrugged his shoulders.

"What could she say? And how could I answer her? It would be strained and forced. I admire Mrs. Piedmont." And there was a far-away look in his eyes. "She reminds me of my mother. This way we both will have pleasant memories. Right now, I have to get to work."

He slipped away in the crowd. The car started.

"Won't I ever see him again?" asked the boy.

"I don't know," Special Agent Thomas replied. His face was grave.

"I hope I do," said Sonny Piedmont. "I like him."

Ju-Ju Carsona was back in the room where he had pasted the letter together. He was counting money, counting it for the third time. It was a pleasant task. The hard part of the job was all over. No more need for the cocaine that had primed him for the danger spot, the payoff. Even that had been easy, thanks to the dimwit. But Ju-Ju felt a strange reaction. So he helped himself to more of the false courage.

The drug was stinging in his nostrils as he reviewed the situation. Everything was to the good. It had been smart to double back to this hide-out right here in the city. Right now State cops were combing the roads that led from Syrport. Let them. He was safe here.

The G-Men probably had the serial numbers of these bills. That was all right by Ju-Ju. He knew a little man who would receive them gladly, put them in a safe, and leave them there for years. Ju-Ju would walk out of that house with \$100,000 in safe money. It was a heavy cut, but worth it.

Muleface Kaneay would be around tomorrow for his cut. Ten grand would shut him up. That left ninety grand. You could go places and see things on ninety grand.

Now that a guy was retired, so to speak, he could give the twists a whirl. There was that blonde over at the Purple Paradise—

Ju-Ju placed a cigarette in his mouth. He struck a match. He moved the flame toward the tip of the cigarette. Then he stared at his hands, horrified.

His fingers were stained a brilliant red. He glanced at the other hand. The same dread color was visible. He rubbed his hands together. The coloring spread and became more livid.

Panic gripped at Ju-Ju's heart. He bolted for the bathroom, tore off his coat, and went to work with soap and water. The stain became brighter, and as the water splashed on his wrists and arms the coloring spread.

THEN Ju-Ju was a trapped rat. His beady eyes darted about, seeking a possible avenue of escape from this unknown terror. All the witches' tales and folklore of a boyhood in Sicily returned to haunt him. Fiery crosses that blazed upon the breasts of guilty men! Voices that screamed the guilt of malefactors!

A wave of anger swept over him. Damn them! He hadn't hurt the punk. He didn't deserve this.

Red hands! Hands that were getting redder. A brand put upon him for all time by some unseen power. Blind fear replaced the anger. He was alone, in this empty house—trapped. He was face to face with some power he could not see, and could not combat.

One thought was uppermost in his mind; he must seek aid of some sort. The dread fear caused him to toss aside all his careful plans. He seized his hat. As he glanced at his hands, he shuddered. Then he left his haven and bolted into the night.

SONNY PIEDMONT was home. No longer need the special agents of the Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, play a cautious, waiting game. Implacably they took up the trail.

Men skilled in interrogation questioned Sonny. They pressed him for more details about the house on the side of the hill, which had a garage in the basement, and which he thought was in the city. He was an intelligent lad. Soon agents had a word-picture of that house good enough to go to work with, and they began their search.

Duke Ashby, accompanied by agents who had valuable contacts, roamed the underworld of Syrport. Carl Sherman's magic had been compounded so that it would not take effect until three hours after the money had been handled. That was for the protection of the boy.

Ju-Ju Carsona was very superstitious. The cards, cards that had been compiled when he did a bit on a narcotic charge, told them that. When this supernatural visitation struck home, it was only reasonable that he would be thrown into a panic. That panic might cause him to do any one of a number of things. So they prepared for them all.

Through the underworld they roamed. They openly announced that they were looking for Ju-Ju Carsona. They let it be known that the bringer of any information would be richly rewarded. They made it equally emphatic that any person who aided or harbored Ju-Ju would suffer.

All the while, the other agents waged their search for the house answering the description furnished by Sonny Piedmont.

Shortly before midnight they knew that the magic was working for them.

A doctor, one of those few men who disgrace a profession to which many other men dedicate their lives, had a

visit from Ju-Ju. He glanced at the hands and went to work. Half an hour later he confessed himself beaten. Ju-Ju, his terror increased, did not wait to hear the technical excuses. He ran, seeking another port of call, another possible haven.

When he was gone, the doctor thought rapidly. This terror-stricken animal was near the end of the trail. No need to sink with him. The doctor went to the telephone and called the local field office of the Department of Justice.

The avenging soldiers of justice, with Ashby at their head, took up the trail from there. It was easy to follow: the progress of a man driven by blind fear, with no attempt at concealment, and only groping for something to ward off this unearthly punishment.

Then the distance between the pursuers and their quarry lessened. They were close on his trail as he rushed back to the house, all possible avenues of aid exhausted. The agents seeking that house also were closing in. They had found the neighborhood, which had many houses of that type, and were beginning their search for the particular one.

Ju-Ju halted his mad rush as he saw them. His panic doubled as he turned in his tracks and prepared to rush back to the underworld. Straight ahead of him was a church. In his youth he had served there as an altar boy. In later years he had turned his back on all that he had learned there. Now, ratlike, he sought to creep back to what was his only sanctuary.

There was a kindly old priest, in whose eyes glowed infinite understanding and compassion. Ju-Ju's heart leaped with hope as he thought of him. This was right down his alley, his racket. Every man was best at his own racket. He started toward the church at a run.

A CAR pulled up at the curb. Special Agent James Ashby stepped out. He waved back the other agents who started to follow him. No doubt of the identity of the panic-stricken man before him.

This was Ju-Ju Carsona. This was his hour. He was to die. It was written. But there was a code that must be observed.

Duke Ashby stepped between the running man and the doors of the church.

"Stick up your hands, Ju-Ju!" he called. His face was grim. His eyes

were narrow slits. But his hands were empty.

The gangster made a convulsive grab at a pocket. His hand came away grasping a gun. Only then did Ashby go into action.

There was a movement so fast that it baffled the eye, and in the agent's empty hand a gun appeared. Three fingers of fire stabbed at the gloom. Three reports echoed in the narrow street.

Ju-Ju Carsona staggered, then fell. His arms were outstretched. The still form constituted a grotesque imitation of the cross that gleamed above the little building before which the gangster was sprawled.

DUKE ASHBY walked slowly forward. Another agent joined him, bent over the body of Ju-Ju Carsona and began a methodical search.

"That was shooting, Duke."

Ashby shrugged his shoulders.

A policeman charged upon them, gun in hand. He halted at their cry:

"Department of Justice!"

He took one look at the form on the ground. He whistled.

"I'll ring for the morgue."

Ashby nodded. He thrust a bottle into the hands of the policeman.

"Give that to the boys from the morgue. Ju-Ju's hands are dirty. As far as I know, this is the only thing in the world that will get them clean."

He turned to the other agents.

"The other one should be easy. Just a matter of time."

The policeman halted him as he started to move away.

"Off to your next job, I suppose. You fellows have to play lots of parts, like, don't you?"

A smile softened Duke Ashby's grim lips. The narrowed eyes opened wide, and the harsh lines disappeared from his face.

"Yes," he said, "it seems to me I recall a certain poet once said that one man in his time plays many parts." His laugh was clear, boyish. "On my next job I have to play the part of a baby's godfather. Think I will make the grade?"

The policeman, hands on hips, surveyed him judicially.

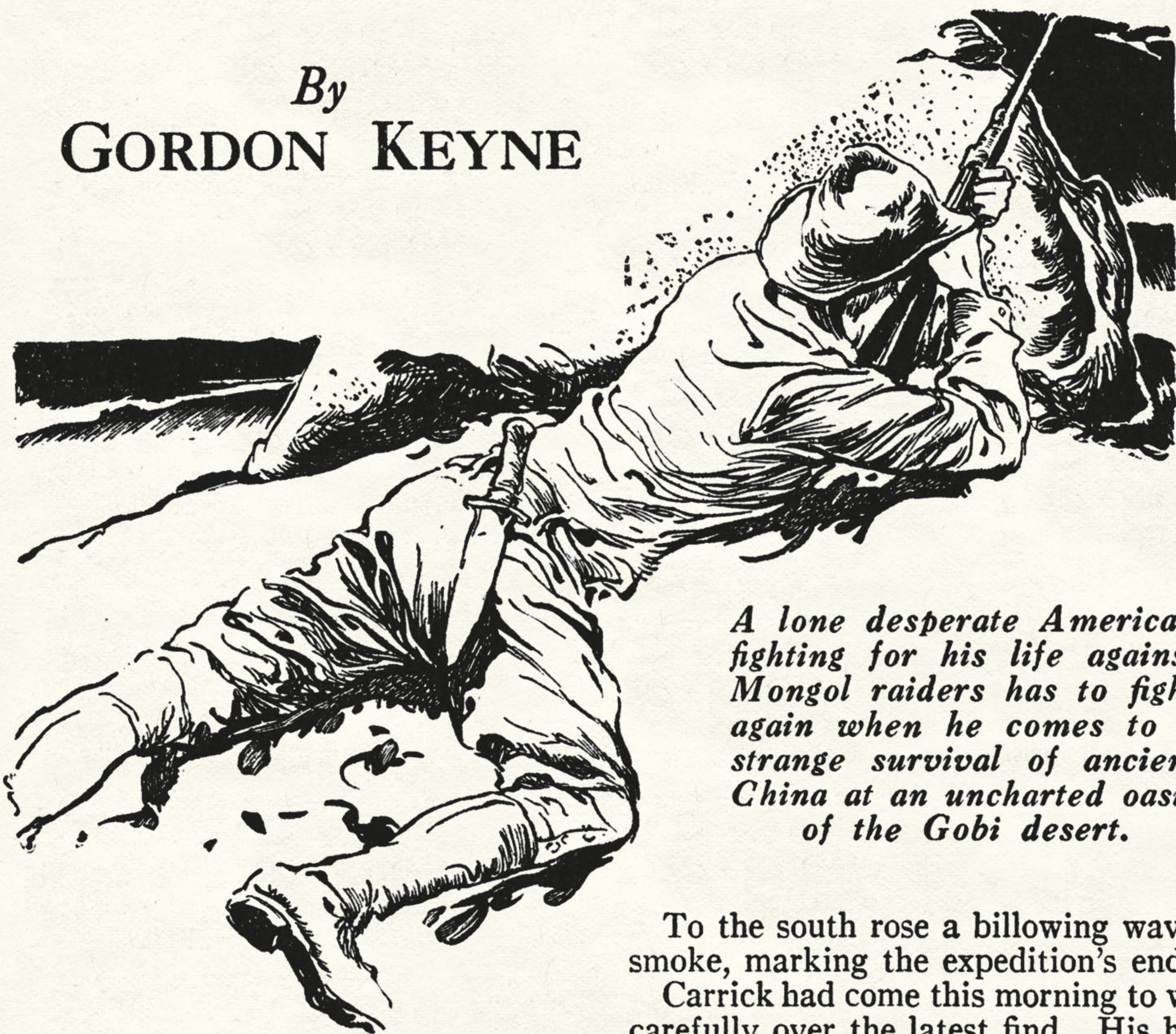
"You'll do," was his verdict.

"I hope so," said Duke Ashby, as he slipped away.

"Turn on the Heat," another authentic and up-to-the-minute story of the F. B. I. men, will appear in our next issue.

The Face of

By
GORDON KEYNE



A lone desperate American fighting for his life against Mongol raiders has to fight again when he comes to a strange survival of ancient China at an uncharted oasis of the Gobi desert.

CARRICK moved slightly, merely adjusting his rifle sights to three hundred yards.

Instantly the sand spurted, almost under his hand. The vindictive crack of a rifle followed, echoed along the naked red cliffs, and was lost. Carrick fired.

A shapeless thing dropped from the rocky pinnacle ahead and lay sprawled in the reddish sand. Carrick grunted with satisfaction. Two more spurts of sand, two more rifle-cracks. This time, however, the bullets missed him widely.

"Got their sharpshooter, blast him!" muttered Carrick. "If I can hold 'em off until night, I've got a chance."

Mid-afternoon. In every direction, except where the high red cliffs blocked the view to the right, stretched the awful desolation, the frozen chaos, of the Mongolian desert. For two successive years the National Museum expedition, under Carrick, had been digging fossil bones here at the fringe of the Gobi. Now it was over. For good.

To the south rose a billowing wave of smoke, marking the expedition's end.

Carrick had come this morning to work carefully over the latest find. His horse waited safe enough, in the niche under the cliff; but he had been caught here in the open near the fossil bed. While one party attacked him, the main body of the enemy had been destroying the camp of the expedition.

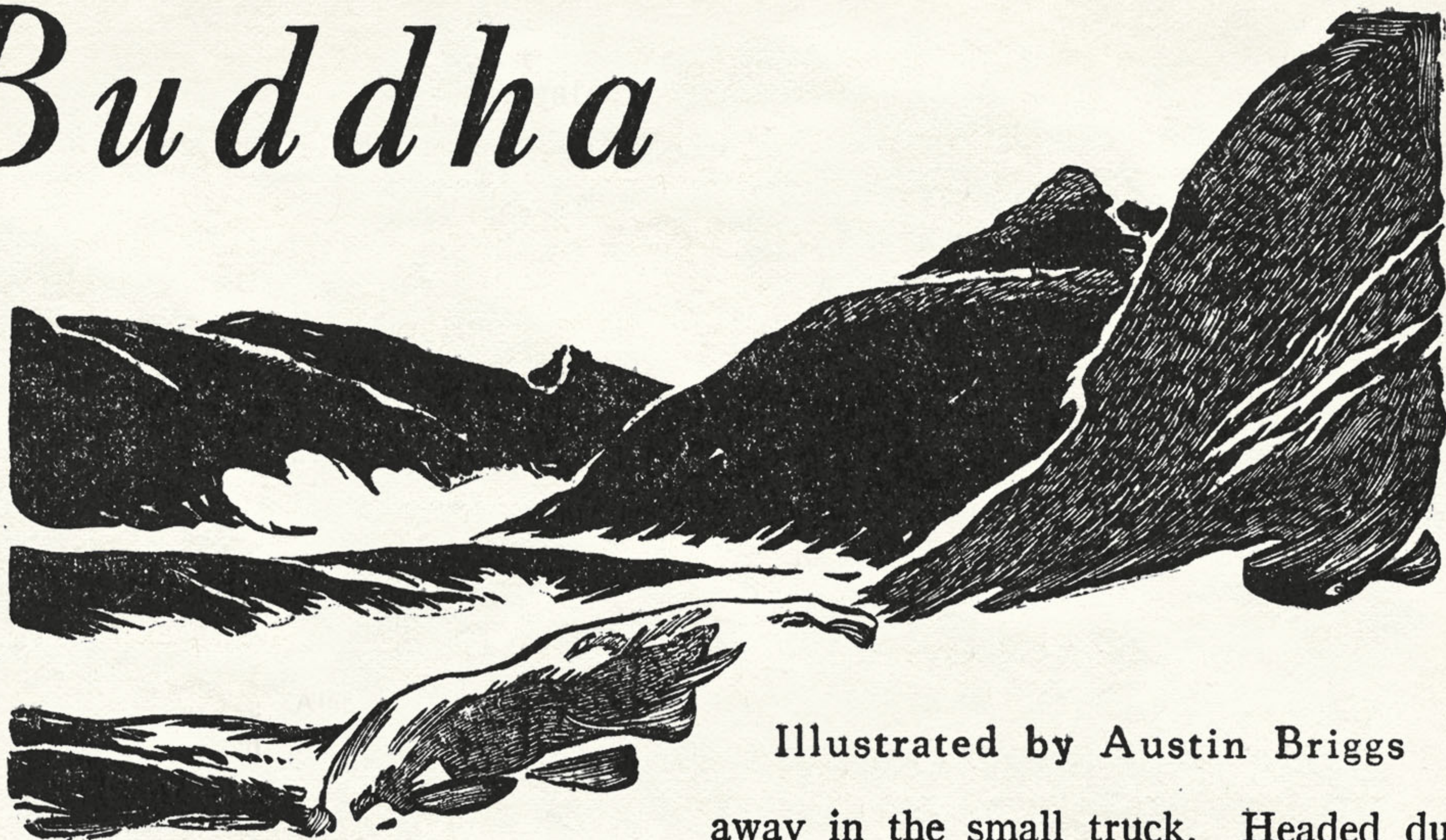
Mongol riders—but whether Tungans, Russians, or Chinese, he had not the least idea. For three mortal hours this diabolic sharpshooter had held him closely engaged. The man's four remaining companions—two were dead—did not worry Carrick particularly.

A speck showed off to the south: a single rider. Carrick took a sip of water from his canteen, picked up his binoculars, and focused on the speck. An exclamation broke from him. It was Harkness. He knew that lanky rider at once, and the gray horse as well. And Harkness was heading directly for him—running slap into a trap!

"No way of warning him," thought Carrick, with a shrug.

Except by firing, of course. The trouble was, he had no cartridges to waste.

Buddha



Illustrated by Austin Briggs

The four Mongols, if such they were, had taken up positions among the scattered rocks that ran along south of the cliffs. They were silent for a time; presently Carrick caught sight of a movement, drew a fine bead, waited. A head and arm showed, and he fired. That man dropped and relaxed, in plain sight.

"Three left," muttered Carrick, as the bullets spurted sand around him.

Harkness was coming on; he was well within a mile now, pressing the gray hard. Apparently he was unarmed. Toiling out of the red sands, reaching a stretch of harder ground, he put the gray at a gallop, heading straight for Carrick.

The latter had no need to give warning. Presently the three raiders opened fire. Carrick tried to divert their attention, but they were well covered from his deadly bullets. Harkness was within three hundred yards when suddenly his horse pitched forward. Shrill exultant yells went up. Then Harkness scrambled to his feet and broke into a run.

"The cursed fool!" exclaimed Carrick, and yelled at him to take cover.

Harkness paid no heed. Bullets spurted around him, but he pressed on. Fifty yards away, he stumbled and fell. Then he rose again and came on, more slowly, holding one hand to his side.

The Mongols could not hit him now without exposing themselves to Carrick. This time Harkness reached his goal, grinning faintly, his face white and set. He came in among the rocks and dropped flat.

"Had to—reach you," he panted. "Done for—anyhow. Wiped out the—camp. Bellinger and Soruth, chief hunter—got

away in the small truck. Headed due west for—Toghrak water-hole. Only chance."

His head lolled forward and he sprawled on the sand. Carrick leaped to his side, with the canteen. A bullet spurted the sand under him, and another. Then something smashed him full in the brow and he pitched down, arms outspread.

The sun beat down on the red rock and the reddish sands and the chaotic desolation of rock and lava beyond, in silence. After a little one of the three Mongols showed himself cautiously, stood up, uttered a yell to his companions. They stared at the two prostrate figures in the pitiless sunlight.

They advanced suspiciously, and clumped together as though for mutual protection. Their fears passed. The first to come up kicked the body of Harkness savagely and turned with a laugh to his companions. His laugh was never uttered, however. All three of them suddenly froze in their tracks.

For Harkness suddenly sat up, and an automatic pistol leaped out in his hand.

It was he who laughed—wildly, shrilly, an insane laughter punctuated by the shots. He fired and kept on firing until his weapon clicked emptily. One after another, the three were brought down. When Harkness ceased firing, they had been dead for some time.

Then, the pistol sliding from his fingers, Harkness quietly fell over sideways and died with a smile on his lips.

SUNSET came. It was pain that wakened Carrick—the hungry, intolerable pain that comes when some foreign object is in the flesh. He lifted a hand

to his head, and flinched. Then, savagely, he pulled out the sharp rock fragment that was embedded in the skin of his forehead. A bullet had driven the rock splinter into him.

HE looked around. Birds, three of them, were circling low, but soared higher in the sky as he moved about. After a moment he understood perfectly what had happened; the empty pistol, the three heaps of skin garments that had been desert raiders. He painfully stooped over Harkness and found a spare pistol clip and several loose cartridges; nothing else but a packet of cigarettes.

Retrieving his canteen, to his joy he found it whole. A swallow of the tepid water refreshed him, and he went to the three raiders. As he had feared, they were Chinese dressed as Mongols; this meant that escape was cut off to the east. But what escape was there for him with only a horse, a little water, no food, and the whole savage expanse of the Gobi on one side, Outer Mongolia and Siberia on the other?

However, he found that the cartridges of one raider fitted his rifle, and this was cheering.

When he had dug a shallow grave, placed the body of Harkness in it, and covered it over, Carrick lit a cigarette. Relaxing, he scanned the empty horizon. He remembered the few words Harkness had gasped out, and nodded thoughtfully.

"Might be worse," he observed with a resigned look in his straight gray eyes. His features were thin, alert, finely carved. Two years of field work here in this desert had imparted to him a look of bronzed fitness, a certain merciless precision.

"The Toghrak water-hole, hm! That's only thirty miles due west. If I can find that ancient river-bed again, as I should even without instruments, I'll pick up Bellinger and the truck. Ought to get there sometime tomorrow, for there's a clear moon tonight. The camp wiped out, eh? That's tough. Damned tough."

For a moment his shoulders sagged. Here was a season's work gone; his party killed almost to a man; everything suddenly smashed out from under him at a moment's notice. But his face did not change, except that his lips were a little compressed. After a moment his shoulders swung back, and he came to his feet. . . .

The sun was just under the western rim of the desert when he climbed into

the saddle and headed out. His horse was fresh. Once across these "bad lands" he would have clear going and could make better time. Nor was there any pursuit; evidently, the main body of raiders were too occupied with their loot to follow up this small offshoot from their party.

On and on, by twilight, by starlight, by moonlight; always on into the nothingness ahead, until the moonlight paled. On in the dawn, where the new-born day veiled in mist the savage red pinnacles and gullies and sand desert; on in the sunrise, in the full brazen daylight, in the pitiless afternoon blaze that struck squarely into his face, as he reeled under it.

Sunset came again. Grim and haggard, Carrick pressed on his failing horse, shared the last of his water. He had found an ancient river-bed, indeed, but probably not the one he sought, for he recognized none of the landmarks. Here and there protruded a giant toghrak or poplar, covered up a thousand years ago when the sands of the Gobi swallowed what had been a rich land, now laid bare in shreds and remnants of what had been.

Cities had been here in past ages, where indeed the first men had walked; but now there was no drop of water. Only red sand, naked red cliffs, and darkness ahead.

CARRICK was waiting for the moonrise when he saw something puzzling.

He stared, incredulous. A point of reddish light ahead; the uneven flare of a fire that leaped and died and rose again, where the line of naked red cliffs closed off the trail for him.

His horse had gone down an hour or more ago. He was on foot now, had abandoned the rifle with his horse, clinging only to the pistol of Harkness. That frightful afternoon had drained his whole body dry of moisture like a wrung sponge.

Light meant humanity. Yet at sunset there had been no human creature within miles, for his binoculars, now abandoned, had certified as much. Of course, men might have been hidden anywhere along this ancient watercourse, now a mere depression in a vast sea of sand, studded with such outcrops of rock as the cliffs ahead. The great forest of poplars, the Toghrak water-hole, was nowhere within sight.

But, if men were here, then water must be here also. No matter what sort of man. Savage they must be, yet he had

"We saw you coming afar, before darkness," said the old man. "Then, you had a horse, and seemed to be trying to find the spot, so with evening we built a fire to guide you. . . . You are ready? Then follow."



nothing remaining except life. Carrick laughed harshly at the thought. Nothing but life; yesterday morning he had had everything! Well, unless they were Chinese, they would not rob him of life for the mere brutal fun of it. Only the Chinese held life so cheaply. Mongols or Tungans, desert dwellers, knew the value of the vital spark.

Carrick dragged himself through the loose sand, came to firmer going, and increased his pace. A fire, most certainly, and at the base of the cliffs. It occurred to him that this might be Bellinger and the Mongol guide Soruth, but he had seen nothing of a motor-truck.

He stumbled on, his head hurting abominably.

When he came closer, he perceived that the fire was blazing in a huge recess of the cliff beneath an enormous overhang, a jutting lip of rock. Possibly

water had scooped out this recess in some bygone age, his scientist's brain took note. Such a fire was possible here because the ancient toghraks burned almost without smoke.

Stumbling ahead, Carrick saw two figures about the fire, one moving actively, the other sitting looking on. The moving figure appeared to repeat some action over and over; Carrick paid little heed to it, blinking at the two, trying to recognize Bellinger. No; both of them wore heavy garments, but not of Mongol cut. The seated figure was old, the other young. An upburst of flame lit them clearly for an instant, showed unmistakable Chinese features.

Both of them turned, staring, as he came into the circle of light, but they showed neither surprise nor alarm. The younger man stooped, picked up a vessel, and carried it over as Carrick halted.



"Welcome, foreign devil," said Wang. "You have brought a message from the Imperial court?"

With a gasp, Carrick seized it, held it to his lips, drank carefully. Water! Fresh, cold water, in this place!

Then he saw what had been going forward here.

At one side, from the rock, trickled a tiny drip of water, almost drop by drop. Beneath this was placed a bamboo trough, catching the slow water and conducting it down to porcelain vessels on the floor of the cave. To find any bamboo in this region was astonishing enough, though readily explainable; but something in the feel of the bowl between his hands caused Carrick to look at it closely. No mistaking that feel, that lovely blue glaze. When he had emptied the dish, he upturned it. Yes; a priceless porcelain made under Kang Hsi. And the others were like it.

He returned the vessel to the younger man, who bowed low and spoke to him in Chinese.

"Your humble slave welcomes you."

"Heed him not, venerable ancestor," broke out the old man opposite. "Tell me quickly! You have brought to us a message from the Emperor?"

"Yes," muttered Carrick, not fully understanding the words.

Instantly, the old man leaped to his feet. A cry of joy broke from him; the younger one looked dazed, stared at Carrick, then grinned widely. Utterly astounded, thinking perhaps he had fallen into the hands of two madmen, Carrick reached for another bowl of water and tried to collect his thoughts.

"Quickly!" The old man struck the other across the shoulders. "Run and advise the master! I will bring the messenger."

He rose. Carrick drank slowly, trying to understand things aright. Then the old man spoke joyfully.

"Venerable elder brother, we have waited a long time for this message! Every day I have come, or every night; and my father, and his father's father before him. In all that time only one man came, but he was a Russian and had no message, so we slew him."

Mad words, thought Carrick, eying the old man sharply while he drank, but a most disturbing air of sanity. When he had finished draining the bowl, he set it down and looked at the other porcelains. One was a *sang de bœuf* bowl, another was a hawthorn vase, their value running into the thousands of dollars. Carrick wondered if he were the victim of a mirage; but the hurt in his forehead throbbed to reassure him.

"We saw you coming afar, before darkness," said the old man. "Then, you had a horse, and seemed to be trying to find the spot, so with evening we built a fire to guide you, also by which to work. We watch, and collect water for Wang Ch'ien Lin."

"Who," asked Carrick hoarsely, "is Wang?"

The other laughed a little.

"We understood that the Emperor had forgotten us, but forgetfulness goes not so far, venerable ancestor! True, it is not the same Wang Ch'ien Lin, mandarin of the second grade, who was sent here in the eighteenth year of Kang Hsi to guard this sanctuary, when he was exiled from the Palace of Heaven. It is his lineal descendant, however, for Wang brought his wives here when he came. You are ready? Then follow."

Carrick obeyed.

At the rear of the recess was an opening in the rock. Taking a brand from the fire, the old man lighted the candle in a horn lantern and started for this

opening, which proved to be a sharply ascending corridor. The dim light permitted Carrick to see very little.

Presently steps appeared, carven in the rock. As he followed, he wondered vaguely whether the old fellow were insane, or whether there could be any basis of reality for his fantastic story. Certainly, it had been the custom to exile erring court members to the frontiers; but Kang Hsi had been dead a long while—over two hundred years, to be exact.

"Does he mean to imply that some mandarin was exiled here to guard a hole in the rock, and went on living here until he died, and his descendants after him?" thought Carrick. "Ridiculous! No reason for it. That is of course exactly what an official of the period might do—but nonsense! I'll see if the old boy has his story pat."

HE lifted his voice in Mandarin to the figure on the stairs ahead.

"Venerable maternal ancestor, why were no messengers sent out, in all this time?"

"Eh?" The other turned. "They were sent, bearing memorials to the Dragon Throne; but all the beasts of burden had died, and the men had to go on foot. Perhaps they died."

Carrick shivered. To start out afoot from this place for Peking—madness indeed!

"But why did not Wang return to the frontier posts, then?"

"He had been ordered to guard this place."

Answer enough, apparently. Then occurred something which, for all its incongruity, really served to make Carrick think he had heard a true story. They passed a sharp turn, where a crucifix was set in the wall, and in passing, the old man revered it.

"What? You are Christians here?" exclaimed Carrick.

"I do not know. This humble slave is not instructed. The mandarin who first came here, put up these images of his god, and those who came after him have done them reverence."

Carrick whistled softly to himself.

He knew, of course, that under Kang Hsi the empire had been largely converted, and the emperor himself had been about to embrace Christianity. Then a split arose on a point of theologic doctrine; it was referred to Rome, which decided against Kang Hsi; and in rage the emperor not only turned out all Chris-

tians, but stamped out the new religion, and closed China to the outside world.

Despite himself, Carrick began to credit this amazing fantasy. And a moment later he perceived how true it must be, as the passage ended in a huge rock chamber, open at one side to the night—another recess or open cave, but of enormous extent.

Here burned faint lights, and all about were images of Buddha and his followers. They were no ordinary ones, however. The central Buddha himself, to the astonished gaze of Carrick, appeared to be of gilded wood inlaid with ivory and semi-precious stones, and was of great size.

On every hand stood high slabs inlaid with gilded characters, apparently in Sanskrit. To his amazement, Carrick perceived that these slabs were of jade, purest white or deepest green—"gem" jade from Khotan, which today brings absurd prices.

"Who built this place?" he demanded sharply. The old man turned.

"Heavenborn, that is unknown. It was discovered by hunters, reported to Peking, and Wang Ch'ien Lin was sent to explore, guard it, and make report. Whether his messengers lived or not, is unknown; probably they did, since you are here with a message. The ancient people who lived here when this was a fertile land must have built the place. Treasures are here, but water is scarce."

The guide crossed the enormous hall and came to another corridor. As he went, he mumbled something about the difficulty of reaching the desert floor and the work that was piled upon him, and so passed into the corridor.

CARRICK followed. In a moment, the right-hand side of the corridor vanished, and stars appeared. They were following a ledge or shelf along the cliff-edge. This shelf widened out; a wall appeared built across it, and the younger man came from a low doorway to meet them.

"He sleeps," he exclaimed quickly, in a low voice. "The women fear to wake him. He killed the oldest one this evening. Li Fan says to let him sleep another hour."

"In that case," intervened Carrick, stumbling forward, "let me sleep as well. I am weary and hungry, but sleep comes first."

"Very well, heavenborn," said the old

man. "Come. There is no lack of room, for few of us remain. When I was young, it was very different; but now there are only six women and three of us men, and our master. It seems he slew one woman tonight. Another gone."

Carrick followed through the doorway, entering a long hall where lights burned, with a range of rooms on either side. Into one of these rooms his guide led him, and set down the lantern.

"Sleep, then; in an hour Li Fan will bring you food."

ALONE, Carrick looked about. A wooden bench, an open window in the wall that showed the stars, a few tattered and worn silk hangings and some rags that had been blankets; nothing else. But he was too exhausted to care. He staggered to the bench, dropped upon it, and as his eyes closed it was in the thought that wakening would bring him back to sanity.

For indeed he believed himself in the grip of some wild illusion. . . .

When he opened his eyes again, it was to find a tall figure shaking him. Carrick swung his feet to the floor and blinked. The man was clad half in armor, half in tattered robes, bore a quiver at his waist and a long bow slung across his shoulders, and wore the conical helmet of the old imperial guard, with a peacock feather sticking up from it.

"Here is food, lord," said the other. "I am Li Fan. This is all the food we have, from the store-rooms of the ancient people. Sometimes animals come for water and we shoot them, but none have come in a long time. My master is preparing to receive you. I will return."

He strode out of the room.

So it was true, then! Carrick roused, stretched, and turned to the dish of food beside the lantern. It was a sort of gruel made from grain, almost tasteless, but he devoured it avidly. His mind raced.

No other food, eh? It appeared that the original Wang Ch'ien Lin had occupied the dwelling-place of a forgotten race more or less intact with food supplies and living quarters. More likely, thought Carrick, it was simply some ancient monastery, unoccupied and forgotten across the centuries. Neither theory was impossible, for in the Gobi all things are possible. Carrick himself had seen the ruins of a great and unknown city laid bare by the winds; but

when he returned a week later, there was only an enormous dune of yellow sand to mock him.

With never-failing water and a great store of grain, these people could exist; exist, and no more. Carrick shivered as he thought of what their life must have been across the years, from birth to death, cooped up here, closed in by death and desolation, waiting eternally for a message that never came. Only the inbred patience of Chinese could have endured such a life.

Another drink; then he lit a cigarette at the lantern and stood up, holding the light aloft. A mark on the wall had caught his eye. Putting the lantern close, he uttered an exclamation of astonishment. There were penciled words in Russian, half effaced, but he did not know the language. He could make out only the figures "1883."

"The Russian whom the old chap mentioned, eh?" he muttered. "But—what's this?"

Scratches showed above the penciled words. A knife-point had made them in the sandstone, and Carrick thrilled as he got the light angled across the scratches until he could read them, for they were English words:

*Ivory Buddha no back beware
right eye God help you if you
read this no escape J. Dillon 54*

"Thanks, Dillon, old chap!" muttered Carrick. "So you were here in 1854, eh? One of the vanished adventurers of a past generation. Apparently this Ivory Buddha is the big boy outside in the temple, the one with the ivory inlay. He has no back, eh? And beware of his right eye. Well, the place was probably more populous when you were here—less run down, as it were. Just at present, I don't think there's much to beware of, with only ten inhabitants left all told! At the same time, I grant you the truth of your last statement. Unless I could get my horse, there's no escape, that's sure."

At this moment Li Fan appeared.

"Heavenborn, the great maternal ancestor is awaiting you!"

UNWASHED, unshaven, but with his wounded head feeling much better, Carrick followed the yellow man.

They went on through the long hall of empty chambers, turned abruptly toward the left, away from the face of the cliffs, and Li Fan pulled aside a thick hanging.

Carrick stepped forward into a large cavern chamber which woke his sharp astonishment.

Lights blazed on all sides. Before him in a huge temple chair, whose lacquer was sadly peeled, sat Wang Ch'ien. Two guards stood on either hand, in armor, holding long spears; but these were women, as their faces betrayed. On the floor were tattered fragments of once glorious rugs. These, and the embroideries hanging on the walls, showed that the original Wang had brought his household goods here as well as his wives.

IT was on the man in the big chair, however, that Carrick's attention was fastened. Garbed in the old style as a mandarin of the second class, with dragon-embroidered robes, Wang was a puny, colorless creature—less than a shadow in contrast with the stalwart Li Fan, who stood by the entrance. His face was weak, childish. No doubt he had spent his entire life here in the cavern chambers.

That there were other such rooms appeared from an opening to the right of the chair, where a woman peered out affrightedly at the intruder.

"Welcome, foreign devil," said Wang in a thin, febrile voice. "You have brought a message from the imperial court?"

"A message indeed, but not addressed to you," said Carrick. "Not the message you have been expecting, indeed. I regret that there was a misunderstanding about the situation."

"What!" Wang leaned forward a little, his claw-like hands grasping the chair-arms, and terrible consternation in his pallid features. "No message? Not addressed to me?"

"Honorable Wang, your very existence is unknown outside this place," answered Carrick without evasion.

"That may well be," said Wang sadly, and fell back in his chair. "But the court—"

"There is no longer a court," said Carrick. "For twenty years the dynasty of the Manchus has been extinct. Peking is no more the capital. There is no court and no country; it has been divided up among various rulers. All the old customs are swept away."

Wang laughed weakly. "So you would come with such lies, eh? After saying that you bore a message—"

"That is my message," broke in Carrick.



Carrick recollected the horses—his sole means of escape! With one wild leap he started for the stairs.

"Liar!" Swift wild fury flamed in the liquid eyes of the creature before him. "Like that Russian who came in the time of my grandfather, and lied! You have brought no message at all. You were not sent here—you are a mere wanderer in the desert, who found this place!"

"Well,"—Carrick smiled cheerfully,— "that may be so, and you are in luck. I can be of great service to you—"

"Silence! We want none of your service," cried out Wang. "Any such as you who come here, are slain. Take him away, Li Fan; at sunrise, lead him out before the great Buddha and let him ascend the dragon."

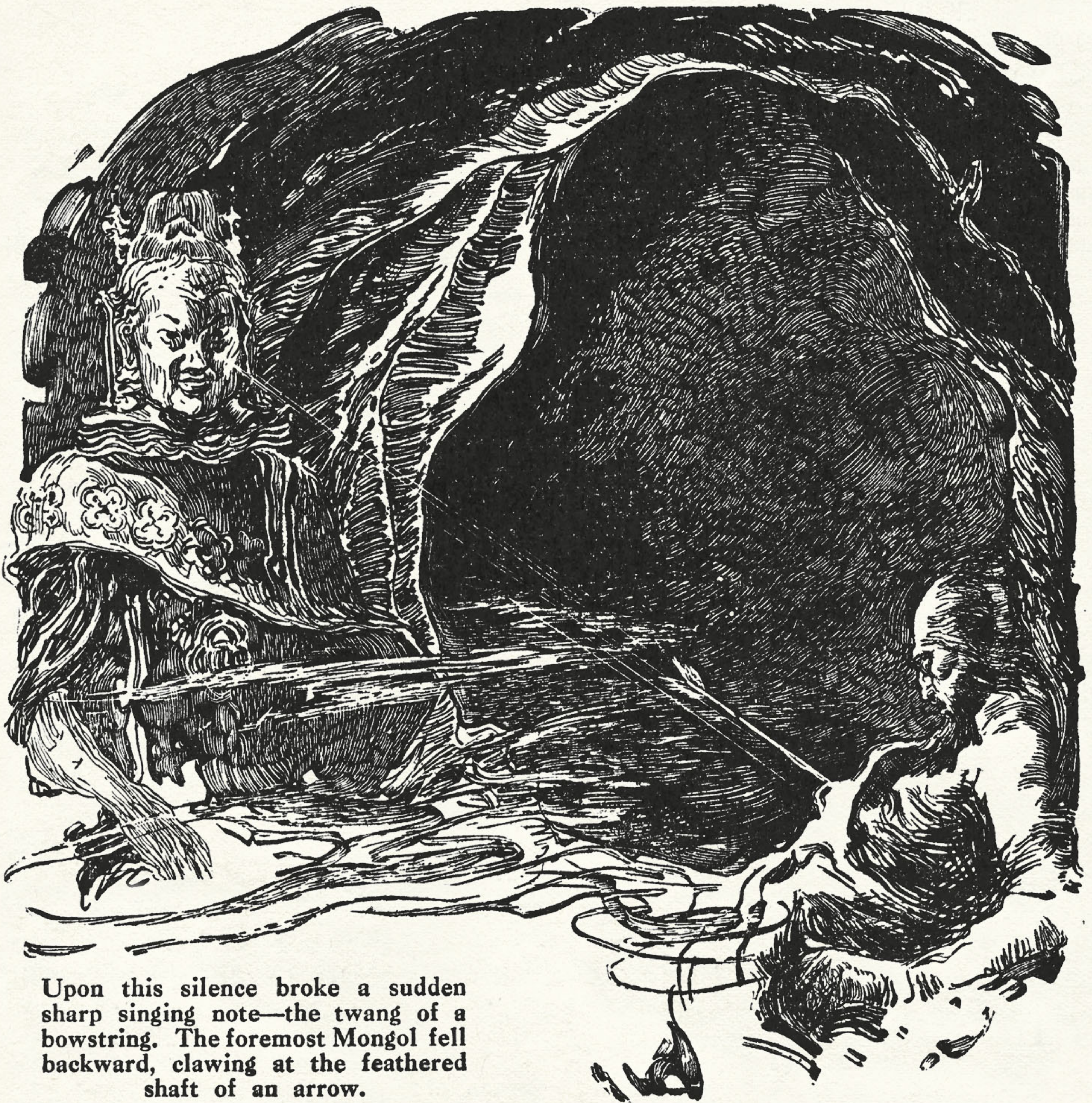
Carrick stared at him, astounded.

"But you cannot do this thing!" he exclaimed angrily. "It is mad folly, and you—"

"It is the custom of our ancestors," said Wang, with a gesture. "Go quietly, or you die this moment."

Carrick glanced around. He saw that Li Fan, at the door, had slipped the string of his bow into the notch, had laid an arrow on the string, was watching intently.

This was the most fantastic part of the whole affair. Carrick had taken for granted that he could talk with this Wang, could show him how the outside world lay, could make plans with him and so assure his own eventual escape from this temple. To cut the interview short in childish petulance was sheer absurdity.



Upon this silence broke a sudden sharp singing note—the twang of a bowstring. The foremost Mongol fell backward, clawing at the feathered shaft of an arrow.

Yet so it was cut short.

Through Carrick's mind flashed everything. He could shoot this poor fool here and now; or better still, the archer—for apparently no one else threatened him. The place was at the mercy of his pistol. Yet, to shoot down Li Fan went against the grain, at the present moment. Time enough if he were forced to do so.

He smiled at the irony of it; this weakling threatening him, dooming him to death, even while the fate of all those here reposed in his pocket. He shrugged.

"Very well, honorable Wang," he said. "If you reconsider the matter and wish to talk with me before doom falls upon you, I am at your service."

He turned, smiled at Li Fan, and gestured to the entrance. The archer watched him suspiciously, shaft on string, and followed him from the room at a motion from Wang. Outside, Carrick took up the lantern which had been left there, and began to retrace his way.

"These rooms," he said to the archer at his heels, "were where your people lived?"

"When there were people, heavenborn," answered Li Fan, somewhat astonished that this foreign devil should take his fate so calmly. "Listen to me!" he went on. "It is evident that you do not fear to ascend the dragon, but at the same time no man eats gold with a smile. Therefore, at dawn, I shall waken you and bring you a drink. Swallow it, and you will not feel the sting when the Buddha smites you."

"Oh!" Behind all this talk of death, expressed in the usual Chinese euphemisms, Carrick suddenly remembered the warning on the wall. "Very well, Li Fan; I think you are more of a man than that poor devil of an imitation mandarin. When the time comes, I'll remember that you were a friend."

"He, at least, is my master," said the archer curtly.

"It seems to me that you are no fool, Li Fan. If you were master here—"

"That cannot be while he lives, heaven-born. You cannot bribe me."

"Heaven forbid! Has he any son to inherit after him?"

"None, lord."

"I see. Why wait until dawn to kill me?"

"It is the custom," said Li Fan simply. "When the sun is up over the desert in the east, the Buddha faces the light and strikes down any who may be there."

"Pleasant custom!" Carrick laughed lightly. "Then from dawn until the sun is up, there will be an interval of an hour?"

"Half an hour, lord," said Li Fan, thus reckoning time after the Chinese fashion, which comprehends two western hours in its one. "Time enough for the drink to work well. You will feel nothing."

"You are kind. How is the old man named whom I met below?"

"He is my uncle, heavenborn, and he is named Li T'ang."

CARRICK came again to his dismal chamber, and when he had entered with the light, Li Fan closed the door and slipped a heavy bar into place outside.

Once more Carrick examined the scratches on the wall, thoughtfully. This message from the unknown Dillon made everything clear enough; somehow Dillon had learned the secret before treading his last path.

The great Buddha had no back; the image, then, was a mere shell, towering high in that open chamber of the gods and facing out across the sunrise desert. The right eye, eh? Probably both eyes were empty, and death could strike out from either one alike. The victim would be led to a certain place on the platform, to await his doom—drugged, immobile, unable to resist or escape.

Carrick extinguished the light and went to the window. This, a bare opening in the outer wall, looked over the desert. The stars twinkled above with glorious brilliance, the moon was out of sight, being high above. Below, the Gobi stretched endlessly, without a break, without a light—ah!

The gaze of Carrick picked up a distant, flaming radiance of yellow light that glowed lower but no larger than the stars. He regarded it a long while, then turned to the wooden bench and curled up. He was asleep almost at once.

So passed the night.

When he wakened, once again Carrick found a figure with a light standing over him. This time it was not Li Fan, but the latter's uncle, old Li T'ang, who had just set down a huge bronze cup, and another bowl of the tasteless gruel.

"Hello! You, eh?"

"Your humble slave salutes you, venerable ancestor," said the old man politely. "Dawn is in the sky, the moon-fairy has retired. Here is the cup that my unworthy nephew promised you should have. Also some food. But first drink until the cup is empty."

"Accept my thanks," returned Carrick. "By the way, Li T'ang, did you see anything of my horse last night?"

"I myself went out to seek, heaven-born. The horse was dying—by now, he is dead."

Carrick drew a deep breath, then shrugged.

"Very well. Who was the young man with you last night?"

"The last of the Wu family, heaven-born."

"Is he, also, an archer?"

"Yes, and an excellent hunter. He is cutting up your dead horse now, and I regret that you will not be here to taste of the meat. It is a great delicacy. I have not tasted meat in three years, since my nephew found a dying camel while hunting, and brought in meat. Well, presently I shall return. Farewell."

The withered ancient departed, barring the door again. Carrick had considered striking him down, but there was no haste whatever about leaving here. Time enough to use his pistol when he was led out to execution. Beyond doubt, Wang would be on hand to witness it, and perhaps the five women as well.

"They'll see something unexpected, then!" thought Carrick, and chuckled to himself.

SUDDENLY he remembered the light he had seen on retiring. He went to the window, eagerly, but the desert below was only a vast gray inchoate waste. The dawn had barely broken.

Carefully emptying the bronze flagon out of the window, Carrick tasted the bowl of gruel, found it apparently without drugs, and polished it off. Then he lit a cigarette, took out his pistol, made sure the clip was full, and went to the window again.

He waited there, watching as the desert below became more distinct.

Suddenly he started, craned forward, climbed into the deep embrasure for a better view. The huge expanse of sand, off to the eastward, showed nothing at all; but here, almost below the cliff, a moving object caught his eye.

Not one object either, as he presently determined, but four. Lighter grew the eastern sky, and presently was faintly streaked with color. Four Mongols with horses, Carrick saw; they were riding along rapidly but unevenly, one being in the lead. Then this one sprang off, stood looking around him, and pointed toward the cliff.

Carrick understood. They were following his trail. A few moments later, however, they had passed in beyond his range of vision.

GRADUALLY the sun-fingers streaked the eastern sky with pink and gold. Sunrise was still some time away when Carrick turned quickly from the window. The bar of his door was shot, and the door was flung open to show the old man.

"Heavenborn!" he exclaimed excitedly. "Did you have servants following you?"

"No," said Carrick. "Enemies."

The other stared at him. "You have not drunk the cup?"

Remembering, Carrick slumped a little, yawned, and pointed to the empty bronze flagon.

"You see. I feel strange—dull and heavy."

Li T'ang's face cleared.

"We have seen four horsemen approaching," he said. "They are not your servants?"

"No. Enemies, I tell you. Chinese. Your people."

"Sons of Han!" The old face leaped with delight and joy. Like a flash, Li T'ang was out of the doorway, slammed the door, shot the bar, and was gone.

"Oh, damn!" exclaimed Carrick angrily. "You old fool, why didn't you give me a chance to warn you? Let those cursed raiders get in here, and they'll smash everything and everyone! Four of that gang, trailing me down. I suppose you think they may have the message from Peking, eh? They'll have another kind of message, blast it! And I'm locked up here!"

He raged in vain, for there was none to answer him, and his blows on the massive door raised only empty echoes.

Impossible to see anything below, for the window was high on the cliff; be-

sides, the rock bulged out underneath the shelf where these dwellings stood.

Presently the glow in the eastern sky was all crimson and gold, and the brazen mass of the sun was trembling on the horizon line. Then the bar was shot back again, and in the doorway appeared old Li T'ang, trembling with eagerness. Carrick remembered his rôle this time and came heavily to his feet as the old man shook his shoulder.

"Come, heavenborn, come! Our honorable master is waiting."

"Warn him!" exclaimed Carrick. "I tell you, these are enemies—"

The other laughed. "Sons of Han are not enemies! I see the drink has worked well. Let me take your arm, lord. Wu is down below to greet them when they come, so do not worry. It is too bad that you cannot be here when they arrive."

Carrick grunted ironically.

He let the old man take him by the arm and lead him forth. They passed back along the open shelf of rock, but could see nothing of the scene below the cliffs. Now they were in the corridor, and a moment later stepped into the immense semi-circular hall of the gods.

The sun was just showing at the horizon.

THE scene that greeted him remained indelibly impressed upon Carrick's memory. Striking in from the open side of the hall, the morning light illumined every detail perfectly. There was the enormous Buddha, standing full thirty feet high and facing the east; it was in the center of the semi-circle. Carrick saw now that it was overlaid in large part with ivory plates, yellowed with age, while gems sparkled from it.

On either side were other images, but smaller ones, and numbers of the perpendicular jade slabs with their ancient inscriptions. On the left of the Buddha—that is to say, on the side whereon Carrick also stood—was Wang Ch'ien in his cracked old temple chair, pallid and uneasy despite his gorgeous robes. About him were now five figures in glittering apparel and holding spears—all five of his women attired in men's armor, no doubt to impress the foreign devil who was about to die.

"Quickly, heavenborn!" Li T'ang urged Carrick forward by the arm, pointing to the shelf of rock directly in front of the Buddha, overhanging the gulf below. "I will show you where to stand—"

Clearly and distinctly, reverberating through the chamber, rolling along the corridors, came the sound of a rifle-shot, then another, then a third.

Old Li stood with fallen jaw, petrified. Wang leaped to his feet, crying out shrilly. At once Carrick knew exactly what must have happened. That poor devil down below had been killed by the murderous raiders he had welcomed. Carrick looked at the huge Buddha, whose left eye-socket indeed gaped emptily, but whose right eye was invisible from where he stood.

Then, quickly slipping away from the stupefied Li T'ang, Carrick darted behind the nearest slab of jade and stood crouched, waiting, pistol in hand. Wang saw him and screamed something, one of the women shook a spear at him—then they had other matters to think about, as a terrible cry quavered through the great chamber.

"Master! Flee! They are enemies—they—"

The figure of Wu came into sight, stumbling, staggering forward from the opposite side, where the stairs from below gave access to this place of the gods.

Even as his cry rose, however, it was drowned in the thunderous report of a rifle directly behind him. He pitched forward on his face and lay quiet. The echoes rolled heavily and then died out into silence.

Even the hysterical Wang was stilled, as he and his women stared at the dead man, then at the four figures who now crept forward in awe and wonder and leering delight. Four Mongols, indeed, or rather Chinese in Mongol costume, their coats flung open, rifles ready. In this dread silence they came on slowly, then with more speed, in single file.

The sight of the huge Buddha meant nothing to them except loot. Old Li T'ang they did not observe, for he stood in the shadowed entrance, unmoving. But the splendid figures of Wang and the five armed guards held their suspicious, alert gaze as they circled.

One by one, they drew out in front of the Buddha, their figures black against the molten mass of fire that was the sun. Then they paused, staring at the figure of Wang, who panted with fear and stood holding to his chair.

UPON this silence broke a sudden sharp singing note—the twang of a bowstring. A shaft of light leaped from the right eye of the Buddha.



The foremost Mongol fell backward, clawing at the feathered shaft of an arrow.

Carrick, however, had not been alone in catching a glimpse of that light-flashing arrow. A yell burst from another Mongol, his rifle flashed up, and he pumped shot after shot at the face of the Buddha. His companions opened fire ruthlessly upon the only things in their sight—the splendid group beside the knee of the image.

Wang shrieked horribly and slumped back in the chair as bullets tore through him. His women leaped in wild flight, hot lead pursuing them. One pitched forward close to Carrick; another was rolling, screaming in agony. A second Mongol had fallen with a shaft through his body, but lifted himself and fired again and again.

The face of the Buddha was a smashed and splintered ruin, and from the right eye dripped down a stream of blood—a fearful and terrible thing to see. No more arrows came. But by this time Carrick's heavy pistol was in action.

The wounded Mongol slumped down as a slug tore through his head. The other two, taking warning, had darted behind one of the great jade slabs opposite. From here, they opened fire on Carrick and drove him to cover. One of them deliberately began shooting down the wildly shrieking women. The last one fell, just as Carrick plumped a bullet into the third of the raiders.

Only one Mongol now remained.

He fired twice, rapidly, the bullets whanging and whistling off the jade slab sheltering Carrick. Then his rifle was silent. An instant later, Carrick caught a scant glimpse of him sliding behind another slab. By this time full daylight brought out every tiniest detail of the great chamber in ghastly relief.

Carrick lifted his pistol, waited grimly. Sure enough, he glimpsed the Mongol, and the pistol roared. But the desert man had slipped away again—his figure

was swallowed in the mouth of the corridor-stairway opposite.

And at this instant, Carrick recollected the four horses which must be waiting down below. His sole means of escape! If that fourth man reached them, he himself was lost, doomed to remain here.

With one wild leap, he started across the chamber for the stairs.

He ran like a madman, the one thought driving him. Here behind him remained only death, with the old Li T'ang. He slipped in blood, recovered, and an instant later gained the head of the stairs.

BEFORE him was pitch darkness, the light penetrating but a little way. But he remembered how he had come, and there were no branch passages to confuse him. He stumbled down the steps, taking wild chances, brought up against a wall at the turn where the crucifix was, and continued his way recklessly.

Then, unexpectedly, light appeared ahead. He plunged into the ground-level chamber where the water dripped. It was empty. Out beyond, however, the clumsy figure of the Mongol was just approaching the group of four small, sturdy desert horses, who stood with lowered heads.

Carrick lifted his pistol as he came out into the sand and blinding sunlight, and fired.

The Mongol whirled about with a yell. His rifle came up; he fired again and again. But he had been an instant too slow. With the second shot, he pitched backward and lay, arms outspread, face to the sky.

His first shot, however, had reached its mark.

Carrick felt the thudding tug of the bullet, though he felt no pain. He stumbled forward and came to the horses. The pistol fell from his hand. The animals looked at him in dumb astonishment, brute questioning. Somehow he gained the nearest and clutched at the saddle.

For a moment everything went black before him. He had lost all coherent thought except that here was his one and only way of escape. His brain cleared momentarily. The horse was dragging away, sidling, eying him with suspicion and fear. Carrick made one supreme effort and dragged himself into the saddle, twined his fingers in the heavy, shaggy mane—

That was all he remembered.

Hours later, it must have been, he came to his senses for a fleeting moment. He was still in the saddle, bareheaded, the sun pouring down its pitiless blaze upon him; thirst tormented him, there was a horrible agony in his side. He looked around with haggard, bloodshot eyes, and saw only sand and scattered rock. The red cliffs had vanished.

With a groan, he lowered his head and slumped in the saddle.

"Good God, man!" said Bellinger. "You've been raving like a maniac for two days—all about some ghastly place!"

Carrick stared around, incredulous.

Here was Bellinger, there was Soruth, the grinning Mongol hunter. A little distance away stood the light truck. It was night, and a ruddy fire leaped from blazing poplars. The Toghrak spring!

"Where—how—"

"Close your trap," said Bellinger. "You've got a nasty wound in the side, but it'll heal in good shape. No talk. What kind of a dream were you having, anyhow? We found you aboard a Mongol pony who had probably headed for this water-hole with you. You were sure done up—a sight! But you'll pull through."

"Get out? Sure we will. We've the light truck, with spare gas, grub and water. We can circle around and make it in a week's time. By then you'll be on your feet, old man. But don't give us any more pipe-dreams about an Ivory Buddha and so forth!"

CARRICK told me all about it, a week after he got into Tientsin. He was pretty well broken by what he had been through.

And nobody would believe his yarn. He was either politely discredited, or thought a bit out of his head. He had not an atom of proof to show, of course. But, as he said to me, he had a wound in the side and had been found along with that Mongol pony.

"That's proof enough for me," he added. "I wasn't sunstruck, and I didn't dream it. And besides, I have memories. Every time I think of the smashed ivory face of that Buddha, with poor Li Fan's blood spouting down from the eye—oh, hell! I'm going back there some day, that's all. The museum will send me if no one else will."

So far as I know, however, Carrick has not been back. And I am the only person who really believed his story—as you may see for yourself.

*The not - soon - forgotten
story of a ham actor who
played one great scene.*



Morley began to clap; Dicer and I joined in. We smacked our palms together until it sounded like an audience applauding.

Bad Actor

By FRANKLIN H. MARTIN

HORACE J. FROTHINGHAM was a bad actor. I got to know him pretty well up here at Grant Island Penitentiary. He was doing a full-length stretch as a fourth offender. Me, I'm here from now on too—both members of the Forever and Ever Club. I don't believe anybody was ever really born with a moniker like *Horace J. Frothingham*; in fact, I know he made it up. Phony, like everything else—the guy wasn't even a good forger. No matter what name he wrote on a check, it still looked like *Frothingham*. Just like no matter what rôle he played on the stage, he was still playing *Hamlet*.

The first time I heard him sounding off, out in the exercise yard, I pegged him for a nut, or a snowbird, or both. He was tall and stooped, and he had a long, sad pan, something like a starved bloodhound. And his voice! It was so deep it seemed to be coming from way down under his shoes. And he made gestures when he talked. So help me, the guy never said as much as yes or no without appropriate gestures.

This first day he was standing there with a ring of goofy stir-bugs around him, head back, eyes rolling, arms waving like a double-jointed semaphore. His forward leg was bent at the knee like the first marine about to jump out of a boat.

And he was giving them the business—something about some guy staring up wistfully at a tiny patch of blue the prisoners called the sky.

"You make that up?" I asked him.

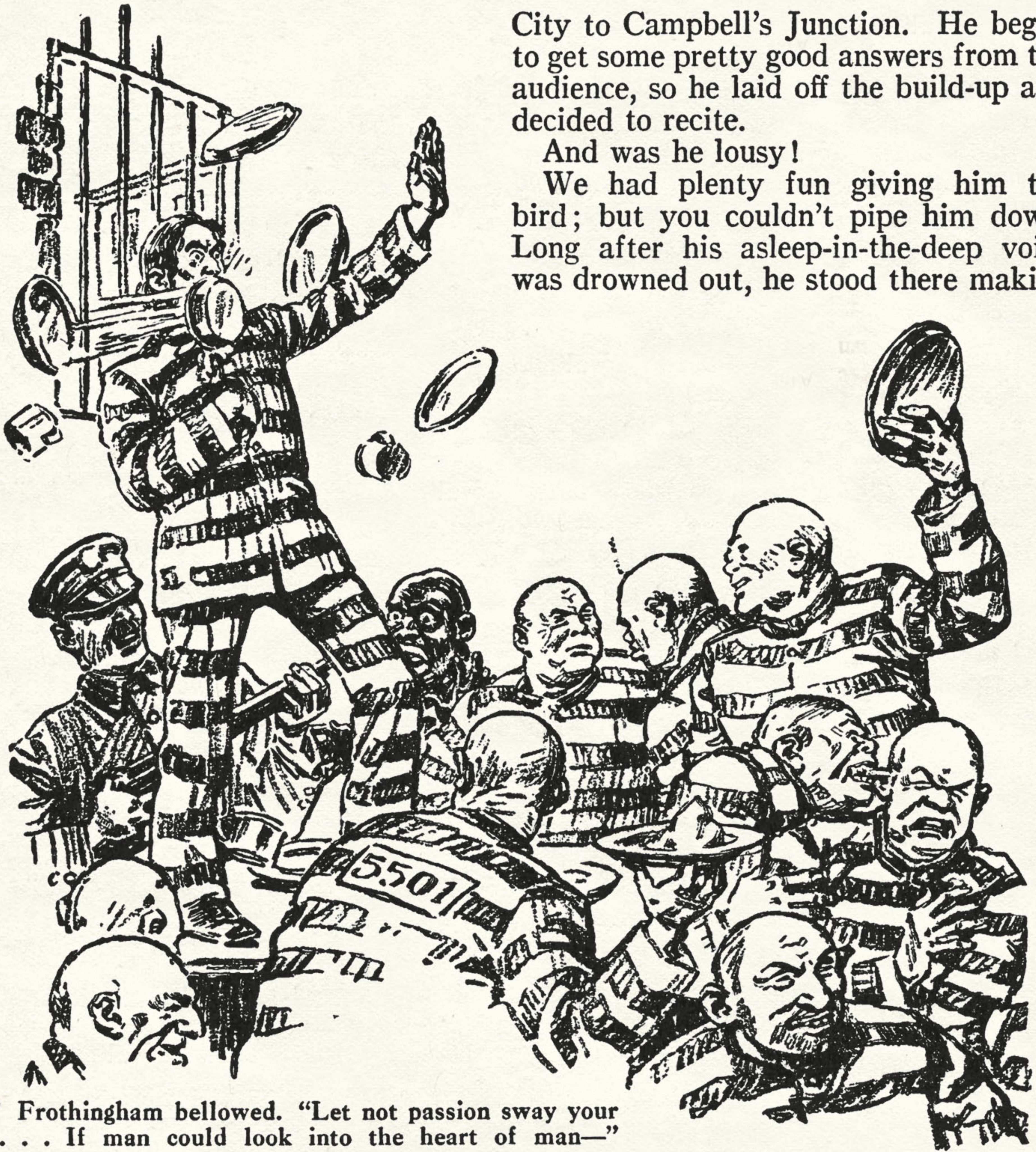
He turned his long sad kisser my way and stared at me with eyes that looked like two empty holes ringed with ink. "That is the 'Ballad of Reading Gaol,'" he rumbled. "By Oscar Wilde."

I had to let that ride, because I have never been in the can in Reading, and so I didn't know what kind of a guy this Oscar Wilde was. Still, I hate to hear a guy have the harpoon tossed into him when he's not around to talk for himself. So I just said: "Yeah?"

He finished that one and started to rumble about, "Stone walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage—"

It was a little too much for Vancouver Whitey, who only had thirty-five more years to go. Vancouver started to giggle. Vancouver Whitey's giggle sounds like the escape siren. So the screws came over and busted up the meeting. . . .

Warden Commerford was a pretty good guy as wardens go—he even allowed Horace J. Frothingham to let his hair grow long, the way he was used to wearing it. And Warden Commerford was always in favor of any harmless ways of taking the boys' minds off the fact that the gate was



"Stop!" Frothingham bellowed. "Let not passion sway your hearts . . . If man could look into the heart of man—"

kept locked; so we had a band, and put on shows a couple of times a year and had a ball-team. We had a horizontal bar in the yard for a while, but the boys kept digging the bar out for uses other than exercise, so he took it away. But the shows were pretty good. We had three or four ex-vaudeville performers and two good quartets and so on. At the closed shows, when there weren't any outsiders or freeholders or parole board members, the Warden let us shout anything at the performers that we wanted to. Sort of like a burlesque show.

The first time Horace J. Frothingham walked out on the stage, he stood there with his arms folded for several minutes, just staring out at us. He looked like an old-time boss undertaker. Then he held out one hand for silence, didn't open his trap until we all shut up. Then he told us in words about six feet long that he was hot stuff. He was an actor, he said. He had played before royalty. He had laid 'em in the aisles from New York

City to Campbell's Junction. He began to get some pretty good answers from the audience, so he laid off the build-up and decided to recite.

And was he lousy!

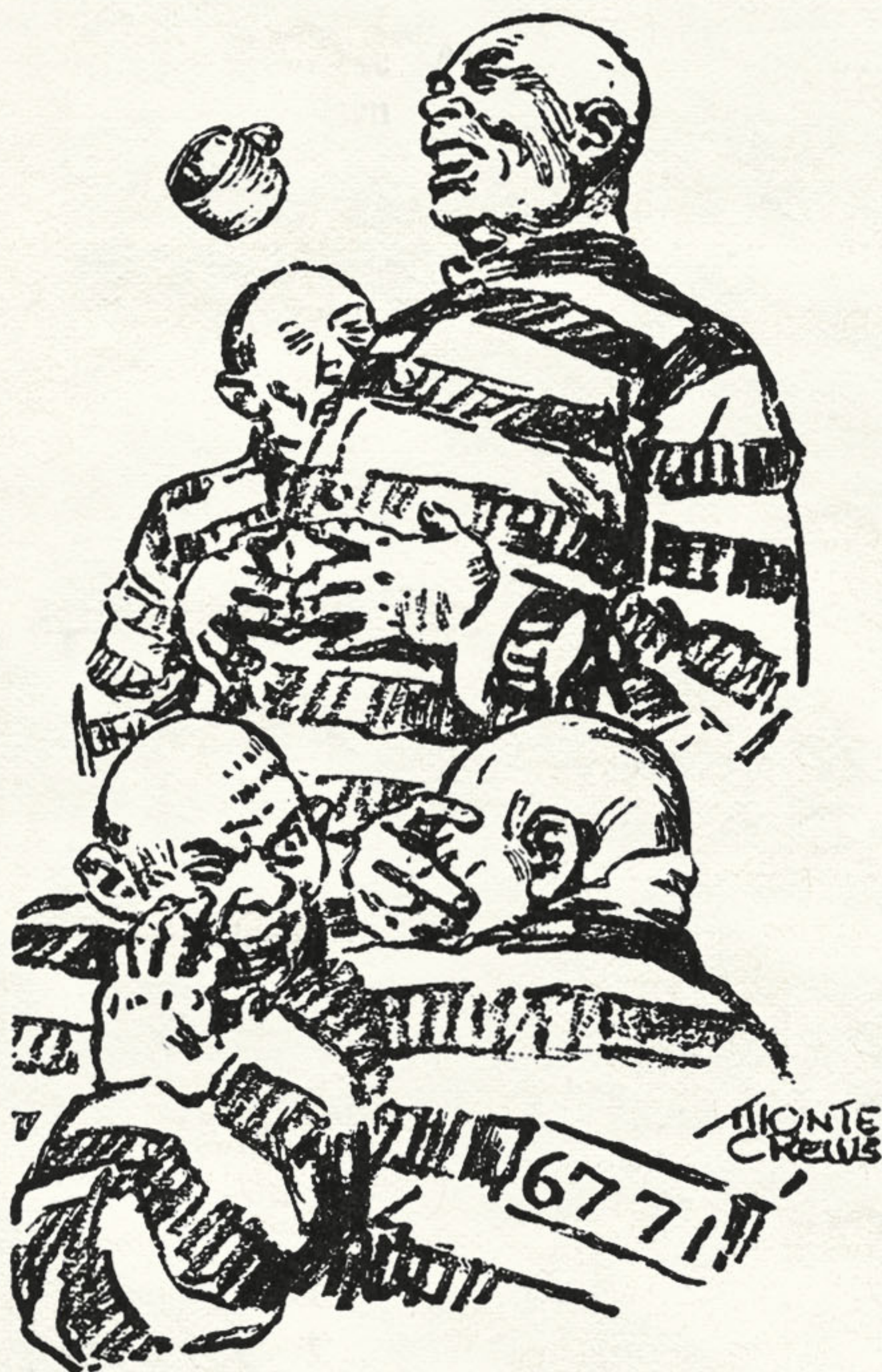
We had plenty fun giving him the bird; but you couldn't pipe him down. Long after his asleep-in-the-deep voice was drowned out, he stood there making

gestures, his big mouth going on and on. His black eyebrows flapped like a crow's wings. His whole lanky frame trembled. After a while he stopped, and stood bowing, while the windows in the recreation-room vibrated with the boos. Then he turned and walked off with a slow, stiff-legged gait, bowed again from the wings, made a sweeping gesture as if he was taking off a big hat in response to a tremendous ovation.

Afterward I found out from Dicer Hart, who was once in vaudeville, that this Horace J. Frothingham was known all over the corn-belt circuit as the world's sourest actor. He'd played in stock companies in the red-barn belt, and the only time he ever got any applause was one night when he was *Simon Legree* and the bloodhounds got him tangled up in the leashes, and he tripped himself up with his own bull-whip, and he and the hounds and the whip and the phony blocks of ice went down in a heap, and the hounds dragged him all over the

stage on the seat of his pants. That was the only time Horace J. Frothingham ever heard the acclaim of the audience ring in his big hairy ears.

Once he broke up a near-riot in the mess-hall, and he never stopped talking about it. It wasn't the way he expected to break it up, but the effect was the same. It was one winter's day at noon. No talking, just the clunk of the enamel mess-gear and the sound of several hundred cons packing it in. Suddenly somebody ripped out a curse. Then came the crash of a bench going over backwards, and the solid smash of a fist against



bone. And before you could put down your coffee-mug, one corner of the mess-hall was a whirlpool of slugging, battling guys in gray. The screws hopped in, but it got off too quick for them. The old gong began clanging. The doors snapped shut. Metal clicked as the screws released the safety-catches on their riot guns. Benches splintered. Curses, shouts—fists and spoons and coffee-jugs flying.

Then Horace J. Frothingham leaped to the top of the table. His booming voice sounded like surf pounding rocks. "Stop! Stop!" he bellowed. "Let not passion sway your hearts, for violence is the trap of fools—"

You could tell he was quoting from some ham play he'd once acted in. Anyway, his volume was good. He stood there shouting the speech of a village philosopher in some crummy opus, while

the battle boiled around him and benches and mugs sailed past his noggin.

Suddenly somebody let fly with a rice pudding. It caught him square in the mug. That was funny. It was the funniest thing I ever saw in twenty years in stir. But this dope just kept on shouting and waving his arms, begging the boys to, "Lay aside cruel and bestial methods—"

Sock! Another of the combatants took time out to smack Frothingham with his bowl of rice. Then another.

Then big black Jigger Jackson, a mean dinge if I ever saw one, and one of the birds who'd started the fight, looked at Frothingham and began to laugh. And when Jigger laughed, he brought it up from way down and sent it up around the rafters. He laughed so hard he quit fighting. Then, all at once, they weren't slugging and slashing each other with tin spoons or coffee-jugs. They all began to bombard Frothingham with food—while he stood there reciting about, "If man could look into the heart of man—"

He was covered with rice pudding—plastered like a wall. It was very funny. Even the screws, that never laugh at anything, the guys who were all set a few seconds before to cut loose with riot guns—even those babies laughed.

And that broke up the fight.

IT was a couple weeks after the mess-hall fight that Frothingham showed me the picture of his daughter. A very sweet-looking kid: small face, sort of aristocratic; eyes big and dark and very serious, and a small, soft-looking mouth, but proud. Not a cry-baby mouth. I looked at the picture a long time and handed it back.

"You never sired that little doll," I scoffed.

He drew himself up, like the outraged hero in some punk play. "She is indeed the flesh of my flesh. I admit she favors her mother. Her poor dear mother—"

"Yeah," I agreed. "Hitched to a ham like you! A lousy actor and a worse forger. What a comfort you must have been to the home and fireside."

That's how he came to tell me his story.

The girl's mother died when she was five years old, and this sad-faced ham wanted to send the kid to a good school. He wasn't making enough, barnstorming, to keep himself in cardboard shirt-fronts, so he forged an endorsement to a note, bought the kid some things and sent her

to a nice quiet private school. At the end of thirty days, he started his first stretch in a place just as private but not so exclusive. In between times, the kid stayed with some old broken-down show folks who had a little shack in Colorado. Soon as Horace J. Frothingham got out of stir, he went on the road again. He wasn't out long before he pulled the same trick. You had to admit he looked sort of respectable. I guess that's what fooled people—that, and his deep voice and long double-jointed words. So the kid went to school again, and the ham went back into cold storage. . . .

By now the kid was nineteen years old and Horace was in for life as a chronic offender. She was all set to be a teacher, he told me, and was going with a young man who had a good job in a bank. When he said that, I snapped: "Where?"

Frothingham dropped his eyes and coughed. "Yes, in a bank. Ironical, isn't it?"

"Did this kid of yours know where you got the jack to send her to school?" I asked.

He coughed again, very theatrical. "A little evasion was necessary. I had to pretend I was doing rather well in my work. I—ah—even let her get the impression that I was something of play-boy, and my—ah—lapses from grace were due to my own high living. That was when she was growing up and beginning to be curious."

I could just picture this lug, living out of a bean can, wearing a long black coat that had turned green, with a moth-eaten fur collar, with newspapers stuck in to keep the wind off his scrawny chest, writing phony letters to the kid about his high life, so she wouldn't think she was living on crooked money.

THAT shows you what kind of squirrel-bait this guy was.

He wouldn't let her come to see him, but she wrote him once in a while. He told me, after he got one of her letters, that she was engaged to the lad who worked in the bank. He said he wished he could give her a wedding-present.

So he would tell me whenever he got a letter, and sometimes he'd read off parts of them. She sounded like a sweet kid, but very serious-minded for her age. Maybe having an old man who'd graduated from some of the best cans in the country made her a little thoughtful. One day he read from her letter a sentence saying that she had told her fiancé

that her old man really wasn't dead, but up here at Grant Island.

The old ham stared at the wall with his big, sad, dead eyes. "I am proud of her—but I wonder if she acted wisely. Her young man may be burdened with the usual prejudices of youth and respectability."

IT was soon after that I noticed Frothingham was sadder and more forlorn than ever. It was like he had stopped playing *Hamlet* and was playing the *Ghost*. I thought it was because he was not riding out the winter very well. His lungs weren't too good, and his clock used to miss beats every once in a while. He was in the infirmary a lot, too. I thought that was what made him look like he was playing hookey from a grave.

But it wasn't. He told me that the girl's young man had cooled off after she had told him about her old man. The young lad in the bank was too respectable to stomach the idea, I guess. Anyway, she didn't see him so much. My guess was the lad was still nuts about the girl, and was having to fight himself to give her up. The news worried Horace J. Frothingham. You could see the air going out of him, day by day, like his life was suffering a sort of slow leak. The last time he appeared at one of our shows, he was so weak and beaten-looking that the boys let him off with just a couple of half-hearted boos.

He was in the hospital wing about three weeks when the Warden sent for me and said Frothingham wanted to see me. When I got there, Dicer Hart, the ex-vaudeville hooper, and another old-time actor called Morley, were standing beside Frothingham's cot. They had the ham in one end of the room, by the windows. The guy's pan was as white as the pillow, his eyes like blobs of ink.

"I am about to shuffle off the mortal coil," he told me.

I said: "Aw, nuts! The boys got you on the program for the big show next month."

His head rolled on the pillow. "No. I am going." Then he started to make gestures, and quoting lines from a play.

*"And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief
candle!"*

*Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the
stage,
And then is heard no more—"*

Dicer and Morley and I all gave him a laugh, the way we always did when he recited, but he kept rolling his head back and forth on the pillow. "No. I am glad enough to go." Then he motioned me to lean over. "She is coming up. Be here soon. I told her to come—and bring the young man. I told her she must bring him."

"Your kid, you mean?" I asked. "She's coming to see you?"

"Yes." He closed his eyes for a second. "And I especially want you three gentlemen to be here when they are here. Is it too much to ask?"

Dicer and Morley and I said no; we'd just as soon stick around, as long as the Warden let us.

So we were there when Frothingham's kid came with a slim, good-looking lad. She was prettier than her picture. She looked like a thoroughbred, and you could see she was trying not to let the prison business get her. The young lad with her was pale and sort of grim-looking too. Soon as they reached the bedside, Horace J. Frothingham reared himself on one elbow and began to talk. His black, empty-looking eyes fastened on the girl's face with the hungriest look I ever saw in twenty years of looking at hungry-eyed convicts.

"DON'T talk, please," the old ham rumbled. "Just listen: I am making my last exit shortly. I want to right a tremendous wrong before I go." He made a gesture as if to reach for the girl's hand, then dropped his paw to the bedspread. "I am not your father."

"You aren't—my father?" The girl's voice was hushed, frightened.

"Don't talk," Frothingham frowned. "The curtain will soon be rung down. . . . You were a baby, a mere tot. Seventeen years ago there was a train-wreck when the bridge was washed out over Bitter Creek. Your father and mother were both killed. Your mother was beautiful; and your father—was a handsome man, a young lawyer from England."

I stood there staring at the guy. He was raving. The kid was his own daughter; I was sure of that. I looked at Morley; he had a very funny look on his pan.

"They left you in my care before they died," Frothingham rumbled on. "They gave me some money, too. But I spent the money that should have been yours—and robbed you of your birthright. I kept you, afraid to put you in a home, lest you be traced and they question me

about the money. . . . I do not know your right name, but it is not mine. Your parents—were aristocrats. . . . Too late now to make amends. Too late for anything except to ask your forgiveness for an unpardonable deed—"

The girl put her hands over her face, and the young lad with her slipped his arm around her shoulders.

Frothingham quavered: "Am I forgiven?"

"Yes," the girl sobbed. "Oh—yes."

"Then go!" Frothingham mouthed. "Go quickly. Both of you!"

The young lad took the girl out, his arm tight around her shoulders. Horace J. Frothingham reared up to watch them go, and for a minute his arms reached out, and I thought he was going to call his kid back—but he didn't, and she and her young man walked on out.

SUDDENLY Morley growled: "What the hell was that for? I know those lines you just spoke. That's the deathbed scene in the third act of 'Life's Retribution,' where the *Squire* tells the girl he's not her real father. I played that bit once in Raleigh."

"And there never was no train-wreck over Bitter Creek," Dicer Hart snapped. "Because—"

"You're right," Frothingham agreed. "It's from 'Life's Retribution.' I always wanted to play that part. I knew I'd be good. And I was good. I was terrific. Why, I held them spellbound. . . . Wasn't I good?"

"Sure," Morley said. "You were sensational. You really put those lines over."

"Then—" And Horace J. Frothingham reared up on both elbows. There was a wild look in his sad, bloodhound face. "How about some applause? How about a little—hand?"

Dicer Hart and Morley and I stood there looking at each other for a second. Then Morley began to clap. Dicer and I joined in. We stood beside the bed and smacked our palms together until it sounded like a whole audience applauding.

Frothingham settled back on the pillow, and a funny smile creased his long pan. His eyes closed, and his head bobbed several times, bowing, taking the applause—taking it on his last exit.

That's the way he went out, with that noise in his ears. I guess he never had heard much of it. Because he was such a ham—a bad actor.



The Story So Far:

IT was on no ordinary errand that the schooner *Cherokee* had sailed into the North Pacific, for her owner and navigator, young Doctor Lincoln Rand, had equipped her as a kind of floating infirmary in which he hoped to accomplish for the natives of North Pacific coast something of what another knight of medicine has done in Labrador on the Atlantic side. With him were his young wife Helena, and his educated Indian aid and friend Mokuyi.

A succession of storms drove the ship off her course, northward. Finally she grounded on a strange and savage coast, an oasis of the Arctic north of Siberia, somehow warmed by unknown ocean currents and by the fires of a great volcanic region that flamed beyond the horizon—a land thickly wooded, and supporting many and varied wild animals.

HAWK

The dramatic conclusion of this epic novel of the new-found wilderness whence, perhaps, came the American Indian.

Almost immediately upon landing, Rand and Helena and Mokuyi were beset by painted savages, and would have been killed had not Mokuyi addressed them in his native tongue. *And they understood him!* For these people were of the same stock as the American Indian, though they had never heard of the outside world.

A few months the newcomers lived among these primitive people; and here Helena's baby was born.

But only six weeks afterward, enemies raided the village; and both Rand and Helena were killed. Thereupon Mokuyi adopted the boy as his own; Mokuyi's native wife cared for him; and later Mokuyi himself taught the boy to speak and to read the English of his fathers.

Kioga, he was named—the Snow Hawk. And the boy throve amazingly in his early years. The bears and one mountain lion were his friends and allies; and in comradeship with these and other wilderness friends, he grew to powerful manhood.

His last link with the outer world was broken when his foster-parents Mokuyi and Awena were killed by Yellow Weasel, the head of the Long-Knife secret society. The evil-hearted shaman pursued the fleeing youth also—but it was Yellow Weasel who perished under Kioga's knife.

Snow Hawk's prowess in war led to his selection as chief of the tribe after the death of old Sawamic; and he directed their successful defense against a deadly attack by the plains people from farther north. . . . Shortly after this, from the cliffs along the shore Kioga caught sight of a yacht stranded below him; on her decks were the figures of white people!

Later Kioga learned their story: Allan Kendle, a wealthy young American, had sailed north on his yacht the *Alberta*, intending to collect specimens for an American museum; with him were his fiancée Beth La Salle and her brother Dan. They had been blown out of their course, and they had picked up a

of the *WILDERNESS*

By WILLIAM L. CHESTER

Illustrated by Jeremy Cannon

boatload of shipwrecked sailors who proved to be mongrel pirates; Kendle had been forced to confine them. Even as Kioga watched, the imprisoned pirates gained the deck, and a fierce struggle followed. Two unseen arrows from Kioga ended the fight in Kendle's favor. But the mutineers had captured Beth, carried her ashore and were fighting over her when Kioga rescued her, and carried her to safety in his cave high in the hills. Kendle led a party ashore to look for Beth, but after a deadly fight with Indians, he and one sailor were carried captive to the village.

In the nick of time Kioga rescued Kendle from torture at the stake; and after a running fight brought both him and Beth back to the ship. . . . So doing, he lost the friendship of the Indians, and he determined to go back to America with Kendle and his party.

Successfully Kioga piloted the *Alberta* through the reefs about Nato'wa. But the ice closed about them; presently the *Alberta* was crushed among the floes; and the surviving castaways set out on a desperate journey southward over the ice. (*The story continues in detail:*)

THAT night Kioga made a firebow of wood broken from the sledge. And in the flame of their crude lamp—made from an empty food-tin—they cooked the rest of the seal Kioga had harpooned.

With the specter of hunger laid for the time, life on the floes was fairly comfortable. Though the temperature was steadily dropping, their furs defended them from serious suffering. But the approach of winter was heralded by the prolonged sunset hours, when the sun skirted the horizon, painting the floes with rainbow hues. With growing frequency the multi-colored streamers of the flickering aurora took flight across the northern sky, darting and quivering in every direction, eclipsing stars and paling even the moon's glowing light.

For the girl these were hours of wonder, and Dan shared her awe. The strange natural phenomena had a parallel among the men. The two sailors were nervous and jumpy, growing hourly more irritable. Kendle became increasingly moody, short-tempered with his men.

Kioga kept his habitual calm. Daily he went forth in search of another seal, returning empty-handed without change of expression. This unruffled calm at last got on Kendle's nerves; one day he remarked with the trace of a sneer:

"The mighty hunter's not doing so well these days."

"Give him a chance," answered Dan in swift retort. "Seals don't stand around waiting to be killed."

Conscious that their situation had worked upon Kendle's mind, Beth made an attempt to placate him by reminding him of their debt to Kioga. "Not one of us would be here tonight if it weren't for him," she said. "Who else could have found a living animal in this dead white floe, and brought it in alone?"

This only aggravated Kendle's anger.

"It strikes me you're mighty enthusiastic about this Indian," he said.

She flared up: "Why shouldn't I be?"

"I suppose you have your reasons," he replied sulkily.

La Salle was on his feet at that. "What are you driving at, Allan, anyhow?"

"This isn't your affair," snapped Kendle, curtly menacing. "Stand aside!"



Then, stung by Beth's scorn and Dan's continued defiance, he drew back his fist as if to strike. Whatever his intention, it was suddenly checked by an iron grip upon his elbow that jerked him round as if he had but a child's strength. An instant later he was crushed to his knees, looking up into the white Indian's face. The intent to kill burned fiercely as Kioga's grip tightened on his neck, and Kendle knew the fear of death. The way of the savage with an enemy is short.

Only Beth's sharp cry of protest, her fingers tense on his arm, halted Kioga. Relaxing his hold a trifle, he looked up. The girl recoiled at the expression in his eyes. "You'd kill him—for a blow that never fell!" she breathed. And then, in swift horror, out of the near-hysteria into which the moment had plunged her, came words which she later was deeply to regret:

"After what I saw once before—I ought to have expected this." She referred to the Indian he sent over the Great Falls near the Caldrons of the Yei.

The full meaning of that would not come to him until later, but he was master of himself again and answered: "I will not forget what you have said."

He turned to Dan with a question.

"Had he reason to strike you?"

"I gave him cause," lied Dan, reluctant to reveal the provocation of their dispute.

Released, Kendle was rising, shaken and humiliated. Equally reluctant, but for different reasons, he made haste to share the blame. "I was most at fault," he said. "I forgot myself."

THUS, for the moment the matter ended. Next morning Kendle approached Beth with apparent humility.

"Forgive me for yesterday," he began. "I should have known better."

Something in the way he said it, some suggestion of lingering disdain for Kioga, irritated her, and she remained silent. And goaded by uncertainty, he then uttered what was in his mind, the worst thing he could have done.

"Or is it possible—that I was right?" he demanded suddenly.

The warm color rose to her face at that, a flush of indignation.

A rush of bitter anger, blind and unreasonable as his mood, ran through him.

"Of all women, you—and that bloody-handed savage!" he exclaimed. "Why, we've seen him kill a man in cold blood! Good God!"

With blazing eyes she faced him, countering fiercely: "Dare you say he did it callously, without good cause?" It was her declaration of faith.

Desperate, Kendle demanded:

"What do you know of Kioga? What is he? Just an ignorant wild man—a nameless nobody. And how about that native woman we saw on the river-bank? Do you know who *she* was?"

The girl went pale at the implication she had hitherto put from her mind. Yet she did not flinch. "I know that she loved him," was her defiant answer.

"No doubt," retorted Kendle dryly, adding: "He has a way with beautiful young women. But I will not let you throw yourself away on your handsome head-hunter."

For a moment she eyed him, between wonder and anger. Then in quieter tones, that overlaid the iron in her character: "The time is past when men 'let' women do things," she said. "This is the Twentieth Century." She turned away. He heard the brittle ice crunch under her feet as she walked back to the camp, leaving him with murder in his heart.

A naked Indian, a barbaric, paint-be-daubed leader of a wild woodland horde, to gain the interest of a woman like Beth La Salle! The incongruity of it was like a blow between the eyes. If Kendle could prevent it, Beth would never give her life into the keeping of such a man.

And now, stripped of normal standards by circumstances that were undeniably cruel, Kendle began to harbor thoughts from which two days since he would have recoiled with horror: His present situation was traceable to misplaced humanity, first in his failure to quell mutiny with bullets, secondly in his too-merciful treatment of the pirates. Was he to permit Beth to ruin her life because of similar scruples? Somewhere along the ice an opportunity might come to be rid of the Indian once and forever.

NOW the rigors of their situation began to bear more heavily upon them. They were reduced to cracking open the bones of the seal in search of marrow; and now Beth succumbed to exhaustion and was lashed to the sledge. The men tethered themselves to it for the double purpose of coöperation in the pull, and to avoid separation. In the darkness of night Dan, sensible that his failing strength was retarding the others, cut himself quietly off the trace, thinking by his death to relieve the others of a

burden. His absence was not discovered for an hour. All the crew favored pushing on, lest delay reduce the chances of ultimate rescue. But Kioga returned to find Dan, and presently came back carrying him over his shoulder, and put him on the sledge with Beth.

IN a crevasse, that night, they came upon the first hideous evidence of how the deserting sailors were sustaining life. They saw what remained of the man who had wished to leave Kendle behind several days earlier. To Kendle it looked as if dogs had been at the body, before he realized the frightful truth.

Kioga said nothing. But he vainly searched his memory for anything to parallel this among the cruelest tribes of Nato'wa. Not in all the history of winter famine among the Shoni had cannibalism ever been recorded.

Soul-sick and exhausted, they pushed on again, listening to the ominous crack of the floes under their feet. Deep crevasses appeared more frequently. Lifting the sledge over these was a back-breaking labor, requiring the last ounce of the Snow Hawk's superb but diminishing energies.

And then, to bar their slackening progress—open water, with the northern lights setting the sky afire overhead and seeming to purr over them like some vast predatory animal, savoring the struggles of its puny prey.

Black despair claimed those who had entered the North on the *Alberta*. Nor was Kioga oversanguine as to the prospect of their salvation now. But while the others gave way to their weariness, the white Indian prepared. In addition to the harpoon, with its length of line, he appropriated several fathoms of the frayed half-inch hempen rope which had been used to tow the sledge. Through his belt he thrust the broken remnant of the steel-shanked boathook.

Drawing new strength from this display of purposeful calm, Kendle took fresh hold upon himself and helped Kioga build a circular wall of ice, across which they draped their canvas, forming a shelter more adequate than any they had hitherto made. Beneath this they spread their few skins, and upon them Beth was laid, wrapped in the heavy slumber of complete exhaustion. Dan and Kendle considered it possible that a seal might break water off the edge of the ice near by. With the three cartridges left in his rifle, Kendle would be in a position to kill one if it came near enough.

Kioga, at his own suggestion, was to follow north along open water. With harpoon in hand he went forth again, moving silently and without haste, straight into the wind. For a time he inhaled naught but the salty smell of sea and ice. Pausing frequently to listen, at length he heard a distant hollow bellow, deep as the bay of a mastiff. Every sense tingled at that sound. Then, faint but unmistakable to him who had roamed the coast of Nato'wa at breeding-time, the tale-bearing wind brought news of meat. And what he scented was the lion of the sea, the dread *Awuk* of the Eskimo—walrus!

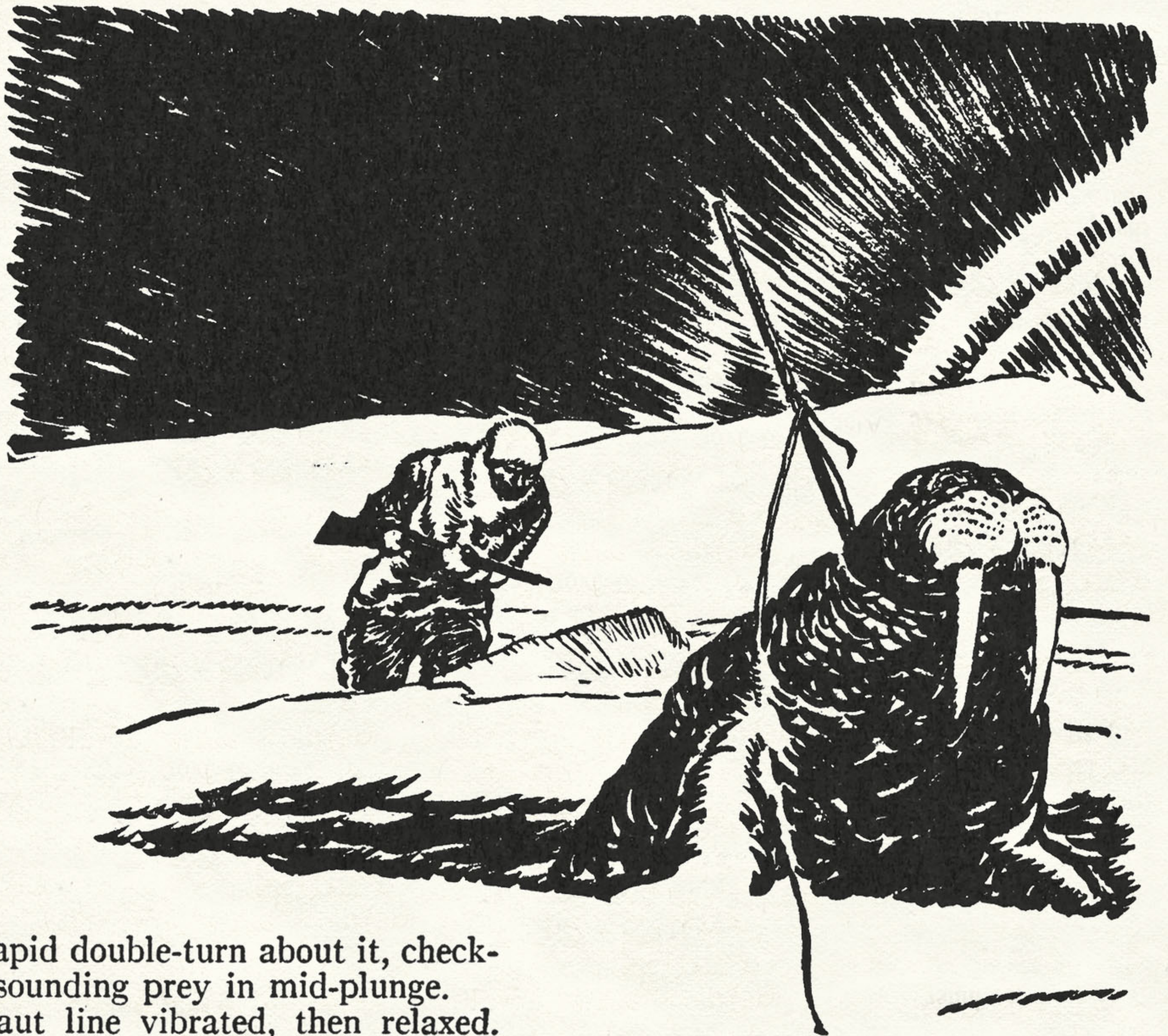
With weariness forgotten in that moment of excited discovery, Kioga turned from the open water, and taking cover behind hummocks and blocks of ice, came soon to a ridge forced up by the pressure. From atop the ridge he surveyed the field ahead.

A QUARTER-MILE away was a discoloration, a newly frozen area surrounded by older solid ice. As he watched, the discolored section was forced upward from below, and crumbled down about the grim head of a brown male walrus. Breathing with a roar, the animal sank. As it went under, Kioga slipped swiftly from his shelter and ran toward the spot. When the broken ice stirred anew, he was flat on his belly, until the walrus breathed and submerged; then up and sprinting forward, alternately hiding and stalking until but five yards of thin ice lay between him and the brink of the walrus pool.

Again that monster square head lifted above its surrounding ice, exhaling with pent-up force, shaking the sea-water from its crest, brandishing thirty-inch tusks which thrust down like bayonets from its upper jaw, masked by heavy quill-like bristles. Its protruding eyes fell upon the tense human figure crouched facing it with poised harpoon aglitter. Breast-high the walrus rose, fascinated for one second by the flash of moonlight on steel.

Back went the white Indian's arm, then shot swiftly forward. The glitter became a streak of pale light. In sudden alarm the walrus plunged—but with him went the sharp-steeled harpoon, buried deep beneath his right flipper.

Above on the ice, Kioga leaped back from the water's edge, paying out the rope coil by coil. Jabbing the remnant of the boat-hook at an angle into the ice, he



took a rapid double-turn about it, checking the sounding prey in mid-plunge.

The taut line vibrated, then relaxed. The beast rose, and broke up through the ice with thrashing tusks. But the hunter had moved back and was fixing iron and rope in solid ice at another point. Once more the harpooned beast fell back. Again Kioga changed position, before the ice burst up about the spot he had just quitted.

Through the bubbling foam and red froth upon its bearded jaws, the walrus broke into its barking roar. With a savage bellow it heaved itself repeatedly high against the ice, striving furiously to reach its enemy, but as often the ice broke under that immense weight.

Thus for an hour or longer the strange contest continued under the brilliant Arctic moon, seemingly without advantage either to man or to walrus.

MEANWHILE Kendle patrolled the water's edge some distance from camp, searching for seal. And luck was with him; for he caught sight of one presently, and killed it instantly with a fine brain shot, so that it could not dive and vanish. He was about to start dragging his prey to camp, when echoes of the combat between Kioga and the walrus reached his ears; and he hastened forward in time to witness the finale.

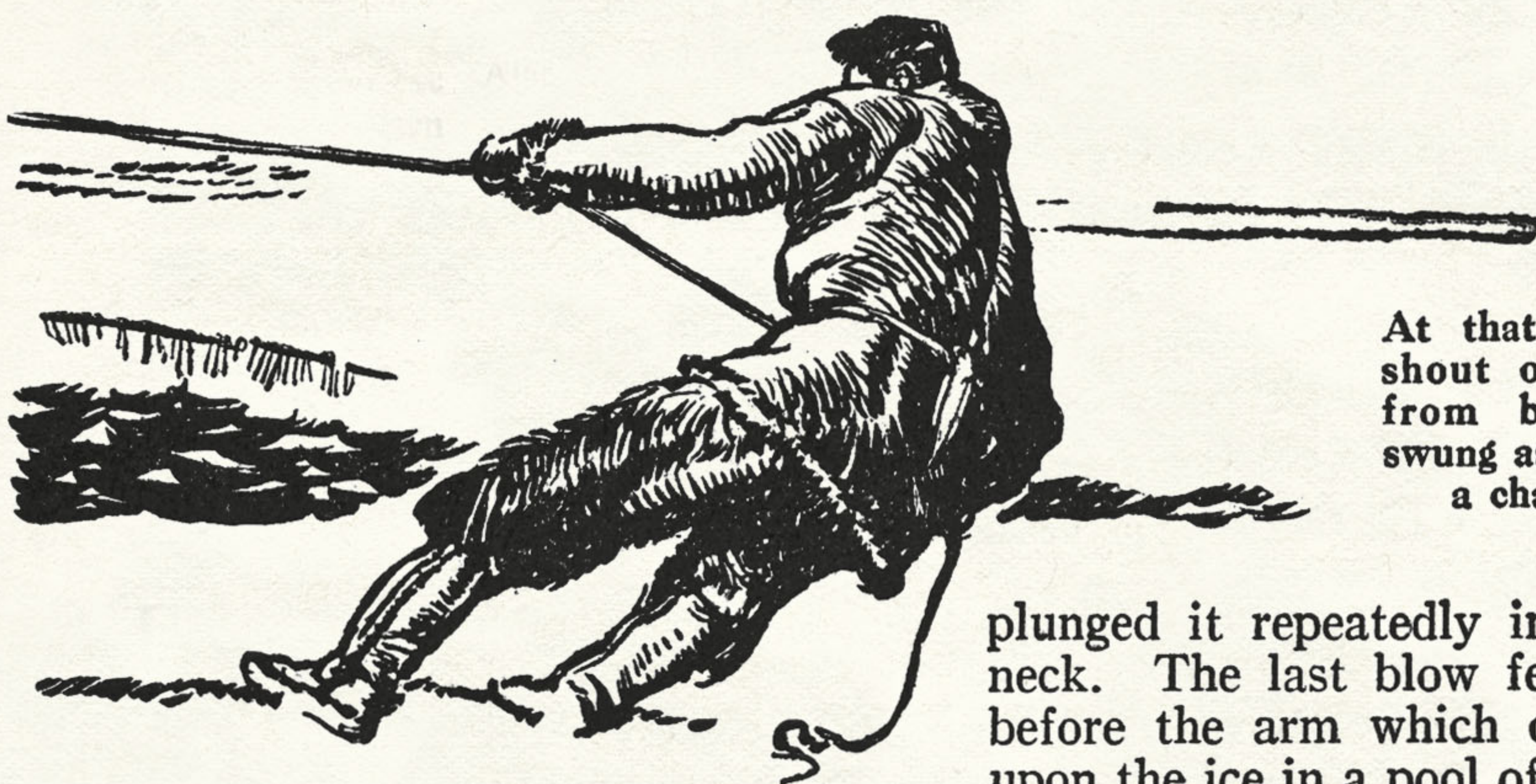
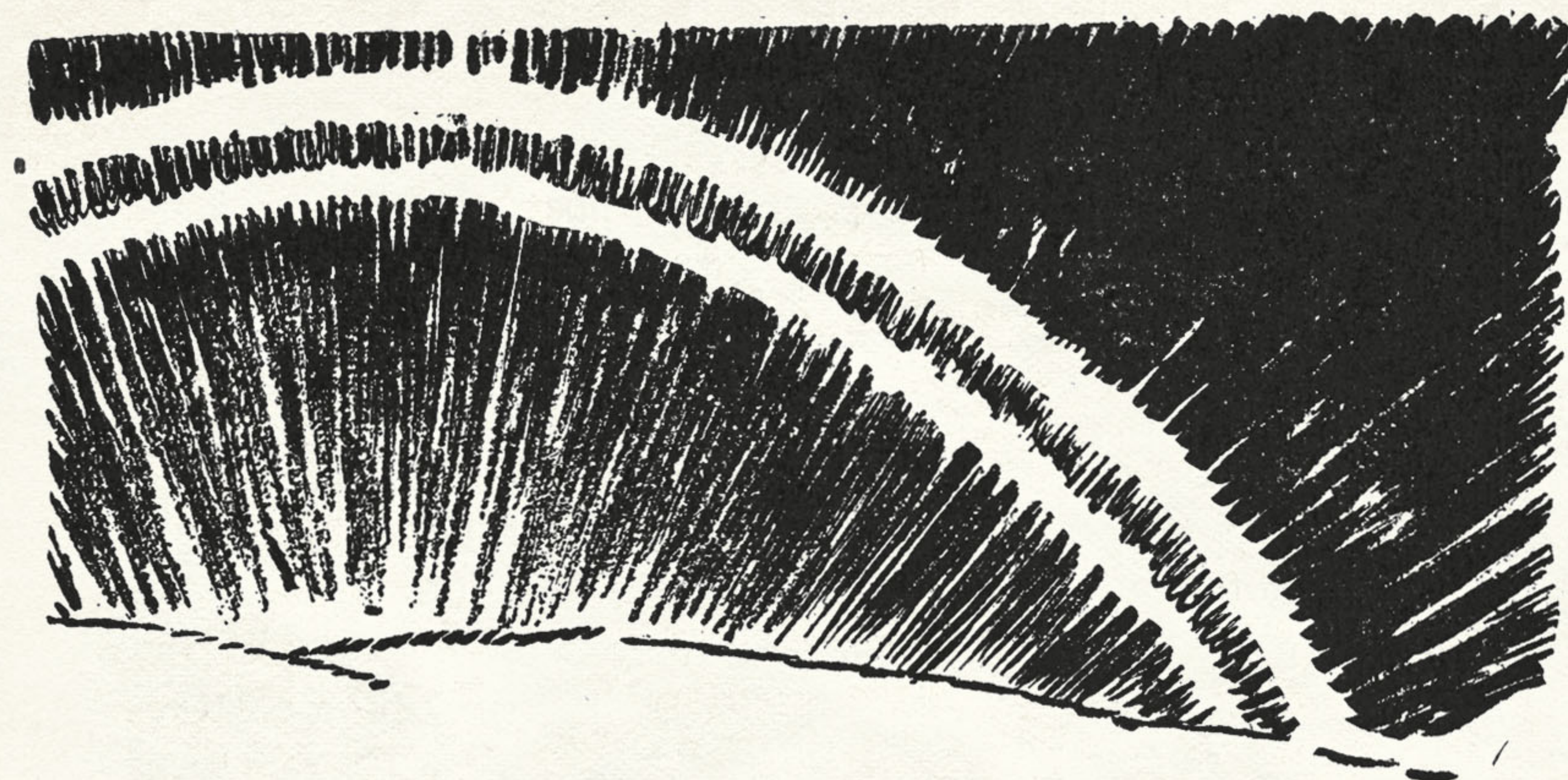
Plunging in violent circles, the animal strove to jerk out the harpoon planted

deep in him. Kioga played him as the fisherman plays a swordfish, giving slack when in danger of losing the quarry. But the danger of losing this animal on which salvation depended was real and imminent, he knew. And for this reason he made ready a noose in the shorter sledge-rope.

The tiring bull rose again, grappling the ice with its tusks in the effort to mount and close with the hunter. Forth floated the dilated loop, then down about the beast's head. A jerk set it tight beneath the hanging ivory bayonets. Now, with every ounce of his strength, Kioga strained upon the second rope to relieve the pull on the first.

Twice-gripped, the walrus retreated, breathing stertorously in the strangling noose. Too exhausted to plunge, it marshaled its strength for a final effort. Then, with a choked bellow, it was up on the ice, aided as much by Kioga's efforts on the rope as its own. With drawn knife the Snow Hawk stood waiting to leap aside and plunge the blade into its throat as it blundered past.

Buoyed up by the excitement, his diminished powers had thus far withstood the drain upon them. But more than an hour of arduous activity had taken its inevitable toll of his weakened body, and



At that moment came a shout of encouragement from behind him. He swung aside to give Kendle a chance for a shot.

panting, he realized how his strength had ebbed with starvation.

At that moment came a shout of encouragement from behind him. With a swift backward glance he glimpsed Kendle. Distrustful of his remaining powers, he swung aside to afford the other an unobstructed opportunity for a killing shot.

As the elephantine beast lumbered forward, Kendle drew a careful bead upon the base of its neck. And then, in the smallest fraction of a second, the thought flashed through his brain: If he missed—who would know how death came to the Indian? A man found dead under the tusks of a walrus—all things are foreordained—an act of God.

Swift revulsion followed, and Kendle ground his damp forehead against the back of his rifle. His finger tightened on the trigger. And then as the scene enacting on the ice leaped back into focus, that drama of life and death drew to its close: Frozen with fascination, Kendle saw the animal's head sweep viciously sidewise, hooking the man upon the underhanging tusks, and bearing down upon him with all its overwhelming weight. He saw the flash of the knife as Kioga

plunged it repeatedly into the leathery neck. The last blow fell, convulsively, before the arm which drove it relaxed upon the ice in a pool of blood.

Neither man nor animal moved.

A moment Allan Kendle looked upon death, trembling as if he himself had sustained the shock of that final attack. Then with a choked cry he turned and half ran, half staggered toward camp.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE SNOW HAWK IS ABANDONED

WILD excitement, Kendle found, replaced the gloom which had reigned on his departure. The men were shouting and straining their eyes across the mist-covered waters. . . . A word from Dan explained matters: During Kendle's absence a ship's whistle had been heard. The sound had been repeated, apparently nearer each time. Every effort was being made to attract attention to their position on the ice.

Risking everything on the accuracy of this report, Kendle fired his last two shots in the air, and listened intently. Distinctly, came a return fire. . . . Two hours later, out of the mists there appeared the running lights and outline of a ship. A deep voice answered their yells.

"Aho-oy on the floes! Can you hear us?"

"Aye!" shouted one of Kendle's crew out of leather lungs. "Who are you?"

"Whaler *Bearcat!* Who are you?"

"Survivors of the *Alberta!*"

"Stand by to come aboard! I'll send a boat."

TO the accompaniment of a faint cheer, the *Bearcat's* boat pulled up to the ice. Its officer leaped upon the floe. Kendle stepped forward, introducing himself, and they shook hands.

"Thank God you're all safe!" replied the *Bearcat's* officer briskly. "We'd almost given you up when we heard your shots. The pack's closing in. Get your hands and gear together to leave the ice. There's no time to lose."

In obedience to that urgent admonition, Beth was lifted unconscious down into the boat by steady hands. The others followed, and were rowed to the ship.

On board the *Bearcat*, in the presence of Dan and all his men, Kendle acquainted her skipper, Captain Scott, with the fact that three men had deserted, and that Kioga had gone forth alone and remained unheard from. Captain Scott considered this carefully.

"Four deserters, eh?"

Dan interrupted him swiftly: "Kioga went out for meat and hasn't returned. You can't call that desertion."

"You're right, of course." The skipper turned to Kendle: "Was search made?"

"I followed along the ice for several miles."

"You saw nothing of him?"

Kendle paled imperceptibly, but his voice was steady. "I did not."

"It's a shame to leave that brave fellow behind," said the Captain.

Dan spoke up again, pale and agitated:

"We can't do it. He risked his neck a hundred times for us. Give me a gun and some food—I'll go out."

Scott put a heavy hand on his shoulder and said, kindly: "Ye'll recall that I'm skipper here, La Salle. Now mind what I say: I've a stout ship and a valuable cargo, which I've risked before to save life. But I've also sixteen men, one with his appendix iced and in need of a doctor. I've none too much provisions, what with several new mouths to feed. It's twenty-odd lives—one of them a sick woman's—against three damned deserters and one good man. Hark—do ye hear that?" And loud in their ears roared the sound of the grinding floes that were closing in. "I see my duty, plain," went on the Captain. "And we'll sail before

we're beset, before the packs close up tight and freeze us in." Then he put the question squarely up to Dan. "What would ye do in my place?"

"In your place," answered Dan tersely, "I'd do exactly what you're doing. But no matter what you do, that man's not going to be left alone on the floes. I'm going out, and if you won't send some one along, I'll go alone!"

Scott had risen and was facing him. "Ye'll stay aboard, and quietly," he growled, "or I'll clap ye in irons! Nobody doubts your good intent. But your friend is a man of resource. He knows the North, ye've said. He'll know how to look after himself if he lives, which I never doubt. I'll leave a cache of food, a gun and some ammunition at the site of your camp. Then I'll stand by for an hour—no longer. More, I cannot do."

Captain Scott kept his promises, both as to the provisions and the time of departure. But he refused to let Dan accompany the boat to the floes, and to make sure of him, set two of his crew to watch him and prevent any last-minute attempt at returning.

At dawn the *Bearcat* steamed out of the pack. Beth La Salle, restored to consciousness, but still very weak, was kept in ignorance of Kioga's fate, lest the news retard her recovery.

It was a strange tale which the rescued party later told, stranger than anything which has ever been recounted of the North, relating as it did to unknown inhabited land beyond the ice-barriers.

If reports of the discovery of a new Northland were taken lightly by the *Bearcat's* officers, it but accentuates the fact that men do not greatly change with time. Four centuries earlier other men had laughed when a Genoese named Columbus declared the earth to be round.

Rumors of the rescue, including the names of the survivors, and those who had not been saved, went to the outer world by radio. On the second list appeared the name of Lincoln Rand.

But all reference to new land was omitted on orders from the *Bearcat's* skipper. Scott, though brave as any man could be, feared ridicule. If the statements of these castaways proved to be the mental wanderings of mind-sick men, he would be the laughingstock of the North, having broadcast them.

OF all who intercepted that wireless message of salvation and forced abandonment, none was more profoundly

moved than the tense listener at a radio receiver in the cabin of the two-masted schooner *Narwhal*, southbound after a summer's geological study on the north Alaskan coast.

More than two decades had passed since the disappearance of an American doctor, his lovely wife and Mokuyi the full-blooded Indian, third crew-member of the vanished ship *Cherokee*. It was seven years since James Munro, now famous for his scientific researches, had given up the long futile search for the friends of his youth, and the woman he had loved and lost to young Dr. Rand.

And now, amid the barking of dogs on deck, strange tidings flashed into Munro's ken, interrupted by the auroral crackle: Tidings of the near-rescue of a man he had given up for dead, yet who appeared to be alive somewhere near, in these ice-fields through which his little ship was bumping her way.

NEWs of Lincoln Rand's existence after all these years came like a bolt from the blue to James Munro, bringing back to vivid life old emotions only partly healed by time. He knew his Arctic too well to discount the *Bearcat's* reports as to ice-conditions. But his *Narwhal* might penetrate where even the greater *Bearcat* dared not go, for she was built for Arctic work, and shaped to rise upon the floes if pressed by the pack. Best of all, upon his ship were dogs and sledge, and two master Eskimo dog-drivers. One was Kamotok, faithful companion of many summers, whose life Munro had once saved, in like circumstances. The other was Lualuk, Kamotok's cousin, only less expert as a dog-driver by reason of his lack of one hand—bitten off by a polar bear several seasons ago.

To Kamotok, Munro addressed a few words in the Eskimo tongue:

"The voice of a ship has spoken. Some one waits alone upon the ice. It will be a long winter, this."

"And cold," agreed Kamotok, tossing a piece of meat to one of his dogs. "Is it a white-skin?"

"Yes," answered Munro. "A man some one knew many winters ago."

"Man is not born to die on the ice alone," commented the Eskimo, thoughtfully. "Some one who has dogs and a good sledge will surely go and look for the white-skin."

"There is much danger, traveling on open ice," began Munro, reluctant to peril the life of his friend.

"It has been done ere now," answered Kamotok. "Did not some one near by thus save Kamotok from death? The ship will be near."

Thus simply the two men came to agreement, with Lualuk concurring. The *Narwhal's* course was directed into the ice-fields until her position roughly corresponded with that given by the *Bearcat*. When further progress could not be made safely, she was anchored to a floe. The eager dogs were harnessed and put overside, the sledge made fast to the traces. Munro gave instructions to his crew to keep rudder and screw free of ice. Then, amid cracking of whips and a blast from the *Narwhal's* whistle, they were off to scour the ice. . . .

Aboard the *Bearcat*, already many miles in the south, a woman looked back with tragic eyes upon the white wilderness of the desolate floes. Beside Beth stood Dan, whose lot it had been to tell her of the circumstances which had compelled Kioga's abandonment. The shock of that news had left her quivering and speechless.

Alone in the rich hunting-ground of his native wilds, she would have felt no fear for him. But here, alone in the darkness and cold, on this silent ghostly drift of moving ice, from which all his skill had produced but one small seal! Long since, he must have returned to the silent and deserted camp. Not all the food in the world, she knew, could lessen his bitterness on learning that those he had served until the end of his strength had gone off without even a note of farewell.

A hard dry sob rose into her throat.

"He would have wanted it this way," said Dan.

"I know," she returned. "All he did was for our benefit. And I could call him savage—and worse! What will he think when he finds us gone?"

Observing her, Dan wondered. "Does this mean so much to you?" His tenderness released the flood dammed up in her.

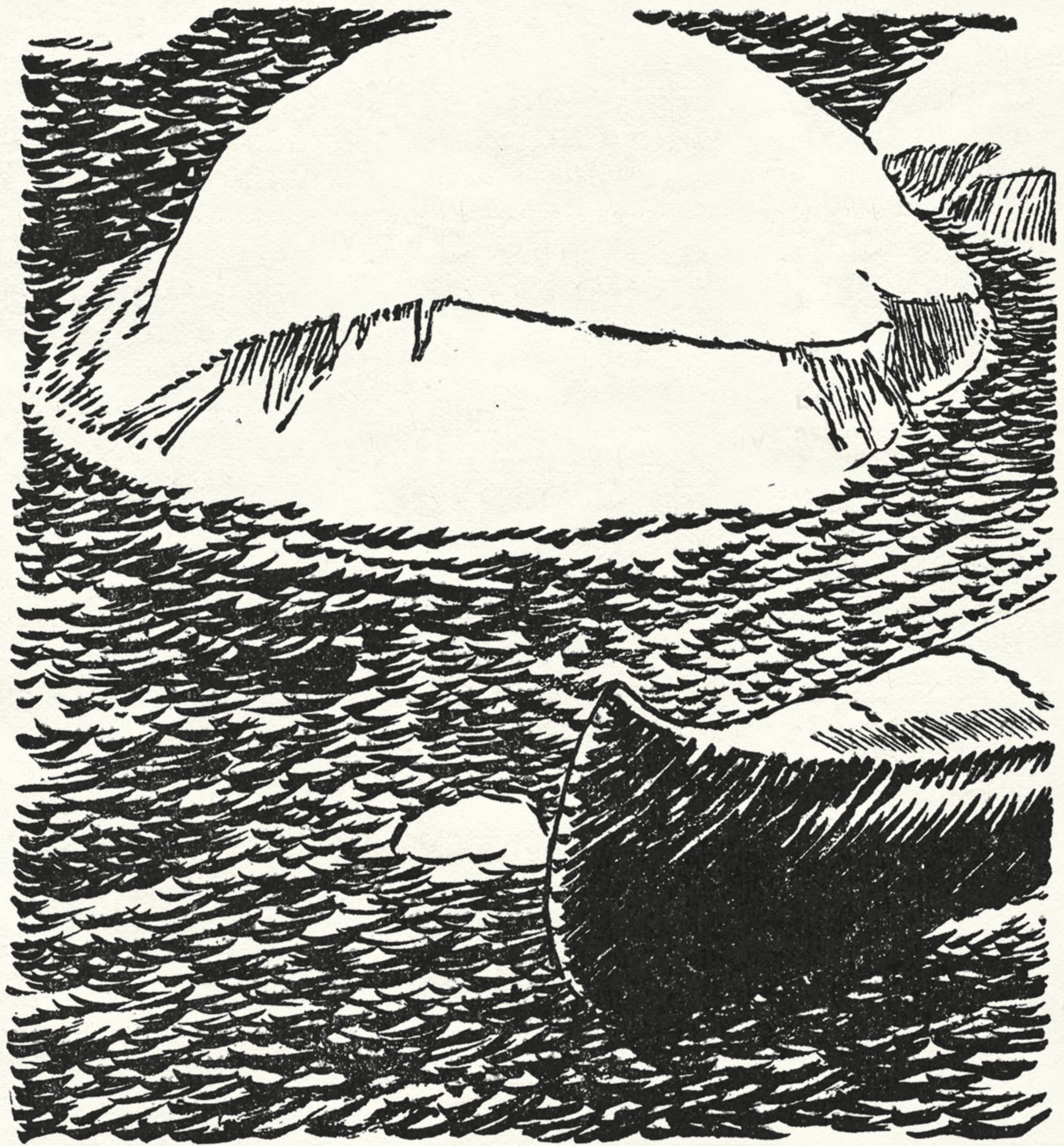
"Oh, Dan," she whispered brokenly. "It means—pretty nearly everything."

Then, giving way, she went into his arms and wept against his breast.

CHAPTER XXXII

ALONE ON THE FLOES

BACK on the ice near the walrus-hole, unconscious for more than an hour, Kioga lay weighted down beneath the leathery bulk of the animal which



had so nearly killed him. Pinned to the ice by one of its ivory tusks as by an enormous spike, his first movements caused the surge of pain which revived him to consciousness.

Above him, unmistakably dead, but menacing even in death, the grotesque bearded jaws were red with froth and blood, which ran down the tusks to mingle with his own upon the ice. He could see the harpoon sticking out of the animal's side, its rope trailing back out of view. He had no recollection of hearing Kendle fire; he wondered about that a little. To move was almost impossible, but by continued effort he managed to free one leg from under the animal's body. Resting, he next attempted to raise the brutish head which, supported erect upon its tusks, fairly nailed him to the floe.

One arm, however, was numb and useless for the moment, and the power of the other sapped. Finally, with the aid of his free foot, he succeeded in forcing the head up a few inches. Then, with a mighty contraction of calf and thigh, he raised it high enough to pull the tusk off of his arm, which it had gashed badly. Thereafter it was only a matter of time

until he had worked himself out from under.

Weak from starvation himself, his first thought was of meat for the others. Looking upon that huge carcass, he realized with intense satisfaction that Beth and his white friends could live for weeks upon this meat. Cutting off several more large slices, he set out for camp, already anticipating the shouts of welcome with which the meat would be received.

He came soon upon Kendle's trail. At any moment he expected to meet him, and others, returning to lift the walrus from himself, which doubtless Kendle had found it impossible to do alone. But he approached the camp, seeing no one, and in a moment more, in full view of the shelter, gazed in amazement.

Of all those who had rested there on his departure, not a soul remained. The camp was empty, silent. Careful examination assured him there was no trail in either direction along the ice. But on the camp-site there were several boxes—the cache left by Captain Scott; and from these he finally deduced the truth.

Judging from the name stenciled on



Nothing could quench his desire to see the white man's country. . . . The dipping paddle urged him through the open lanes toward the south.

the boxes, the *Bearcat* had come up. The party had been taken aboard, and the ship had sailed. Barring an inconceivable callousness on the part of all white men, that could only mean one thing: On account of his long absence they had believed him dead. But not being sure, they had left this cache. . . . No, they had not been sure of his death, but had left him behind none the less!

That Beth had consented to his abandonment, he could hardly believe at first, though in time this conviction was to gain strength. He could not know that her slumber had been the stupor preceding complete unconsciousness. In vain he searched among the things left behind for some note from her, or some last word of final explanation—which none of the others had thought to leave, in the excitement of rescue.

Little by little a conviction forced itself upon Kioga: Beth had intervened, calling him a savage when he would have taken the life of Allan Kendle. But when Kendle deserted him upon the ice, her voice had not been raised in protest. To his question, which of the two meant more to her, there could be only one answer.

Believing this, he experienced a bitterness he had never known before, and

stood for a time lost in thought. But finally, with the fatalism of his adopted race, he turned to the meat he had brought into camp. Cutting himself a generous slice, he ate slowly and deliberately. Having partially satisfied his hunger, he returned to the walrus.

With his sharp knife he laid the animal open lengthwise, being careful to preserve the hide intact. Removing several more thick steaks, he placed these upon the hide and with his rope attached thereto dragged meat and skin to the abandoned camp. Here he built a fire, using some of the wood from the cache boxes left by the whaler. Partaking again of the fresh meat, he threw himself to rest beneath the shelter which Beth had so lately abandoned, leaving the skin near the heat to prevent its freezing. In a moment he was sleeping soundly.

Rousing several hours later in full command of his powers, again he set to work reducing the sledge to a pile of wood, and applied all his knowledge and skill to the task of creating a canoe from the materials at hand. One of the longitudinal pieces of the sledge made a fair keel, to which he added ribs, trimmed to shape out of the remaining wood. The ribs he lashed to the keel with strips of the walrus-hide which in drying would shrink to form a tight joint. When, after many hours the framework was completed, he spread out the walrus hide from which he scraped all the flesh. Upon this he placed the framework,

stretching the skin tightly up and over the gunwales, lashing it there securely. The greater part of the labor was done. The fashioning of a pair of paddles was simple by comparison.

Now he lowered the craft into the water beside the floe, satisfying himself that it was seaworthy and sufficiently well-balanced. An hour spent in experimental packing assured him that he could now leave the floe at will and place confidence in his new-made skin boat.

He made one more trip to the bare carcass of the walrus and returned with a last back-load of frozen meat, which he had had to chop away with the ax.

Into the boat he loaded a quantity of the supply left by the *Bearcat*, all the frozen meat the stern could safely hold, and some of the walrus-fat by means of which to keep his rude lamp alight, so as to melt ice into water. The rifle he laid against a thwart, the harpoon and its rope-coil at his right hand. As a last precaution he decked his craft with the canvas which had originally covered the *Alberta's* lifeboat; and took along two strips of wood to serve as runners if he had to drag his canoe across the ice.

Then he pushed away from the floe and felt the welcome swell of the sea. For a time it had been in Kioga's mind to return to Nato'wa. Yet the circumstances of his abandonment were a challenge. Fiercely, he longed to confront Kandle with his perfidy. And nothing could quench his desire to see the white man's country of which Mokuyi and Beth had told him so much. . . . The dipping paddle urged him through the open lanes and into the darkness toward the south, leaving a shimmering wake on the moonlit waters behind him.

THUS for some days he traveled, eating when hungry, sleeping on the ice when weariness overcame him, beneath the shelter of the inverted skin canoe. And every few hours he ascended some high hummock for a look around, seeking a glimpse of land.

But all unknowingly, each time he lighted his oil lamp he exposed himself to one of the greatest threats which awaits man or beast on the northern ice-pack. Moist black twitching nostrils as keen as his own winnowed the air miles away. Atop an ice-ridge an immense yellow-white form stiffened and stood a moment rigid as a sculpture cut in snow. Then, agile as a cat for all its hugeness, it leaped from its watching-place and

slouched across the broken ice with unbelievable speed, nose in air.

It was a white bear, a hunter of the winter night, a born stalker and devourer of flesh, thrice the size of a Bengal tiger, hated and feared by primitive men from Mackenzie Bay to the New Siberian Islands, and known by the name Broken Foot.

Surly by nature, contact with man had multiplied its natural ugliness of disposition. The constant irritation of a bone Eskimo lance-head, encysted in the flesh of one shoulder, gave each step a gnawing pain and kept alive its hatred for the whole tribe of men. Then one day it had trapped and killed a dozen prime sledge-dogs in a crevasse, smashing in the heads of their three Eskimo owners, returning later to eat of their flesh.

In that hour it learned its strength. Spurred on by the unending twinge in its shoulder, it had turned to cache-robbing and the vengeful killing of men and dogs, satisfying its rankling grudge against mankind whenever opportunity arose. . . . This was the beast that moved up-wind along the scent which had advertised the walrus oil-lamp.

Perhaps an hour later, out of a crevasse behind a new-made camp, the bear's close-set eyes fell upon a familiar sight—a kayak, the possession of hated man. Forth came the bear, low-held head swinging from side to side upon the long neck. Boldly into the camp strolled the white baron of the northern wastes. Upon the overturned canoe it laid one heavy paw, and with a stroke clawed the bottom open as a knife slashes a melon. It tried its long yellow fangs upon the woodwork, grinding out a rib as if it were wax. The stock of the rifle was next crunched to splinters between those powerful teeth. Then, having snapped up and devoured all the provisions and meat, the bear began ripping and tearing the other objects. One of these, the buffalo-skin containing Kioga's possessions, was about to receive special attention, when of a sudden the huge beast quivered and froze rigid, with head high.

RETURNING by way of the backbone of a ridge, from which he had again surveyed the ice, Kioga rounded a peak and looked down upon the bear wreaking wanton destruction upon his camp. Fortunately for the Snow Hawk, the old habit of spear-carrying had not deserted him, and he had the harpoon over his

shoulder. And though he was too wise in the ways of wild animals to have taken the offensive against this monstrous beast ordinarily, these circumstances were not ordinary. At one glance he grasped the full significance of this raid upon his camp. Not only was his escape by water destroyed, but his meat was eaten to the last ounce.

In an instant the bear had become not an enemy from whom to escape, but the prey whose flesh he must have, if he were to survive. His decision made, Kioga drew back the harpoon, cast out a length of rope and made ready for the throw.

IN turning to sample the air whose taint had given it pause, the bear exposed for one instant the curve of its elongated neck. On the wrong side for a heart thrust, the Snow Hawk took quick aim at that other center of vitality, whose function and vulnerability he knew so well—the spine.

With lightning quickness he hurled the weapon forward and down, transfixing the bear through the neck. But the cast was a little low. The instant paralysis and quick death which accompany a severed spinal cord did not follow. Though the shaft stuck out at both sides of the animal's head, it must have only pierced the heavy neck muscles.

Instead of collapsing, the bear wheeled, wrestled the spear a second, then caught sight of Kioga. Experience had taught it only contempt for the puny physical armament of mankind. With a mighty bound the great white form catapulted itself up toward that man-figure poising just above.

To the killer's surprise, this man evaded its great paw, dropped past like a stone and alighted by the wrecked canoe. In falling, Kioga was a human counterweight upon the harpoon rope, which he had drawn round a shoulder of ice. The bear received another tear of pain from the harpoon and turned to pounce down upon the fur-clad man, who was taking hitches of the rope about a block of ice.

As the bear began its leap, Kioga laid hold of the ax beside his canoe and stood ready where the beast must land.

And then to the ice-bear came a second surprise. In mid-leap it was suddenly jerked off balance by the rope attached to the harpoon through its neck. Half-suspended like a great gaffed fish, it hung an instant with hind feet on the ice, its forepaws striking furiously at the rope.

Knowing that in another moment its

enraged struggles would snap the rope or drag out the barb, Hawk aimed a blow which, had it struck the skull must have brained the beast. Instead, as the bear swung round, the ax-head fell an inch short, laying open the neck.

The rope suddenly parted with a snap. The helve was torn from Kioga's grasp as the bear crashed to its side on the ice. The knife upon which Kioga now depended sank thrice, its full length, in that reddening side. As the bear twisted in a frenzied convulsion there was a brittle snap. Armed with only the hilt, Kioga slipped on the ice and dropped within range of the deadly quarter-stroke of the bear's single useful forepaw. He was instantly clutched toward the black-lipped cavern of the gaping jaws.

Straight into that yellow-fanged maw, Kioga hurled the haft of his broken knife. It was his last desperate resource, a feeble attempt to stave off the imminent clench of those lacerating fangs which sought to meet in his brain. For a moment it was successful, enabling him to straighten his arms against the haft of the piercing harpoon, before the beast coughed out or swallowed the knife-handle—he never knew which.

Then, with every mighty ligament and sinew locking his arms straight, he braced himself against the bear's efforts to draw him into its bite. He felt the fur garment and some of his own hide torn from his back, down which a warm flow instantly began. Then the bear was convulsed again, touched in some vital part by one of the pieces of imbedded steel. If he could hold out a little longer, it would be over. But his joints felt afire, his tendons seemed tearing away from their bony seats. The sweat was starting from his brow and clenched jaw as he resisted the immense power of that massive foreleg curved round him, and strained away from the jaws clanking repeatedly shut, an inch from his face.

A FEW miles back, Munro and his two Eskimos, discouraged in their search for the abandoned man, had come upon the fresh sign of bear, with its promise of a good supply of meat. Setting their leashed but eager dogs upon the hot scent, Munro and his men followed swiftly. A scant half-hour passed thus, before the barking animals were loosed. Five minutes later Lualuk checked suddenly, and with Kamotok examined a bear's track, clear and perfect in a patch of snow.

It was none other than the hated Broken Foot. Though armed with lances, and with Munro's rifle to fall back upon, neither man would stir another inch.

Then came a redoubled yammer of their dogs somewhere ahead. Waiting no longer, Munro hastened forward alone. Courage inspires courage. A moment later Kamotok and Lualuk followed.

JUST as it seemed to Kioga that his arms must be forced from their sockets, the bear sank to its side, drawing him down, the while it shuddered, coughing. Suddenly above its ceaseless growling, he heard a snarling bedlam, as of wolves slashing and snapping around him, and he rose up to defend himself against this newest menace.

Thus Munro and his Eskimos came upon him, a wild and fearsome figure, rising like a figment of the imagination from the icy waste of the wind-blown pack. Straddling the immense mountain of bearskin which he had just laid low, erect in the barking circle of the frenzied dogs, he stood. Naked to the waist, bleeding from a dozen slashes on back and sides, enveloped in the vapor of his own breath, he looked as fierce an animal as those which ringed him round.

Dumfounded, the newcomers gazed from the man to his kill underfoot.

Now, at sight of the Indian's face, Munro stared in surprise. He had hoped to meet Dr. Lincoln Rand, the friend of his youth; and in the moonlight Kioga's resemblance to the elder Rand was indeed startling. But as he approached the other with extended hand, his gladness became uncertainty. Despite an astonishing resemblance, this swart giant was not the Lincoln Rand of earlier years; yet Munro could scarce tear his eyes from the striking lean face, so like in general aspect, but differing in details from the one he had expected to see.

While Kamotok whipped off his dogs, Kioga remained impassive before the other's searching scrutiny, his own eyes missing nothing of Munro's wonderment and evident confusion. But he gripped the scientist's brown hand none the less.

Munro was explaining:

"I mistook you for a man named Lincoln Rand. We heard he was lost somewhere on the ice near here."

"My name is Lincoln Rand," answered Kioga.

Munro was nonplused. But finally, he spoke briefly of his long search for the owner of the missing *Cherokee*.

And comprehension had flashed into Kioga's mind and eyes at mention of the *Cherokee* and his parents' names.

"Long ago two men and a woman were wrecked on a northern coast in a vessel called the *Cherokee*," he said slowly. "One man was my father, the other an Indian. The woman was my mother. My father's name—Lincoln Rand—is also my name."

Munro's face lighted with excitement.

"And your people? Mokuyi? Helena?" Kioga caught the note of anxiety and suppressed dread. "They are safe and well?"

As he looked into the eyes of James Munro, Kioga knew that it would be hard to give him the truth, but quickly perceived how best he could do it. Indicating his few possessions, he replied: "I have a record kept by my father which will tell the story better than I could tell it."

"Good!" cried Munro. "Let's get back to my ship, where we can talk."

WHILE Kamotok and his cousin Lualuk went back with their dogs to fetch the sledge, Munro bound up Kioga's wounds. When the Eskimos returned, the bear was skinned, its paws cut off and some of its meat loaded upon the sledge. The party then returned to the *Narwhal*.

In the privacy of Munro's own cabin Hawk produced the log-book of the *Cherokee*, and sat silent and immobile while his companion opened it. Several times he saw the older man start as he perused the battered record, only to become completely dominated again by its amazing revelations. Soon Munro came to that part of the book where the handwriting of the elder Rand ceased and that of Mokuyi began, telling of the Indian raid.

He looked up once, questioning Kioga by a glance. With infinite regret Hawk affirmed the truth of those old tragedies.

But not even grief could blind Munro to the immense scientific importance of the document which was the log-book. And when he had completed reading the little volume, he laid it aside with a care amounting almost to reverence.

"What's written here," he said thoughtfully to Kioga, "may clear up one of the greatest puzzles of science—the riddle of the American Indian. And in this little box we may find the undeveloped negatives mentioned in the log."

To his intense satisfaction, the photographs responded to the developing proc-



Just as it seemed to Kioga that his arms must be torn from their sockets . . . he heard a snarling bedlam, as of wolves.

ess to which he later subjected them in the dark-room on his ship. Kioga the Snow Hawk then looked for the first time—with a strange mixture of emotions—upon the likenesses of the white parents he had never known. Here were they who had set down the record of the *Cherokee's* cruise. Here, as he had never known him, was Mokuyi, garbed as a white man. And here were scenes at which his heart expanded; scenes of Hopeka village and of the wild landscape roundabout which sent a pang of homesickness deep into his heart; pictures of wild-life, and persons long forgotten. And also the picture of a little white child, in the arms of Helena Rand—the photograph of himself as a baby.

Thus was crowned with pictorial evidence Munro's interpretation of this strange tale, as taken from log-book and picture-skin. Further corroboration was found in the birth-certificate, executed by the hand of Lincoln Rand, years ago.

SOME hours later Munro returned with his men, among whom was Barry Edwards, his Canadian associate, for another sledge-load of bear-meat. Having cut away enough for their needs, in accordance with their habitual custom, the two scientists proceeded to open and examine the bear's stomach, so as to note its contents, for zoological record.

In addition to the meat recently devoured, it yielded a curious assortment of objects, as the bellies of these great robber-bears often do—pieces of dog-collar, a short length of Eskimo whip-handle, a handful of stones—all of which were noted and laid aside. Then, with an exclamation of surprise, Munro saw something else. It was a strip of cloth, apparently stiffened by some kind of filler. He soon uncovered a small pocket pen-knife, the initials on which had been dented out by the bear's teeth. Finally he found fragments of a leather pocket notebook. Upon the notebook fragment, in stamped gold letters, was the last syllable of what may have been a name. He could just detect the letters "--sen."

With conjectures tumbling over one another in his mind, he found Edwards staring at these objects with something like horror. As their gaze met, between question and assertion, Edwards spoke one word: "*Amundsen?*"

Amundsen! The very name brought back those terrible hours not long before, when the entire world had waited to learn the fate of the famous explorer.

And yet—it was into the European Arctic that Amundsen had disappeared. The bear which had devoured these dim traces of tragedy had been slain near Alaska, far to the west. Granting that one of these polar-bears might range for a thousand miles over the Arctic ice drifting in its eternal great circle, still it seemed unlikely that this explained Amundsen's disappearance.

Belatedly Munro answered his subordinate: "Amundsen? Maybe—poor fellow! But dozens of Scandinavian names in the syllable '*sen.*' Let's go on hoping that one day Amundsen'll be found, as Greely was, still alive."

THAT night the *Narwhal* began its homeward journey, fighting its way through the ice-pack. When no openings appeared, Munro resorted to dynamite, by means of which great fissures were started, through which his vessel was able to force her way until a wide channel of open water was found at the Alaskan coast. With favorable easterly winds prevailing, Munro crowded on sail and power. At Kotzebue Sound, farewell was taken of the Eskimos. Thereafter the approach to the *Narwhal's* home port of San Francisco was swift.

On this return voyage Munro recreated from information supplied by Kioga a picture of Nato'wa, a new land peopled by red men such as the earliest *voyageurs* found. Munro had decided to seek financial support for an expedition to this newest frontier. But of this he made no mention to Kioga at the time. Nor had he disclosed to anyone the contents of the log-book and picture-skin. He was aware of the value of his newfound documents and eager to add them to the sum of scientific knowledge. But with true scientific zeal for accuracy, he wished first to see Nato'wa with his own eyes.

And Snow Hawk, in his turn, tapped Munro's vast reserves of knowledge concerning everything civilized. By the time they had reached California a strong attachment had sprung up between the two men, strengthened by their common memory of Mokuyi, and Munro's own enduring love for the friends of his youth.

And then, one bright brisk morning, they came into the port of San Francisco—by water, as Kioga's parents had left it—the only citizen of Nato'wa known to have set foot on American soil in modern times. The Snow Hawk's newest adventure was begun.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE LAND OF HIS FATHERS

EAGER to assist Kioga in every possible way, Munro insisted that Kioga remain his guest until he could be suitably equipped with the everyday necessities of civilized life. To this the Snow Hawk assented gratefully, asserting his desire to spend a few weeks visiting all the civilized countries, and learning all there was to be learned.

Munro laughed. "I can teach you a lot. But no man can learn all there is to know. As for travel—what will you use for money?"

Kioga looked up, puzzled, at that. The scientist smiled. "But don't let that trouble you. This little volume of yours is probably worth a fortune."

In reply to Kioga's questions, Munro then explained the need for and the uses of money. A great light began to dawn in the Indian's mind. The mystery of those sailors, paying with their lives in an attempt to salvage his abandoned gold, was clearing. He began to realize, too, why the skeleton aboard that old hulk had sacrificed all for the yellow metal. For among civilized men, money was almost equal to blood; without it men could not live. How, then, would he manage, if Munro's prediction as to the worth of his log-book did not prove true?

Munro had prepared to advance funds to defray his young friend's current expenses, when he learned of Kioga's emperor's ransom in precious stones. Great was the young man's own astonishment to find that his glittering pebbles could be turned into cash.

"What their value may be, I cannot say," declared the scientist, "but we can soon find out."

And true to his word, he found little trouble in exchanging a small fraction of Kioga's treasure for a sum ample to take care of him for a year or more.

"You are rich," Munro explained. "Nothing is impossible to a man with money. What do you want to do first?"

"You've said that your American Indians are related to my people, the wild tribes of Nato'wa. Let us visit them, first of all."

Munro agreed. And Kioga saw here, in the Land of the Free, the privileged charges of a generous government, the remnant of a red-skinned race living—with all the wild, contented liberty of animals caged. Old men, who should have been respected councilors, squatted

indolent before their dilapidated canvas lodges, sad scarecrows in the habiliments of white men, objects of curiosity to tourists who came to stare uncomprehendingly.

What a contrast to the Wa-Kanek horsemen of Nato'wa, whipping their sweating mounts into the black buffalo-herds, while their horses' manes stung their tattooed cheeks and the painted, tasseled exploit-feathers spun against their brown bare shoulders!

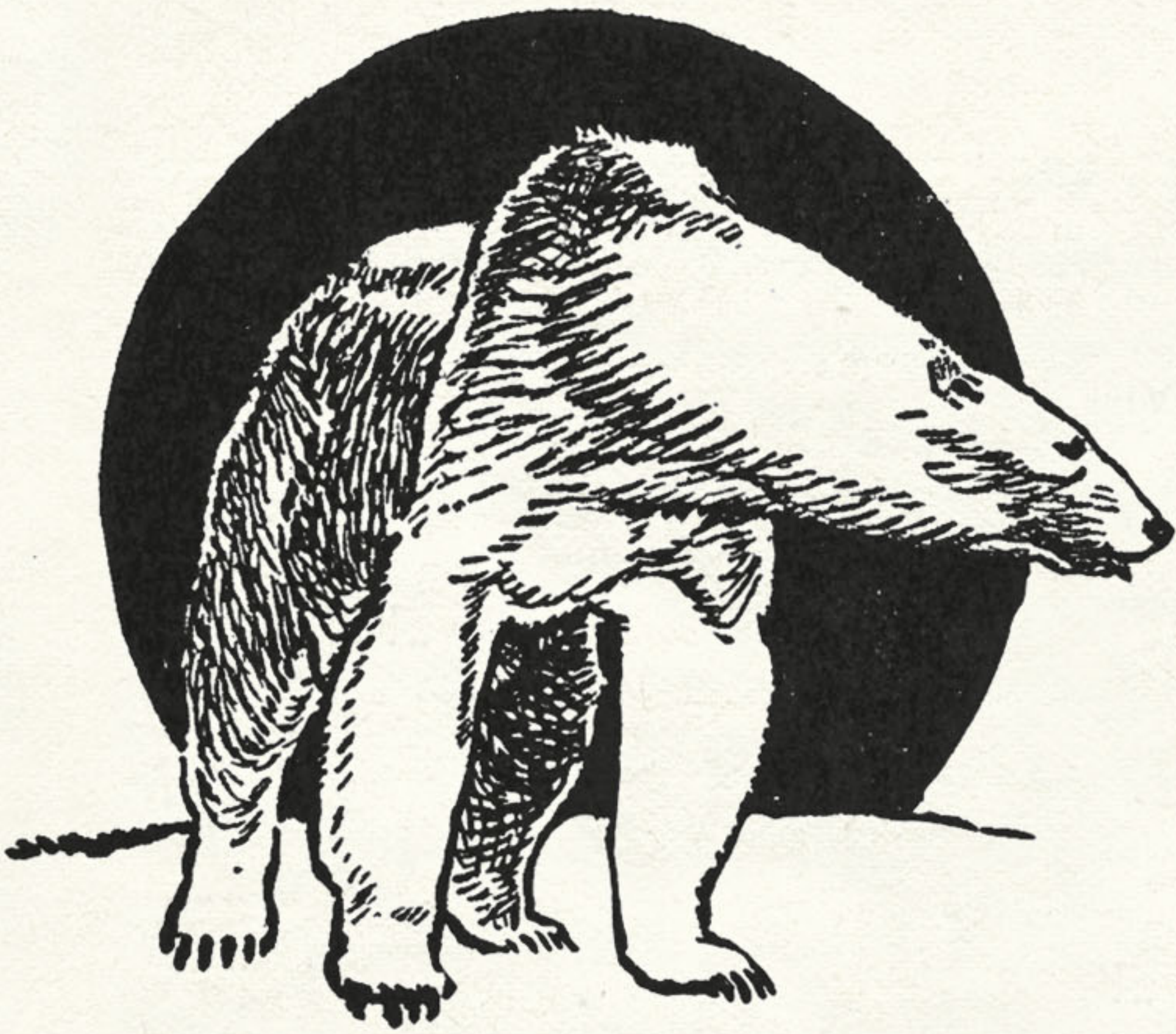
Both men came away, filled with pity. But Kioga was to learn still more of civilization and its defenders. Strange sights met the eye of the young barbarian in the land of his ancestors. On the one hand he saw those long human queues of hungry men—the breadlines—and on the other, a hundred steps away, sumptuous hotels into which plump and solid men strode heavily from shining motors, to seat themselves at tables laden with the richest of fare. Even among the cruelest Indian tribes, chieftains and great men impoverished themselves to give to others. If there were no food, all starved together.

But Kioga was becoming adjusted. Guided by the scholar with whom he traveled, he was soon at ease in his new surroundings. He had, besides, the native dignity inevitable in one accustomed to presiding over Indian councils.

PLEASED by these signs of conformity, Munro made great plans for Kioga—a career in business or law or engineering. And exulting over the changes he had apparently wrought in his protégé, when personal business relating to his Amerindian collections required his presence on the West Coast, Munro felt he could at last throw the Indian upon his own resources. Accordingly the scientist wrote a letter conveying appropriate orders to his domestic staff, by means of which Kioga was to identify himself on arrival in Manhattan. And it needed but Munro's suggestion, added to his own impatience to visit the place near which Beth dwelt, which sent Kioga, as by the magnet drawn, to New York. . . .

He went to sleep in a drawing-room quiet but for the rapid click of rail-joints beneath the wheels of his train. He awoke in a railroad terminal hidden in the depths of the earth. Above him, spread out like a huge sprawling lioness, roaring Gotham crouched on guard over her strange litter of peoples.

One of these, with red cap and ebony skin, took command of Kioga's bags and led him along a subterranean labyrinth



of tunnels, through revolving doors and into a richly carpeted hotel. Here, by the magic of an entry in a register, Kioga acquired title to a square cave in a great building of steel and stone, crowded with hundreds of cliff-dwellers like himself.

That night, Kioga, the erstwhile savage, roamed this pulsing jungle of man's creation, exploring with as much interest as had his father explored the mysteries of unknown Nato'wa, and marveling at the wonders of the commonplace.

He got lost in the subway system. He rode elevators and escalators until told to move on, by men in blue coats and polished shields. He wore calluses on his fingers inserting endless coins into endless machines, and came home laden with things he would never use. But how fascinating were these turning wheels everywhere—wheels which symbolized the difference between this life and the culture of his own tribes.

And there was one other thing which seemed very strange: The men of civilization did not paint themselves, but the women everywhere applied the color, with occasional results that would have made a Shoni brave, painted for his first war-party, turn green with envy.

ONE night Kioga attended a theater and was supping in a night-club afterward, thoughtful of the changes the months had made in his life. Round about him there was the hum of conversation, light laughter, the strains of soft music, the clink of glasses, all that pleasant combination of sounds which denotes people at ease, enjoying themselves.

Suddenly he noted a hush, like that preceding the coming of a tigress through the silenced forest, and he witnessed a strange phenomenon: All present were reaching upward with both hands. Tak-

ing his cue from the others, Kioga did likewise, with an amused and tolerant grin. No doubt this was some new absurdity of civilized conduct.

But the smile faded when across a few tables he saw a woman faint, while her escort, white-faced, made no move to revive her. Everyone seemed frozen as with fear. Glancing over one shoulder, Kioga saw a masked figure standing at the doorway several yards distant, covering the patrons with a pistol. Two other men, with guns drawn, stepped inside.

Undoubtedly Kioga was the particular target of the hold-up, since one of the bandits quickly singled him out and began rifling his pockets. Rooted in amazement, the Indian had been slow to comprehend something which his limited experience had not hitherto encompassed.

As it happened, Kioga's pockets contained but a few bills. Angered and disappointed, the bandit cursed and raised his gun to strike the white Indian. But that single hostile gesture signaled the truth to Kioga. Even as in his native wilds, there were those in the jungle of civilization who lived by fang and claw! It had not taken the hunters long to assemble, once they had winded rich game.

Ah, but here was no tame and submissive prey, awaiting an outlaw attack in fear and trembling! Lincoln Rand, thus far, had submitted to the training-collar of civilization; but now the collar slipped. As that gun came up, Lincoln Rand sloughed off name and white-man's teaching and became in an instant the Snow Hawk, the primitive cliff-man disturbed at his meat. He struck as he had learned to strike—fast, hard, suddenly.

Under the driving impact of an iron fist, his assailant reeled back a dozen feet and collapsed. The second thief was about to shoot when a grip like a steel manacle fell upon his gun wrist. A sudden wrench, a jerk and the man writhed on the floor, screaming with the agony of a dislocated shoulder.

Possible resistance on the part of these soft dinner-club patrons had been far from the calculations of the bandits. For a brief instant their leader at the door was taken by surprise, before wheeling to fire at the Indian. In a bound Kioga was upon him, his hand at the bandit's throat as the hot red blast of a firearm scorched his neck.

To spare one who would have fired at random into a roomful of innocent people never entered his mind. He attacked with the fierce retaliation of a wounded

leopard, pausing not to measure his blows nor the expenditure of power. He felt the bandit go limp in his grip and flung him aside. A heavy hand fell upon his arm, and he spun round to face a fourth man.

In the whirl of excitement he saw but another bandit to be dealt with summarily, and struck twice, felling him like a sledge-smitten steer, and bending above him, ready for anything. As he stood thus, the metallic clink of steel sounded, closing cold about his right wrist. He found himself shackled to one of three blue-coated policemen.

From the springs of wildness just below his surface there rose not fear, but the unreasoning reaction of the wild paleolithic animal whose sole obsession it is to evade the trap.

With a surge, he sought to drag his hand from out the steel link. But before he had done more than tear the skin at his wrist, the full weight of a nightstick descended, beating him half-stunned to his knees.

He recalled succeeding events as through a thick haze; the herding of frightened patrons from the scene, the post-mortem held over the dead bandit, the revival of the injured officer, and something else—the dull concussion of exploding flashlight powder, as some enterprising press photographer wheedled his way in and departed with the coveted picture.

With the acrid smell of burned powder stinging his nostrils, Kioga's mind gradually cleared to a realization of what had transpired. Gravely in need of Munro's counsel, fearful of what Beth must think should garbled reports of this reach her, he gave his name, but then turned a deaf ear to the questions of his captors.

Speechless and utterly stoic, he was led, still manacled, from the scene of his clash with civilized men of the law, and driven to the nearest police station. After a futile attempt to learn other particulars of his identity, the Snow Hawk, free rover of the Nato'wan forests, was locked in a solitary cell, and left to meditate upon another phase of civilized life.

Several days passed thus, his meals pushed to him through the bars. Hardly an hour that he did not receive a visit from one or another person, seeking to break down that barrier of secrecy which he had thrown up between himself and the world outside the bars. Otherwise a model prisoner, inwardly, his thoughts were in a bitter turmoil:

Tonight on the rivers of Nato'wa the soaring hymns of the Spring Festivals would be rising and swelling in the mist-drenched air, while even the greatest beasts paused in their hunting to harken. On the foaming streams, in light barks, the shadows of red men would be hunting in silent phalanxes toward the southern villages, to participate in the Sun-worship Ceremony. . . . How he hungered to feel the springy bow jar against his own palm, to see the dark streak of the speeding arrow, to hear it *struck* into the bounding buck; to listen again to the lash of the elements beyond the door of his cave; to hear the bark of sea-lion herds, pouring in upon the serrated southern shore through the foaming breakers, while the sea-spray stung his lips and beaded on his hair. To dash taunting at the apex of the fanning pack, leap from out the very clutches of Guna at the edge of the salt-lick of Go-Manu—ah, that was the life with which the Great Ones had endowed him!

He would get out of his present plight—of that he had no doubt. But was not all of civilization a prison? Was he, who had slept in grottoes and caves on the wind-torn heights of lofty cliffs, forever to dwell within the confines of four walls, to wake in the night stifled and panting for air? Was he who had hunted with the beasts upon the winding forest paths to eat forever of meat killed by others, and never to pursue his own prey again? Was he who had sprawled at will on any grassy sward, to meet daily with signs proclaiming NO TRESPASSING, KEEP OFF, PRIVATE PROPERTY, in a land where by virtue of purchase alone men thought they owned the earth?

He would get free, he assured himself again. But in the night, laying hold of the doors to his cell, he tried his mighty strength upon the bars and found even that of no avail.

CHAPTER XXXIV

CONCLUSION

FROM the hour when Dan had told Beth of Kioga's abandonment, she had waited all the long months in expectation that word of the Indian would come. With difficulty Captain Scott of the *Bearcat* had persuaded Dan and Beth of the folly of attempting rescue in defiance of the winter season.

"Come next summer," concluded the old sailor, "we can have a try. But not

this season. If your man is saved, 'twill be by the Eskimo. Among them word travels, and we can learn of it next summer, not sooner—unless by a miracle.”

Kendle's agreement added weight to Scott's opinion. . . .

When the *Bearcat* discharged them at a civilized port in Alaska, except for signs of exposure and hardship, the rescued passengers were outwardly sound and whole again. While Kendle, Beth and the others took a steamer for the States, Dan remained in Alaska. Scott's advice to the contrary, he organized an expedition to make a search for the missing Indian, but before final preparations were made, the North was gripped in the rigor of winter; the attempt was reluctantly abandoned, and Dan wrote Beth to that effect. . . .

Kendle, meanwhile, had set himself to win Beth anew, proving by a thousand little acts of kindness that she had misjudged him. The frightful experiences on the ice had placed an undue strain on him, as leader of the party responsible for their survival. If he had cracked under that tension, it was no more than anyone else would have done unless, like Kioga, he were made of iron.

How great that strain had been, was not at once apparent. It might never have been known, but for events which followed soon after their arrival in America. The Kendle fortune was one of the first to crash at the beginning of the world depression. With it, his health, hitherto superb but undermined by exposure and injuries sustained on that fatal voyage of the *Alberta*, began to fail. At first he thought little of it, but the day came when he collapsed in his office and was taken to a hospital. There Beth had been his daily visitor.

AND there it was, one evening, after his illness had seemed to take a turn for the better, that Kendle was reading one of the newspapers which his nurse had brought to him. Of a sudden he stiffened, staring at the picture of a man whom—surely—he had seen go to his death on the northern ice-floes.

Skimming the bold-face headlines, his eyes leaped to the news item pertaining to the photograph. It read:

Last night at the exclusive Alessandra Club, one gangster was killed and two others injured. . . . A police officer, Patrick Smith, was also manhandled and critically hurt by a man who calls himself

Lincoln Rand. Rand was beaten into submission and locked up on a technical charge of homicide.

Considerable mystery surrounds the prisoner, who though well dressed and with no lack of money, refused to divulge further particulars concerning himself. It is believed that he is a member of a rival Chicago gang, using an assumed name, and was defending himself against an underworld feud over an unnamed woman.

All efforts at further identification having failed before the stubborn silence of the prisoner, he will be held awaiting a hearing next week. . . .

Kendle's every instinct sought to deny the identity of the man in the photograph, but sudden dread racked him.

Relieved by time and fancied immunity of the last whisperings of conscience, he had almost forgotten that hour when he had withheld the bullet which might have saved Kioga's life. But now—again a prey of the conscience so long set at rest, he passed through that particular hell reserved for those capable of knowing shame. Profound relief came, out of the knowledge that he was not, after all, responsible for a fellow-man's death. But if Beth should read this, if she should meet Kioga!

Hitherto Kendle had not pressed the advantage he had won by his fine consideration during the hours when she had been mourning the Indian. But that afternoon, anxious to secure her promise at once, his hand fell upon hers.

“Beth—if I recover from this—will you marry me?”

Yearning had often carried her back to those happy hours when a godlike figure had carried in the antlered buck on sun-browned naked shoulders. But the passage of time had gradually extinguished the flame she had tended with fierce devotion. Compassion for Kendle, the realization that his illness rose partly out of sacrifices made for her, and the strong attachment which had existed between them since childhood—all these things had combined to soften her toward him. Yet with consent trembling on her lips, she hesitated. Then, noting Kendle's unusual pallor, aware that her promise might be the stimulant to his recovery, she answered: “I'll not leave you, Allan.”

Hearing that, he leaned back, apparently to regain some of the ground he had lost in the last few hours. But on Beth's departure, his fears returned.

What would Beth think if she learned that he had left a man to die, and falsely represented Kioga as unaccounted for, to Captain Scott? Kendle lay long awake, spent with worry and apprehension. . . .

On the train from San Francisco, on Dan's return from Alaska, he also sat up with a start on reading the news-item which had prostrated Kendle. Though encouraged to believe so by resemblance and name, Dan was not absolutely certain that the photograph was indeed that of their Indian benefactor. After all, men often do look alike, and the name Rand was not uncommon. Beth, waiting at the station, greeted him affectionately.

"Any word of Kioga?" she asked.

Loath to raise her hopes unjustifiably, Dan did not tell her of what he had read. But as soon as possible he left her and going alone to the police station, identified himself and asked to speak with the prisoner.

He was conducted to a cell wherein a tall figure lay at ease on a cot. Addressing the occupant, the attendant received no reply. Then Dan spoke.

"Kioga! Is that you?"

At the sound of his voice the tall figure was up in a quick bound. And after one glimpse of those green-blue eyes, Dan knew he had found his man.

"DAN!" came Kioga's instant response, as the hands of the two friends met and gripped strongly between the bars. "How did you know I was—here?"

La Salle passed in the clipping, which Kioga read in amazement, to find himself termed a gangster, a murderer and a philanderer in a breath. It was his first experience with the genus *news-hawk*.

"Why didn't you let us know you were safe? Why didn't you tell us you were in trouble?" Dan rushed on, without waiting for an answer. "It's an outrage! I'll have you out in no time."

"You'll have trouble, Dan," answered Kioga. "I've killed a man."

"Not a man, my friend—an underworld rat. It was justifiable self-defense, and they won't hold you for that. But the copper you hurt—I'll have to make peace with him. I think it can be done with a check-book. The other charges—I'll have them quashed. But before I go—tell me what happened up there on the ice."

Kioga told him. And in return he learned the reasons which had dictated his abandonment. Exulting in knowledge that Beth had not consented to leav-

ing him on the floes, Kioga scarce heard Dan's account of Kendle's illness and reverses.

A little while later Dan left, to return soon with the good news that he had arranged for Kioga's liberation. And after another hour the Snow Hawk was a free man again.

Dan had taken it for granted that Kioga would immediately go with him to see Beth, and the Snow Hawk's hesitation took him aback.

Kioga had not had much time in which to weigh what Dan had told him of Beth and Kendle. He sought some plausible excuse by which to create a delay, until he could think the matter over. He took refuge in his obligations to Munro and ended by pleading pressure of affairs.

"But you'll come—as soon as you've finished that?" Dan insisted.

"As soon as I possibly can," Kioga assured him.

"Good! Meantime I'll break the good news to Beth."

So for the time they parted, Kioga proceeding toward Munro's house, intending to say nothing to anyone of his imprisonment, Dan going to Beth with tidings of Kioga's safety.

"Take a good grip on yourself," he advised her. "It's wonderful news I'm bringing you." She looked up, smiling, instantly to sober at his expression.

"Kioga's alive, Beth."

White to the lips she went, at that, paler than she had been amid perils. "Dan—you wouldn't say that unless—" There was entreaty in her voice.

"I left him an hour ago," he told her.

Her hand flew to her throat. "You talked to him!"

"Yes." He knew that her world was suddenly reeling; yet only a quiver betrayed the tumult his words must have roused. Her next words belied it.

"Please, Dan," she whispered. "I'm so happy!" But she burst into tears.

ALONE, however, Beth's first reaction of intense happiness was already tempered by actualities. Though all her friends and relatives had voiced their horror at reports that she had fallen in love with a savage, she hadn't taken them seriously. But now, faced by that newspaper report, she wondered. She knew, of course, that he was no gangster, but were not the dire predictions of kin and intimates confirmed by the newspaper account of his unquenchable violence? Recollection of that time on the floes,

when he had so nearly taken Kendle's life, came to her again.

Moreover, if she threw Kendle aside, it would be said that her love had been that of a fair-weather friend, that she was deserting him because his fortune was gone. For the opinions of others she cared little; but Kendle—friend of many years' standing—Kendle himself would believe it. She could not bring herself to pile this misfortune atop the other trials he had endured.

At last she reached a decision: she would go to Kioga, thank him for all he had done in their behalf. She would explain away any hurt still remaining as a result of his abandonment. More than that she could not do as yet—nor less, in common decency.

But her intention was interrupted by telephoned word that Kendle's condition had become much worse. Scrawling a quick note to Kioga, she explained her delay but promised to get in touch with him next day. Posting the letter, she hurried to the hospital.

Kendle was in delirium, the nurse told her—possessed by terrors the nature of which no one could surmise. His physician, who was in attendance, and who knew something of their Arctic experiences, thought Beth might be able to explain his nightmare or perhaps by her presence help to quiet him.

KENDLE did not recognize her. He seemed re-living those fearful experiences in the Indian village, and recounting them accurately according to her memory of his earlier accounts. He spoke of events on the ice, after the sinking of the *Alberta*. Nervously Beth followed his words, no longer in a sick-room, but carried by his words back upon the drifting floes. . . .

The immense Arctic stars hung low overhead. . . . Out somewhere in the darkness, Kioga had been absent many hours in his search for meat. . . . Rifle in hand, Kendle was leaving the camp. . . . All this was clear and lucid enough in her aroused memory.

But now the image was less distinct, for it was Kendle's own experience, in which she had not shared, of which he now talked.

It seemed to Beth that near a patch of broken ice she saw Kioga, some mighty menacing shape bearing down upon him. Kendle's rifle rose, wavered, fell without being discharged. In a voice that reflected some of the agony of those terrible

moments on the ice Kendle raved softly: "God . . . why don't I fire? No—let it finish him. Who'll know I was here? . . . All that meat, enough for weeks—meat—meat." A moment later Kioga was down—beneath that monstrous dark thing, unidentified to her mind.

Stiffening with horror, Beth drew suddenly away from Kendle, scarcely able to believe what he was saying. And yet—dark, gloomy lines from "Macbeth" came suddenly to mind:

Foul whisperings are abroad; unnatural deeds

Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds

To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.

And now Kendle was uttering words which put the final stamp of proof upon all he had revealed. "What will I tell Beth? Nothing. . . . Who's ever to know I let him die? Nobody. . . . Who cares if he's dead? . . . Nobody. Great hunter—warrior—all that rot! Only good Indian's a dead Indian." Low laughter shook the sick man, subsiding as suddenly as if choked off. But that poor infected mind was not yet done discharging its troubled secrets: "But he's not dead. He's alive—killing again. Beth mustn't know—mustn't learn." Kendle started suddenly up, as if galvanized by apprehension. "What if he comes here? Good God! But he can't. They've got him in a cage. . . . But what if he gets out. . . . I had the chance—why didn't I kill him? . . . Will . . . if he comes here."

Beth scarce heard what followed, for reason was telling her that Kendle's words had been too sharp and graphic to be the pure fabrication of a disordered brain. No imagination, however feverish, could conjure out of thin air a knowledge of Kioga's jailing. Kendle had known of that when he had asked her to marry him! He had harbored a knowledge of Kioga's plight even on the ice, but had given Captain Scott the misleading information which resulted in abandonment, when search must have resulted in Kioga's immediate salvation. And all this time, while Beth had grieved and hoped and prayed, Kendle had watched—and kept silence!

She might have forgiven the abandonment, since she had long ago forgiven the state of mind which led up to it. But the utter baseness of this continued deception was the final blow to her affection for Allan Kendle.

Her promise to him need no longer be honored, since it had been asked and given under false pretenses. Had he been well, she would have left him at once, to go to Kioga. But he was calling her name now. Pity welled up in her. The thought of deserting him in this hour of his need was too much for her. She would wait, until he showed definite improvement, then communicate with the Snow Hawk.

But long hours were to pass before Beth left the hospital, with Kendle resting quietly, the crisis definitely past.

DR. JAMES MUNRO, returning to New York with a trunkful of fresh Indian relics, encountered a young woman on the doorstep of his house. It was Beth, weary and wan after her long siege at the hospital.

"I am looking for Dr. Munro," she explained.

"I am Dr. Munro, Miss La Salle."

"You know my name?" in surprise.

"Better than you think," he told her gently. "Kioga has told me of what happened on the floes."

He saw her breath suddenly quicken. In answer to his summons a manservant appeared. Munro gave an order.

"Wake Mr. Rand. Tell him Miss La Salle is here."

The servant looked surprised. "Why—Mr. Rand's gone out, sir. I'm sure 'e went out during the night and left a note on the hall table. 'Ere it is, sir."

Hastily Munro tore open the envelope. The note was in Kioga's bold script. It read:

My dear friend:

The winds blow me. I return whence I came, to live and die an Indian. I am convinced that Beth has decided in favor of Kendle. Perhaps that is best. I could not live as a white man—for long. And I have no right to urge her to a life away from her home and people.

A third of the gems in our safe-deposit box, I give to you. The log-book and the picture-skin, and the photographs—all are yours to do with as you see fit.

The remaining stones, please turn into funds. Put the money at the disposal of Miss La Salle—and of Allan Kendle, if that is her wish.

The letter was unsigned; Munro handed it to Beth. Then, without loss of a moment he resorted to every means at his command by which to reach the writer—telephone, telegraph and the com-

bined forces of radio and the police of three Governments. But in vain. Kioga had vanished as completely as he had effaced himself in the green crypts of his native forests.

DAY after day the girl's persistence in pursuit amazed Munro. When he admitted defeat, it was Beth who clung to the hope that somehow, somewhere, Kioga would be recognized and detained. The scientist shook his head.

"All the border forces couldn't stop him if he wanted to pass."

Beth hardly heard him. She was thinking of a firelit cavern in the heart of a wild and savage land called Nato'wa. A woman waited for her man beside the glowing embers. Thunder rumbled in the distance, and rain fell with a hissing roar. All the elements opposed his passage, but he came, laden with the spoils of the chase, which he laid at her feet.

She was thinking, too, of Heladi, waiting in far Nato'wa, with open arms and beautiful eyes afire, for the mighty warrior scorned by a Christian maid. For Heladi, henceforth, he would wing the arrow swift away and bring in the fresh-killed deer.

Beth no longer asked herself if she could have lived the life of an Indian wife, taken up an Indian woman's burden or shared the man she loved with others, in the Indian way. She knew now that anything was preferable to this intolerable separation. She had the will and the means—what with his princely bequest—to follow him to the ends of the earth. She told Munro so.

"You would go to those lengths—even into the Arctic?"

"Wherever the trail leads, Mr. Munro," she assured him quietly, in words worthy the daughter of pioneers. The words echoed in Munro's mind. He recalled all that Kioga had told him of the Indian life, melting away on one continent, but continuing unchanged as of old on another. Already, in fancy, he heard the low tattoo of the Indian ceremonial drums, speaking to the Great Mysteries; the thunder of the buffalo-hoofs across the Shedowa. The flicker of the aurora borealis in the northern sky was the reflection of Indian campfires, round about which aged chieftains sat and told tales to the pulse of the thumping tom-toms—tales that were old when Rome was young, tales of the Buffalo Stone, of the Moon and her Seven Sisters the Pleiades; while from the outer ring of darkness, cut

HAWK OF THE WILDERNESS

by the orange glowing cones of the skin tepees, came the nicker of piebald ponies and the eerie howl of prairie wolves.

Now he thought he could hear the muted whisper of the P'kuni heralds, calling their sonorous messages from camp to camp, and fainter still, dim songs sung by peoples of whom the modern world knew nothing.

Here was the dream of a lifetime. A new land to be discovered, new history to be written. Adventure, exploration, his name added to the illustrious roster of those who sought in vain the secret of the polar North. A monument to be erected above those unmarked graves.

He was powerfully stirred by the prospect of gazing upon the glittering mosaic of Indian existence, unspoiled in its ancient liberty. He was attracted as are all true adventurers by the lure of unknown, unheard-of places. But in the end his decision turned upon the fact that a part of his own heart was buried with Helena Rand on unknown Nato'wa. It seemed fitting that he should follow her there.

"It's a long trip, full of danger," he warned Beth. "There's the risk of hunger, snow-blindness, freezing—some of which you've already experienced."

She looked up at him, smiled and answered: "There's also Kioga—and that's all in the world I care about."

The daughter of pioneers had spoken.

SO ends the tale of the Log and the Skin. You will recall that Munro shipped to me the strange relics of a strange story and visited me preliminary to setting out upon this, his most daring adventure, in the distant spaces of the polar region. The picture-skin, the log-books and the photographs have found a place amid the collection of Indian relics enumerated at the beginning of this narrative.

The fate of James Munro and Beth La Salle, as yet is unknown. Will it be the triumphant return of a Peary, a Mac-Millan, a Stefansson—or the eternal silence of a Hudson, a Franklin, or an Amundsen?

The gods of the white North are jealous and guard their secrets well behind gates of ice. My story remains unfinished, perhaps never to begin anew, unless the frozen lips of Boreas relent from their age-long silence to fathom for mankind the riddle of Nato'wa and its copper-skinned peoples.

THE END

Share the

A persuasive girl may make out a good case for sharing jobs or property; but touch-downs—well, that's something else again.

By

JONATHAN
BROOKS

WATERLOO was won on the playing field of Eton, but Napoleon, who never saw the place, thought he lost because of a muddy track. And when we take the Irish—well, the Irish have even less idea, minus two, than Napoleon thought he thought he had!

It was awful, no less. Tippecanoe tied us, zero to ort, which was exactly four touchdowns better'n the Tips deserved. The gang's sick over it—first time this season we don't win by at least five lumps. Davy Miller, cap and q.b., crazy for an unbeat-untied record his last year, he's that down he cries. Coach is nerts, or more so. And why not, when a 110 mi. per hr. speedster can't outfoot a 14-yr. old model Tea?

So I organize a Board of Tragedy, on the special going home. Say nothing to Coach, who's busy with football trying to figure it out. Get Davy, and Big Schultz, the stickin'-through guard, and Sparky Sparks, rabbit left half.

"Between us girls," I said, "how come?"

"Lay off, Doc," says Davy. "Why bring that up?"

"We gotta bring it up and spit it out," I said, "so we can take the Irish next Saturday. Get well, in a week. Your plays didn't work, Davy. And Schultz, there wasn't a gain through you all day. Sparky, you never got nowhere. How come?"

I give 'em the eye, all around, and wait. Finally Davy opens.

"Never got a pass away clean," he mumbles.

"Saw that," I said. "Sparky, you never got loose, outside or inside tackle."

Touchdowns!



Illustrated by
Henry Thiede

"Davy, you make a fake play for Pat's gal," I said. "That's the—" "Nix—out!" says Davy.

"Not ever," he growls. "Usually, Pat flattens every tackle for me, or flanks him out."

"Or turns him in," Davy says. "And generally Pat keeps 'em off me so I can get my passes away, too. But somebody was always on top of me today."

"Oh-ho, so it's Pat, is it?" I said. "But Schultz, how come you never opened any holes for Pat?"

"No holes? Why, great garsh, Doc, I smothered every bozo they sent in against me—four of 'em!" Schultz sputters.

"Yeah, I know," Davy flares up. "Pat always goes into that hole so fast that when I try to hit him in the stummick with the ball, he nearly breaks my arm off as he goes by."

"Unh-hunh? So it's poor old Pat McGlone to blame, is it, for everything we didn't do?"

"Say, we're not shootin' an alibi," growls Sparky.

"Honest, Doc," says Davy, "he was so slow gettin' up to the line, y'd think he was stoppin' to thank me for handin' him the leather!"

"And it was always the tackles, Pat's men, that flagged me," Sparky puts in. "He never handled one!"

"Okay, then," I said. "I saw the game, and I didn't have to worm this stuff outa you felluhs. But I wanted to

be sure. Pat McGlone's our No. 1 boy, best fullback we've had in fourteen years. Stoutest all-around man on the team!"

"Absolutely," says Sparky.

"But today he done us wrong," I said. "How come? We gotta straighten him out for the Irish game. That's why I called this Board of Tragedy."

"Prescribe, Doc," Sparky says.

"But if I don't know the trouble—"

"You're the trainer, Doc; find out," says Davy. "My guess is, maybe he's gone stale."

"I'll find out," I said. "You guys come around to my place tomorrow night." I saw Coach comin' down the aisle. "And keep tight."

"Well, what's this, the mourners' bench?" asks Coach.

"You don't look so darned happy y'rself," I said.

SO I get up from there and mosey along through the car until I find patient old Pat McGlone, *né* Megalono-vitch, Senior fullback. A blond Polack, six foot two, weighs 202 on the programs, 212 on the scales, and 222 on Mondays. A horse, for speed and power; but hardly for horse sense. Good lookin', good guy.

"Well," I said, when I found him dug in behind a book in his berth, "studyin', hey? Don't let Coach ketch yuh. Relax."

"No, just readin'," he says, with a scowl.

"Detective story, mebbe?" I said.

"Well, it *is* a kind of mystery," he says, with a foolish grin, shuttin' up the book. I sneak a look at it, but can't make out anything except the name of Marks or Marx, on the cover. He shoves it under his pillow, and turns over on his side. "Guess I'll close up for the night," he says.

That was all I could get out of him.

IT'S just as bad next afternoon, too, when I go around to his place to feel him out, before the guys come to talk it over. Schultz is not there, but here's Pat lollin' back in a big chair, legs crossed, readin' another book.

Scowl on his face. He looks up when I come in. "Doc," he says, "yuh know what I think? Our whole political system is wrong!"

"Democrats and Republicans both?" I said. "Fifty million of either one couldn't—"

"No, no, the system," he says.

"Mebbe you've gone stale," I said, reachin' over and crackin' him below the knee-cap. His foot flies up past my ear, and I duck.

"Stale? Not me," he says. "But Lenin says here—"

"Thought y'r mystery was by a guy named Marks," I said.

"He's Pass A," Pat says, diggin' back into his book. "Wait—"

But I couldn't. I beat it. These mysteries get me down. Only, I'm purty sure the guy's not gone stale.

"What's the answer, guys? Where do we start?" I ask our little Board of Tragedy. "You, Big, you room with him. What say?"

"Well, if you ask me," says Schultz, slow, "the felluh's sick, that's all."

"What?" asks Davy, worried. "How?" A captain don't want anybody laid up, especially an important toughy like Pat.

"He's not stale," I said.

"Well," says Big, "I got two reasons for thinkin' so: First place, after breakfast 'is morning, he wouldn't go downtown with me to get a plate of sauer kraut. We always do that the Sunday after a game. Must be sick."

"He'd be sick if he *did*, you mean," laughed Sparky.

"No," says Schultz. "Another thing, this evening he shaves, puts on a necktie, and a coat and hat, even! And goes out, never sayin' a word. I say, he's sick!"

"Sounds goofy," I said. "But check. —Sparky?"

"Think he's in love," Sparky says. "No reason. Just think so."

"Hope not—no cure," I said. "Davy?"

"He wouldn't wear a necktie if he wasn't in love," says Davy. "I hear he's turned communist, but that can't be so, if he's wearin' a necktie!"

"And he's always readin' a big book," Schultz puts in. "About Russia, generally."

"I caught him readin' two, but he told me they were mysteries," I said.

"To him," Sparky laughs. "He can't read—he only makes out the words!"

"Cut the comedy," growls Big Schultz. "This is serious. I'm not gonna see the guy go plumb to hell and laugh about it!"

"But what you gonna do—get hard with him?" asks Sparky.

"He'll tear you to pieces," warns Davy.

"Hunh—not me!" Schultz grunts. "But I'll not get hard. I'll find out what's wrong, and then we'll decide what to do."

"Hop to it, Big, and luck," says Davy. "We'll get together. I'm goin' over and say hello to my sweetie, then heigh for the hay!"

"Wait," I said. "Who sees the guy in the daytime?"

"He's in philosophy with my woman, ten o'clock," Sparky says.

"I see him meet a dame at eleven, every morning, at the chem lab," Davy adds.

"All right, then," I said. "Just for fun, Sparky, ask your dame to stroll along with Pat from that class to the lab. If it's love, maybe that will stir up Pat's woman some. Who is she?"

But nobody knew. "See you tomorrow, felluhs," I said.

WHEN Big Schultz comes into the dressin'-room Monday, he drags me off to one side. He's bluer than black.

"Which is it, communism or love?" I asked him.

"Oh, Lord, Doc," Big groans. "It's— it's *both*!"

"No!" Paderewski Megalonovitch, a communist! Pat McGlone, in love! It's too much. Much too much, or so!

"Seniors don't dress today," yells Coach just at this point.

I'm busy with this and that, until the workout begins. Then I sit down on the bench for a minute, and here's Pat McGlone hulkin' down by me, all sober

and mysterious. Lovely afternoon, sunshiny. Fine lot of tough young animals out there bustin' into football. Glorious. But old Pat McGlone, he glooms.

"You see, Doc," he begins on me, "the system's wrong, because it's unfair. World's fulla wealth, but only a few own it. They oughta share, and share alike. No man is entitled to surplus while another man wants."

"Wants what—*his* surplus?" I said.

"Wants for food and shelter," he says, very serious. "Every man is entitled to those things, and to comfort too."

"How come? Just by being?" I said. "Or by workin' for 'em?"

"YOU don't understand," Pat gets patient on me. "Doc, no man is entitled to acquire wealth or position by takin' advantage of weaker or less fortunate beings—"

"No, and the Republicans and Democrats don't favor it, either," I said. "Except for themselves! But what's it got to do with football? You wanta share the wealth, and also share the touchdowns? You wanta call it a day when you've made your share of the tackles? Leave somebody else do your blockin' when you think you've done your share?"

"Let every guy share the glory," he says, positive.

"And leave 'em shirk the gore?" I said. "Rats! You wanta *help* 'em share the glory, just like they're tryin' to help *you!*"

"While I and Davy and Sparky get the headlines, the others are never heard of," he says, shakin' his head. "It's not fair."

"But who's kickin', anyhow?" I asked.

"Doc, you simply wouldn't understand," Pat moans. "But capitalism and competitive sports are on the same low plane—both must go!"

"Yeah, and how about football?" I said, gettin' sore.

"A childish game, for young and old children," says Pat McGlone. And he gives me a look full of pity, and he gets up and walks away.

There you are! The biggest, toughest, roughest game of he-football that is known in the Middle West ahead, only as far as Saturday. The Irish ridin' high and horrible, roughshod over everybody, but worried about us. And we're good, with four great seniors in Pat, Sparky, Big Schultz and Davy—good enough to give 'em as good as they send, or so. Hundred thousand people buyin' tickets to see the battle—and we bog down be-

cause our key felluh goes communist, or is in love, or what!

THAT night our Board of Tragedy swung into action because, from being low, I go into high, a dudgeon, or something. It all started when I get the fool notion— But wait. The boys show at my place after supper.

"It's love," says Davy. "And we're sunk."

"It's communist, ditto," Sparky laughs.

"It's both!" I said. "But we're no such thing as sunk."

"Well, I'd hoped we'd get somewhere, this last year," Davy says. "We've come a long way, Sparky, and Big and Pat and I, together. But now, with Pat out, or down—"

"Don't give up yet," I said. "Sicker dogs than this one have got weller! Listen, let's get tough with Pat, pour it on him."

"He could lick a roomful of us," Sparky shakes his head.

"I'll explain," I said. "Sparky, is your woman clever?"

"Second to none," he grins. "Why?"

"Then you get her to pretend to fall for Pat McGlone in a big way. Ask her to stick with him every time she can, until Pat's gal sees them together. Yeah?"

"She'll play ball—and can make it rich!" says Sparky.

"And you, Davy, *you* make a fake play for Pat's gal," I said. "That's the other half—"

"Nix—out!" says Davy. He's a captain, when he puts his foot down.

"But Davy, we've got to get ahold of Pat, to whip the Irish."

"Right, Doc; but I'm not the felluh," Davy explains. "Everybody in school knows I've been engaged for months, and Kitty wouldn't stand for it, or think it funny, or take the kidding for the sake of old Alma Mater. Nope, that's out!"

"But look, Davy, we gotta get Pat outa this mess," Sparky argued. "My woman will help; yours oughta!"

"Let the game go hang, then," I said. "But I thought we all wanted to win this last one."

"Hold on," says Davy. "I'll handle it. I'm out, *but* I'll put a guy on the job. You know Joe Rudy, over at our house?"

"Millionaire parlor poodle? Keeps a car and to hell with the faculty? Joe College hissself in puhson? We all know the pest!" Sparky grins.

"I'll sick him on the gal that got Pat's number," says Davy. "He'll do it for

me. He'll dazzle her—millionaire, see? Got a brother goes to school with the Irish."

"Have him give her a play, then," I said. "Make it snappy, for this is Tuesday, and we got to save Pat by Saturday noon, sure."

"And Davy," says Sparky all of a sudden, "have this Rudy tell his brother that Pat's gone yellow. He'll tell the Irish, and they'll get on him, and—"

"Pat will kill a few of them, and—"

"We'll *all* go to town!" yells Sparky.

"Now, listen, wait," says Davy. "I want to win this game so bad I can taste it. I want to save old Pat, too; but when it comes to telling the Irish or anybody else that old Pat McGlone's gone yellow—"

"Shut up, Davy," I said, flat. "You know as well as I do that when it's all over, Pat will thank you. When he gets his senses—"

"And besides, he'll never know," Sparky argues.

"Oh, well!" Davy gives in. "But if he ever finds it out and murders me, *you* guys will be hung!"

"Snap into it, and get things moving," I urged, pushin' them out.

THEY had been gone half an hour when Big Schultz heaves in again, lower than ever, all worn down because his bunky has gone to the bowwows. Thinks it's love and communism, both. Pat's gal, it seems, has just given him another shot in the arm—of communism; and Pat takes it diluted with love. Big says Pat is over in his room now, just aching.

"The big lunk!" I said. "Let's go over and ache him right—we can, the two of us."

"No, I've got a better idea," says Schultz. "Get this poison at the source!"

"Source? You sound like an income tax," I said.

"No, I mean, let's go see this woman, and set *her* right," Schultz explains. "Get her right, and he's O.K., automatically."

"Right—bright!" I said. "On our way!"

So we pull up after while at the Apha Davit house, ask for the gal, and don't have to wait a minute. She's in the hall, ready to go out. Dating, probably.

"Miss Schilkart," says Schultz, "this is my friend, Doc Jones. Pat's friend, too. Trainer and physical director—"

"Glad to meet you, ma'am," I said. "Heard Pat speak of you. And we

thought we'd like to talk to you about Pat. You see—"

"He's rather distracted trying to adjust his mind to the childish problem of kicking, throwing, catching and carrying a ball," says Miss Schilkart. "A grown man, too! Adult, in every sense but mentally!"

"Er—ah—exactly, ma'am," I said. She had me stopped cold. Funny-lookin' little thing. Jet black hair, straight. Worn long, with a knot on the back of her neck. Horn-rim specs. No make-up. Couple freckles on her nose, all that kept her from being as ugly as any other highbrow.

"And the boys are going to play with some other boys Saturday," she laughs. "Sorry, but I fear I cannot help you!"

"But ma'am, it's important!" pleads Big Schultz.

"Besides, I've an engagement," she says. "Oh, there comes Mr. Rudy now. You'll excuse me, won't you?"

And away she goes, leaving us feeling like two of yesterday's used potato-skins.

"Cold as diamonds," I said to Big.

"And as rich, too, I guess," says Big Schultz gloomily. "I don't know what we can do, now."

"Well, we can do some hard and earnest hoping," I said. "But is she so rich? What's her name, did you say?"

"Elsa Schilkart," says Big. "Great garsh, Doc, don't you read the papers? Her father is the guy that owns eighty-four filling-stations. Been writing letters to Prexy kicking on his daughter learning radicalism here at the U."

"Learning it? Hell's fire, she's teaching it!" I said. "Her father—say, do the papers give his name as Moie Schilkart?"

"Yeah. He says he'll take her out of school unless—"

"Wish he would," I said. "Wish he *had*, away back! But never mind, Big. Let's get a move on. I've got an idea. You go on home, and tell Pat you just saw his girl friend out dating with Joe Rudy in his car. Rub it in!"

"Okay, but what are you going to do, Doc?"

"Never mind, but I'll be busy," I said. "Davy's working, and so is Sparky. They're both snappy; let's us move!"

I DON'T know why I was so dumb so long. Elsa Schilkart, Moie's daughter! Moie, the rich guy with 93 filling-stations. Little Moie Schilkart—I remember him—eighteen or twenty years ago. Always out for track, but winding up as



Wham! There goes Pat gallopin' across the goal line with two Irish halves hangin' onto his outer works!

No. 5 on a five-man cross-country team. Couldn't run a lick, but would keep trying all day! Moie Schilkart—and now he's run himself into a fortune.

Sure, he'll remember me. I've rubbed anyhow four barrels of goose-grease into his thin frame, in his time. So I get a long-distance call placed, from the room, and I sit waiting for it to come through.

And in comes Coach, of all people! Anybody on earth I didn't want to see as little as I wanted to see Pat McGlone, that minute, it was Coach. No use to have him snarl up our plans.

"Hi, Doc," he says, throwing his hat on the table and sitting down. "Say, what's the matter with McGlone?"

"Who?" I said. "Oh, McGlone? McGlone—why, what's wrong?"

But just then the telephone rings, and I have to answer, and sure enough it is little old Moie Schilkart. These calls are expensive, and I hadn't reversed the charge. Didn't see any way to stall, so I motioned Coach to shut the door.

"Hello, this is Doc Jones, yes," I said. "Yes, same old Doc. Thanks, Moie. But you don't change; your voice sounds just like it did when you were running five miles instead of 97 filling stations! Why don't you ever come down? Busy, I suppose? Say, Moie, we got an awful problem down here. Need your help. . . . What? Thanks, I knew you would. Now then, here's the trouble. . . . Your daughter is not only learning communism here, but she's teaching it. . . . Yeah,

teaching it! . . . To whom? Why, to Pat McGlone, our fullback! . . . Yeah. Besides, he's in love with her. Just about ruined him, for the Irish game. We can't afford to lose him. Best toughy we've got. . . . *Me* talk to her? Well, I tried, but no good. She put me out like a fire. . . . Now, Moie, you help us out. Don't let us down, Moie; you never did, before. . . . What? . . . Oh, fine! . . . Sure, I'll save you tickets, good ones! 'By, Moie, old scout!"

"SO that's the trouble?" laughs Coach sourly, when I hang up.

"Yeah, and it's plenty," I said. "Poor goof talks about sharin' the touchdowns. One guy don't deserve all the dollars or all the headlines—divide 'em up. And so forth! Philosophy. . . . Unsound systems. Ouch, and double ouch!"

"It would be bad enough if he was only in love. What can we do?" he asks. "We've got to have Pat at his best, or we're sure out of luck Saturday. Olson couldn't carry a ball with handles on it through a sheet of wet paper!"

"Three of the boys and I are handling it," I said. And I told him all we've got working: girl rushing Pat, guy dating Pat's girl, Big Schultz riding Pat, the Irish finding out Pat has gone yellow—and now, we've got old Moie helping.

"He'll tell her to make the big lug get in there and play some ball!" I said.

"But what can I do to help?" Coach asks, lookin' worried.

"Well, just drop Pat out of the line-up for tomorrow's scrimmage," I said. "Let him think *that* over."

"All right," he says. "And I'd say, Doc, these look like tactics to me."

"Worked out by our little Board of Tragedy," I said. "But don't worry, Coach. Some way, somehow, we'll have Paderewski Megalonovich in there playing a ton of football, of a Saturday!"

I don't know whether I was as brave as I sounded. But Davy reports progress Wednesday, and so does Sparky. Davy says Joe said Elsa Schilkart tumbled for dating. Sparky says his gal found Pat tickled over a little attention. Big Schultz says Pat had a kind of dazed look. Progress? We got love on the run! So I tackle communism.

Pat stands by me that afternoon during scrimmage while Olson fills in at full. And he says: "That's fine, Doc. Let Olson go in, and share the credit! There's enough to go around."

This burns me down to sifted ashes. "Why, you big Fascist, credit? Share credit? If Coach lets you in there Saturday, and you go the way you been goin', you'll get *more'n* your share of wallops on the chin from those Irish! That's about all you *will* get!"

"If he lets me in there, Doc! You don't mean—" He stops all of a sudden. "Doc, don't call me a Fascist!" And he walks away from me in a huff.

SO I knew I had him on the run, some. The next day, I got in the mail a carbon copy of a telegram that Moie Schilkart sent to his daughter Elsa:

DEAR ELSA HERE IS NEW PROPOSITION
STOP I CONSENT TO YOUR COMMUNISM
PROVIDED YOU WILL DROP BIG ROUGHNECK
FOOTBALL MAN I HEAR YOU ARE ENCOUR-
AGING STOP AS EXTRA INDUCEMENT COMMA
IF YOU WILL CUT YOUR HAIR COMMA
I WILL STAKE YOU TO FOUR GOOD PERMA-
NENTS PER YEAR STOP IS IT A BET QUES-
TION MARK YOU ARE TOO SMART TO FOOL
WITH DIRTY FIGHTING DUMBBELLS STOP
AFFECTIONATELY FATHER

Beat it? That ruins us and our tactics, as far as I can see! Wouldn't yuh think a man smart enough to own 108 filling-stations could write a brainier message than that?

I'm askin' him to make his daughter put old Pat back on the right track, and here he goes and tells her to ditch him! Our Board of Tragedy's sunk without a trace. . . .

So a hundred thousand crazy football fans pack the stadium to see the slaughter by the Irish, or else a dangdingdong old horse of a fight. Great crowd. Great day. But I'm low, and so is Coach.

"Pat?" he asks me.

"Hold him out a few minutes," I said. "Gimme a chance to work on him, just a little longer." He says oke.

ON the bench, I'm sittin' right by Paderewski Megalonovitch, scowling and hunched up in his sheepskin. Mad, disgusted, maybe, with childish things.

The kickoff, them to us. We try twice, but no good. Punt.

"Tough on Davy," I said to Pat. "And Sparky too. Nobody in there to share the touchdowns with 'em, after three years!" Old Pat don't say a word. "And Big," I said, "it's rotten for him—not a soul in there to whang through them big holes he opens up. He won't get to share any glory today."

The Irish take that ball, and they begin to go places with it. Work on one side, away from Big so's he can't get his hands on 'em. Sort of a quick opening play, that cuts back fast right past Olson. He's one of these guys that mean well, but can't play either off or defensive football. Irish are goin' places, eight and thirteen yards at a crack. Their side of the stadium is nerts.

"Olie don't want his share of the tackles," I said to Pat. "If he'd just get his share, instead of leavin' all of 'em for Davy and Sparky, we'd stop those—"

But just then Pat gives a lurch my way, as Davy leaves his feet, back there in safety, to drag down a loose Irish ball-lugger. Maybe he's mad. Then in a minute the Irish go over—all the way down, down after down, and score a score. Irish rooters whoop on high.

Irish make their point, too. Seven up. "Say, Pat," I said, "who's the purty blonde I hear is givin' you a tumble these days?" He only scowls at me. The Irish kick off again. Our ball-club looks as bad as it did in that horrible ortnort Tippecanoe game.

"I hear some rich bird is grabbin' your girl away from you," I said. "Tough luck, Pat," I said.

"She falls for money," he growls, watchin' Davy tryin' to get back up the field with the ball with exactly *no* full-back blockin' for him.

"Oh, yeah?" I said. "Her? Listen, the guy's only a millionaire. But *she's* gonna heir about forty million some day.

Her father owns 121 filling-stations, whole chain, and—"

"Wh-at?" he gawps. "Oh, shut up, Doc, will you? Look, oh—look at that dirty bum, givin' Sparky the knee!"

Maybe the guy's coming, after all. But then he's still a communist. And he's still in love. . . .

Olson loses two yards tryin' to edge into a heluva hole Big Schultz made for him. "Maybe she's sore because this blonde has you on the run," I said.

"Army coulda crawled through there on its stummick," Pat mutters.

He won't pay any attention to me. I fall off him like water off a duck's rain-coat. No use, I guess. But just then, I hear an argument, behind the bench.

"But I'm telling you I am a letter man myself," says a voice bustin' out with authority. "Rights, anywhere in this place! All I want is to see Doc Jones a minute!" I look around, quick.

Great garsh, it's little old Moie himself! I waggle him up, with an assistant manager trailing him. "Moie!" I said.

"Doc!" he says, outa breath. "Listen! Where's this guy the Irish say can't take it? That don't like it?" I can feel old Pat, right against me, shiver all over. "She says to tell him—"

"Where is she?" I said.

"Right there!" he says. I look around, and so does old Pat McGlone. Moie nods in her direction, front row, but we can't miss her—if we know her. Boy, oh, man! That black hair bobbed till who untied the pup! Bright black eyes! A touch of stick on those lips—that little freckled nose turned up just enough—yeah, that lumpy Joe Rudy alongside.

"And she says, tell him to get in there and share this licking with the rest of our gang, or she's off him for life!"

"Hey, licking?" growls old Pat with a glare. "Who th'—what th'—say, you! Whoever y'are, tell her I can't take it, tell her I don't like it. But brother—"

RIGHT at this point, this dizzy little doll lifts up her fist and shakes it right at old Pat McGlone—but smiles! Smiles brighter'n anything in a drugstore could make her!

"Tell her I sure can deal it out!"

And old Pat wheels around on that bench and begins tearin' at his sheepskin, to get it off. And lookin' for a headgear.

I wink at Moie, who whispers "Psychology!" and beats it. There is a cheer from our side of the field. I look around quick. Davy has just accidentally com-

pleted a forward pass for the enormous distance of six yards to a sophomore end. First down. The Irish take time out, to figure us out. Midfield, only fifteen yards in from our sideline and bench.

I JUMP up and walk around to grab Coach a minute. He listens, grins, and then gives Pat McGlone a nod, which is all he needs. Out gallops Paderewski Megalonovich! And right then was when the Irish made two enormous mistakes:

They made the first by havin' a big knock-kneed sophomore lug at left tackle who'd never seen Pat McGlone in action. Nor felt him. And he made the second by poppin' off, out loud, while he gawked around in the time-out.

"Where's the guy they had who went yelluh?" he burped.

And old Pat McGlone heard him!

Among the twenty-two other footballers who hear this piece of business is Davy Miller, and anybody says Davy is not smarter'n two blisters is barmy. Time's in. . . . Huddle. . . . Signal. And it's Sparky's ball to the right, their left, with old Pat McGlone chargin' up ahead to take that tackle *out*. Out? I mean *out!* Pat hits that sophomore lug so hard he lights out of bounds on his neck! Out of bounds? Out of the game—*out!*

Wait, wait! Sparky's through, and cuttin' back—a good thirty-five yards before he's pegged. Trust Davy to call the right one, and credit old Pat McGlone for makin' it good. Our crowd goes crazy—a ball-game after all, with us in it! I sit down, and feel better. Trust Davy, and credit Pat again, in a minute, after the Irish have gathered up that lug left tackle, trundled him off and replaced him with somebody they hope knows better'n to antagonize a combination bull and buzz-saw!

Time's in. And Davy takes a look at Pat. Huddle. . . . Signal. . . . Big Schultz wheels into action to wipe off two Irish on the right side of their line, and *wham!* There goes Pat in, and through, to run right over their defensive open center, and go gallopin' across the goal line with two Irish halves hangin' onto his outer works!

Pandemonium breaks looser'n it ever cracked before. Something hits me in the back. I look around, and it's Moie Schilkart's hat. Anyway, he's bare-headed, huggin' this purty little gal of his, and she's got tears in her eyes! While Joe Rudy looks like a rusty pitch-covered penny. . . .

Us, six; them, seven. And we stick there, and the crowd groans because Davy can't snag a slovern passed ball and spot it for Pat to boot the extra point. But an old dangdoodle of a ball-game begins right then and there, and no hundred thousand football fans ever got as many times their money's worth in one big lump! I'll tell the Football Guide himself myself.

THOSE Irish are in there fightin' every foot, don't think they're not. But so's our gang. And thanks to McGlone's dander, it's us pitchin', most of the time, and them ketchin', which they can do, and plenty. *Ding* they go up the field; and *dong*, we come back again!

"Pat makes up for a hundred poor games," says Coach to me.

"But he only played one, Coach!" I said. And I had one laugh at Pat. Time out. He tangles with a big tackle which came through to hurry a pass Davy's tryin' to get away, and when they come down, this tackle, their right, he jams a knee in Pat's breadbox. I hurry out with a bottle of water and my towel.

"Pat," I said to him, "don't leave them Irish share these touchdowns!"

"Doc, you damn' old capitalist, I'll kill you!" he grunts.

"Whassat, whassat?" says the referee, stickin' his nose between us.

"He's okay," I said. "Says it's Saturday."

"For us, it is," says Pat, climbin' up on his feet. "For them, it's Judgment Day! Let's go!"

And there they went, hotter and heavier to the half. Just as well, too; for the crowd and I, we both needed a rest.

The third quarter goes even tougher, or more so. We're still pitchin', playin' the string out to fourth down alla time. They're ketchin', and kickin' on second down. In the lead by a skinny little point that looks fatter every minute, and fightin' to hold it. But even if they should win this game, they're takin' a lickin' and they know it, and they like it, and that's why we all of us love the Irish. But can they win it?

Another tackle, the right, calls it a day for them, or would if he felt like talkin', after his steenth collision with old Pat McGlone. Big Schultz has beat down five guys alternatin' against him. Davy is workin' the game down to a break, like the fox he is, and after while it comes.

On one of Pat McGlone's hell-for-breakfast tackles! You see, they start

the fourth period slowin' the game. Try a third down, on their own twenty-yard line, with a nice, conservative plunge at center, and old Pat goes up to meet it without waitin' for the fullback to pop out of a hole, if any. He whangs into this big vice-versus so hard the Irish drops the ball. When the referee recovers the leather, he has to drag it out of Big Schultz's paws!

Their twenty—but *our* ball. "Let's go, gang," yells Davy.

Pat's ball, through Schultz. Eleven yards! First down again, the goal to go. Pat again, head down, bullin' for four more yards! Second and five. Pat some more, for two. Do those Irish fight, or do they *fight*?

One great grand crash, with Pat luggin' and gallopin', straight into a concrete foundation made of eight big tough Irish that stand him down. That was third. And the Irish bunch to block down another and save the old ball-game. But for fourth, with them bunched? There goes Sparky!

Listen to fifty thousand people, losing their minds! How come? Sparky streakin' over, outside their tackle, a mile a jiffy! Because old Pat McGlone has smothered their third-string left tackle over on their left guard so tight neither one of them can breathe!

Also, the extra point. Us, 13; them, 7. And that was the game, though one of Davy's passes did connect after while, so that the ball was downed on their twenty, from where Pat could boot over a fielder to make us 16. Then it doesn't matter if they grab themselves a touchdown on a wild last-minute pass.

PAT McGLONE, *né* Paderewski Megalonovich, dropped around to see me the next morning, blushin' like a bride over a lot of All-American publicity.

"Listen," I said, "what about this communism, this sharin' the touchdown business? Cured?"

"Say, you didn't see the Irish gettin' any of *our* share, did yuh?"

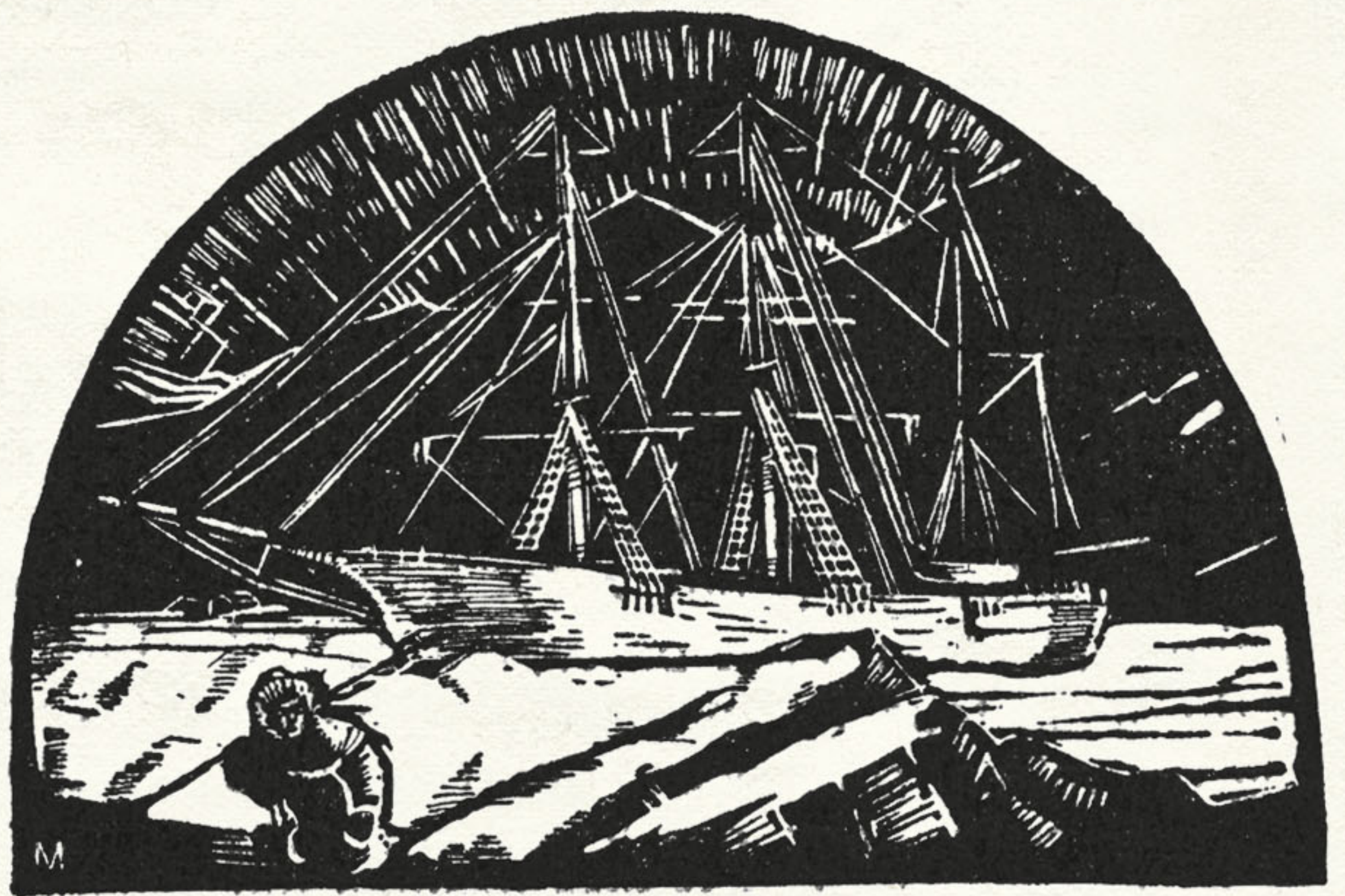
But there's no cure for love!

"Pat," I said, "looks to me like maybe old Moie would share his wealth with you, if you played cards right!"

"But I'm *unlucky* at cards," he laughs. And he whangs me so hard I didn't get over it till Christmas. . . . What? Oh, he majored in physical ed., but just now he's been promoted to manage nine filling-stations in St. Louis. Yeah. And they're livin' on, and in, his salary too!

REAL EXPERIENCES

Each of us has lived through at least one episode so exciting or so strange as to demand record; for this reason we print here each month five such stories of Real Experience. (For details of this prize contest see page 3.) First the sole survivor of the ill-fated Greely Expedition, besides its distinguished commander, tells its moving story.



Tragedy in the Arctic

As told to Burt M. McConnell

by GENERAL DAVID L. BRAINARD

THE events of which I shall tell occurred before many of you were born, and the participants in these Arctic adventures have passed away, one by one, until only two of us are left—General A. W. Greely and myself.

Little was known of meteorology when I was a young man. Our Weather Bureau was then under the jurisdiction of the Army Signal Corps, and it fell to Lieutenant Greely's lot to take a small detachment to Lady Franklin Bay, just across the channel from northern Greenland, to make tidal and weather observations over a period of two years. Our station was the most northerly of thirteen established by various other nations in a concerted effort to learn something about the weather. I was a Sergeant at the time.

Our ship fought her way through the ice in the summer of 1881, and we landed at Lady Franklin Bay in August of that year. Comfortable quarters were set up two hundred miles from the nearest Eskimo settlement. One of our first tasks that winter was to wrest from Great Britain the "farthest north" record, which she had held for three centuries. Lieutenant James B. Lockwood and I, with an Eskimo dog-team driver,

accomplished that feat when we reached Lat. 83° 24' N., after a strenuous sledge journey of five weeks in which many of us hauled our own sleds. For two years the members of the expedition made daily magnetic, meteorological, tidal, and other observations. They were made with such precision as to call forth the admiration of the entire scientific world, once the results were published.

In all the history of exploration, no expedition had gone into the Arctic with better equipment, higher aims, and greater expectations of success. In those days, when the Indians of the Western plains were still on the warpath, an admiring nation thought of us as heroes living in another world. When the relief ship, sent by the Government in 1883, was crushed by the ice and sunk, the entire United States was kept in a ferment over our plight. With few magazines and newspapers, no telephone system, and none of the modern inventions in the transportation and communication fields, the impression that the Government was neglecting us nevertheless spread over the country. Families discussed our predicament at the dinner table, lighted with whale-oil or kerosene lamps, and agreed that something ought to be done.

The public eventually became so aroused that the Government was forced to offer a reward of twenty-five thousand dollars for the safe return of our party of twenty-five men. In fact, there probably has never been such a widespread and sympathetic interest in a small group of explorers as the American people felt for us. The relief ship sent by the Government in 1882 was unable to reach Lady Franklin Bay because of unfavorable ice conditions. Two vessels sent the following year not only failed to make contact with our party, but cached little or no food for our sustenance during the retreat southward. And to make matters worse, our death warrant was virtually signed when it was decided not to send another relief expedition in September of that year. Such an expedition undoubtedly would have reached us. It would have found us all alive and in good health, waiting for transportation home. And the cost would not have been more than thirty thousand dollars. The elaborate expedition that found us the following June, our ranks thinned by starvation, cost more than five hundred thousand dollars—and brought back only six of the original party of twenty-five.

Lieutenant Greely's orders were to retreat southward along the coast if the relief ships did not reach us on a certain date in August, 1883. We attempted to do this, carrying rations for forty days. Eventually we arrived at Cape Sabine, two hundred and fifty miles south of our base camp, but not until we had encountered gales, blinding spray, rain, sleet, snow, darkness; and suffered from hunger and cold. The drifting ice-fields threatened to crush our frail boats. We had expected this, but we did not expect to spend the winter and spring on a barren and wind-swept Arctic promontory. We had not anticipated a winter of hardship and horror, of insufficient food and clothing, in cramped quarters, without the warmth of a fire or even the light of a coal-oil lamp. We did not expect to be called upon to face starvation, insanity, and death.

BESET by drifting floes, we hauled our boats out onto the ice, built sleds, loaded the largest whale-boat and our supplies upon them, abandoned the rest, and set out over the ice. Encumbered with tons of scientific records, clothing, food, and equipment, we were able to travel only two or three miles a day over the hummocky White Desert. A gale

drove us out to sea. Then a southerly drift carried us near Cape Sabine. Another gale blew our ice field into the middle of Smith Sound. New ice was constantly forming—ice thick enough to hamper the progress of the boat, but not strong enough to bear a man's weight. At the end of seven weeks we made a successful dash for shore, and landed at Cape Sabine on September 29, with every man in good health, and with scientific records, instruments, provisions and equipment intact. This was according to Lieutenant Greely's plans.

Crossing to Greenland or Littleton Island was out of the question, even if the channel were free of ice. Winter was at hand; strong tides rose and fell from ten to twelve feet, twisting the ice-pack in all directions.

Temporary quarters were built, and parties sent out to look for caches of food and messages from the relief ships. We learned that one of the vessels actually had been crushed in the ice and sunk within a few miles of our winter camp at Cape Sabine. But the commander had left a note, promising that he would try to get in touch with the second relief vessel; that "everything within the power of man" would be done to bring relief. On the strength of this promise, we went into winter quarters.

OUR hut was cold and damp from the start; we had fuel only for cooking. Sleeping-bags froze to the canvas which lay between the bags and the bare ground. Since we were obliged to sleep in our clothing, the insides of our sleeping-bags soon became coated with ice. The roof and walls gathered frost, as steam from the cooking condensed in the frigid atmosphere. Our only light in the hut was furnished by a rag dipped in seal-oil. Drifting snow sifted in through the crevices of the hut. In the opinion of the surgeon, our daily ration was insufficient to sustain life.

Finally we broke up a whale-boat for fuel. A party of volunteers undertook to bring, from a point forty miles away, some beef that had been cached there years before by a British expedition. They reached the spot after traveling five days, and were on their way back to camp when one of the men froze both his hands and feet. In order to save his life, the others abandoned the meat and brought him back to the hut. When they returned to the spot, they learned, much to their dismay, that the ice on which

they had cached the meat had drifted out to sea.

For weeks one of the volunteers, Elison, suffered excruciating pain in his hands and his feet; then these members sloughed off, one by one, without the patient being aware of it. All he knew was that the "soles" of his feet itched terribly. We strapped a spoon to the stump of one arm and a fork to the other, in order that he might feed himself.

Meanwhile, the hunters of our party, including myself, obtained a few seals, a small polar bear, about twenty-five foxes, scores of dovekies and ptarmigan; and others brought in shrimp, seaweed, reindeer moss and lichens. These last items we boiled with strips of seal-skin and pieces from the sleeping-bags. Lieutenant Greely placed me in charge of food supplies—a task of overwhelming responsibility, under the circumstances. The men grew ravenous and irritable; by mid-December we had become weak and apathetic. Fresh water was obtained from a near-by lake, through a hole in the ice.

Early in January it became my duty to report to Lieutenant Greely the theft of some hard-bread. This was a staggering blow to the morale of the party. Each man immediately became suspicious of his comrades; no doubt some of them doubted my ability to withstand the temptation to steal from the supplies in my charge. A few offered the thief a bit of their own pitifully small ration if he would desist. But the criminal did not admit his guilt. In the semi-darkness of the hut, each man searched the eyes of his neighbor for a sign.

When the supply of tobacco became exhausted, we smoked tea-leaves. When the water of the lake became brackish, we melted fresh-water ice. Since fuel was scarce, Lieutenant Greely used to put some cracked ice in a hot-water bottle, and melt it by the heat of his body.

THE first death occurred in January. No salute was fired over the grave, although ours was an Army command; ammunition was too scarce. Insubordination among the enlisted men began to crop out. The camp thief continued his demoralizing work. Lieutenant Greely tried to keep up the courage of the others by holding out the hope that we would all get to Greenland. Volunteers tried to make the crossing on the ice, but were driven back by open water.

There were almost daily quarrels; this was a severe strain upon the commander,

who was none too well, but the knowledge that the thief remained at large—that he was still strong and healthy while others were growing weak—outweighed every other responsibility. One never knew how a quarrel would end, for in the circumstances death was preferable to life. Our faces were covered with soot and smoke, for we never washed; our clothes were caked with grease and dirt, and our matted hair hung down to our shoulders.

On March 1st the strait was free of ice, but the party did not have strength enough left to carry the whale-boat down to the shore and launch it. Later in the month the entire lot of us nearly perished from asphyxiation when the burning alcohol lamp robbed the air of the hut of oxygen.

IN April one of our two Eskimo hunters died, and another member of the expedition two days later. Just before he passed away, we heard a hoarse whisper: "Water!" We had none to give him. Three others died during the month, and our other Eskimo hunter was drowned. By this time some of the survivors were mentally deranged, and Lieutenant Greely felt that death might come to him at any time. He therefore made arrangements for me to take command in the event of his death, and even spent an entire day getting his personal effects in order. But he survived. In fact, I stood beside him on his 91st birthday, recently, when Secretary of War Dern pinned upon his breast that most coveted of military decorations—the Congressional Medal of Honor.

In May, 1884, we abandoned the hut, and set up a tent nearer the water. Four men died during the month. One of the poor fellows shared Lieutenant Greely's sleeping-bag, and since there was no other place for the commander to sleep, he remained in the bag with the dead body through the night.

June opened with a howling gale and drifting snow; three men, including the surgeon, died during the first week. Our position grew more horrible, day by day. Each man, as death marked him for its own, became delirious; his mind wandered, and he talked incoherently of home, mother, father, wife or sweetheart. We all got to know the symptoms, and would glance at each other, as if to say: "He will not live the day out." Not one of us knew, when we crept into the sleeping-bag at night, whether we would

ever wake in this world; the chances were that we would not.

The camp thief contrived to outlast the majority. But his end came in the first week of June. It was, for him, entirely unexpected; was he not twice as strong as any other member of the emaciated group? What if the commander *should* make a report of the thief's traitorous acts to the War Department? He would outlive us all, and destroy the evidence. He would go down in history as the only survivor of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition—and no one would know by what means he survived. He would be a hero!

When this traitor was actually caught in the act of stealing, there was nothing for Lieutenant Greeley to do but write the military order by which he was executed. Three rifles were loaded—two with ball-cartridges and one with a blank. Three of us non-commissioned officers were called upon to perform the execution. We did not know whose rifle would cut short the culprit's life. . . . We led him a short distance from camp; three shots rang out; and his body was left lying where it fell. When Lieutenant Greeley made a report of the incident to the War Department, the Adjutant General of the Army sustained his action in every particular.

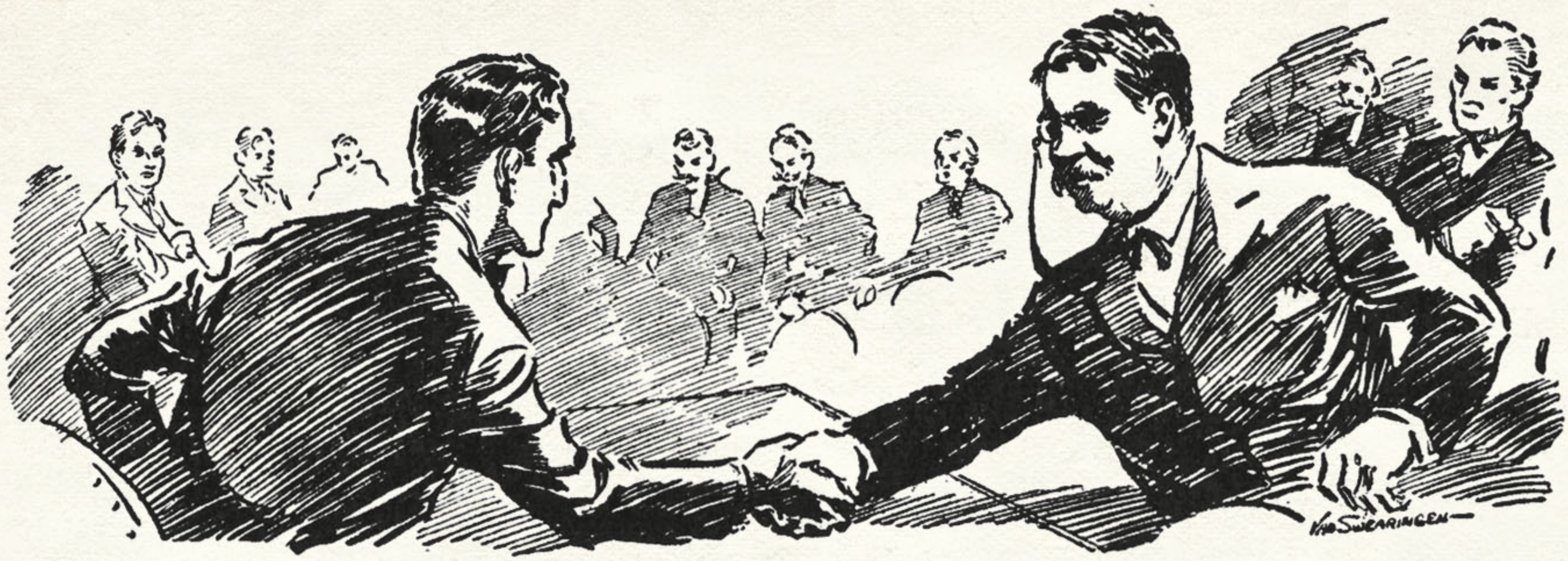
BY the second week in June of that fateful year, 1884, absolutely no food was in camp; we were reduced to eating our seal-skin clothing and sleeping-bags, with a few shrimps and lichens. One man died on the 12th, another on the 18th. By some miracle, the man without either feet or hands survived. By the 22nd we were all completely exhausted; for two days we had had practically nothing to eat. There were only seven of us left—seven out of twenty-five. Our time had come; we were all convinced of that. It was too early in the season, we thought, for a relief vessel to batter her way through the closely packed ice of Smith Sound.

Our only consolation was that we had done our work well. Lieutenant Greeley's orders from Washington read that he was to retreat with his party along the coast of Grinnell Land—and he had carried them out. The expedition's scientific work, complete in every particular, was amazingly accurate. Two of us had reached the "farthest north" of that period, and the other contributions to science and exploration, in the opinion

of impartial observers, were on the whole of greater value than the records of all previous Arctic expeditions combined. . . .

It was not until June 22nd, by which time eighteen members of the party had perished, that the *Thetis*, a sturdy whaler, accompanied by the *Bear*, came around the point. Commander Schley, later a Rear Admiral, was in command. For three weeks these vessels had battled their way through the ice from Upernavik, Greenland. Spurred by the Government's reward of twenty-five thousand dollars for our safe return to civilization, (a reward for which Government ships were not eligible) eight whaling-vessels also had entered the race, but they were outdistanced by the *Thetis* and the *Bear*. Sometimes it was necessary for the ships to blast their way through the heavy ice-pack with torpedoes. Finally the two American vessels arrived at Littleton Island. Failing to find any sign of us there, they made preparations to remain for the winter. For it was not supposed, if we had come south, that we had been unable to cross to Littleton Island.

Rations were landed and cached at two points, and the two vessels steamed across the sound to Cape Sabine. Parties were sent ashore to look for messages. They found one, dated the previous October, in which Lieutenant Greeley reported our whereabouts, and said we were all well. This note also gave the location of our camp. Boats were lowered in the heavy surf, and the rescuers came ashore. They found most of the party in the tent, weak and emaciated. Three of us, however, were able to walk down to the boat. The tent had been blown down by the heavy wind, and we were all too exhausted to raise it. So there several of the members lay, waiting for the end. The rescuers fed us with warm milk and beef tea, wrapped the weaker ones in blankets, and carried them down to the shore. The bodies of the dead were unearthed and wrapped in blankets. At that season it was daylight throughout the twenty-four hours, and this enabled the rescue parties to work all night. As soon as practicable, the surgeons operated upon Elison, who had lost both hands and feet through frostbite. The poor fellow never rallied, and died three days afterward. Within a month the rest of us, six out of twenty-five, were back among our families and friends, thanks to Commander Schley and the officers and men of the *Thetis* and the *Bear*.



A Son of the Frontier

*A wild Westerner walks in on a meeting of the Cabinet
—and President Roosevelt appoints him U. S. Marshal.*

By JOHN ABERNATHY

THE fact that I had won the friendship of the President in such a short time and had become the object of much publicity and popular interest, was due to no effort on my part. I did not ask any favor at the hands of the President. When the wolf-hunt was ended, I returned to my home and my family on the ranch.

President Roosevelt, however, was a believer in ignoring formalities and he sent for me to visit the national capital. I did not have the ready cash to pay for the long trip to Washington, and therefore went to a bank in Frederick, where I borrowed enough to buy a ticket, also for expenses. I left with eighty-seven dollars in currency, after paying for the round-trip ticket from Frederick to Washington. Upon reaching St. Louis, I still had eighty-four dollars of my money left, all of which was in \$20 bills except \$4 in silver.

Riding in a chair-car all the way to St. Louis on a slow train from Oklahoma was very tiresome; I was in need of sleep upon arriving in the Missouri metropolis, and the train for Washington did not depart for eight hours. Before starting out to find a quiet hotel, I checked my baggage at the station. At first, I decided to leave the old-time trusty six-shooter in one of the grips. But before I walked away from the check-stand, I suddenly decided to take my gun along with me.

A policeman directed me to a hotel near by. I was shown to a room, and was not long in going to bed. My trousers with purse containing the eighty-four

dollars was placed on a chair beside the bed. There were two doors in the room. Dozing off quickly, I soon was sound asleep. But the sound of one of the doors being opened awoke me. I jumped up, seized my pistol and throwing my shoulder against the door, it came open. Then things began to happen.

Behind that door was the worst-looking woman I ever saw. I grabbed her with one hand, holding my pistol in the other, jerking her into the room. She began screaming at the top of her voice. Her screams brought a man and another woman running into the room through the front door. This man had a gun in his hand as he entered, but when I took the drop on him, I hurled the woman between us, ordering this man to drop his gun, which he did.

"There's your damned old pocket-book," said the woman as she threw it on the floor. I forced all three of the robbers to back out the door. I then dressed hurriedly, and ran into the lobby of the hotel. All had fled from the building. I counted my money and discovered that twenty dollars was missing from the purse. Upon meeting a policeman on the street as I left the hotel, I told the officer of the robbery.

"What kind of a town have you," I asked, "where a man is robbed in open daylight? And I was directed by your fellow-officer to go to that hotel."

"You go up the front and I'll go up the alley—and we will meet up there," suggested the policeman.

"No, you go up the front, and I will go up the alley," I answered.

I went up the alley, entering the hotel again from the back way, then going into the lobby. There were no persons in the hotel except the negro porter, who refused to talk. The policeman called me over to the corner of a room, where the carpet was pulled up from the floor. A brand new section of floor had just been placed by a carpenter.

"The authorities got onto this place and discovered a trapdoor in this floor," said the officer. "The city forced them to take the trapdoor out," he continued. "They may have another trapdoor. It is a good thing you woke up just when you did—for maybe you would have been awakened and maybe you wouldn't; you might not have known anything for a week or two."

I left the hotel, returning to the depot, where I remained until train-time. I was worried over the loss of the money.

SOON after the train left the Union station, I met W. B. Johnston of Ardmore, district attorney for the Southern District of Indian Territory. Senator Chester I. Long of Kansas, was in company with Johnston. Both were on their way to Washington. I told them that I likewise was Washington-bound—to see the President. Both Senator Long and Johnston offered to help me arrange for an appointment with the President.

"It will be Cabinet day when we get to Washington," said Senator Long; "nobody is able to see the President on the day he meets with the Cabinet. I doubt if it will be possible for you to see him for at least a week."

I registered at the Raleigh Hotel upon my arrival in the capital city. I counted my money and decided that I did not have sufficient cash to remain in Washington for a week. So I ignored the suggestion made by Senator Long and District Attorney Johnston, and went out looking for the White House.

Senator Long and District Attorney Johnston, upon their arrival, had also registered at the Raleigh Hotel, but did not know I had left so early that morning. I went along Pennsylvania Avenue, looking at the many buildings. I quickly recognized the Capitol at the far end of the Avenue from photographs. Then my eyes fell upon a tall white building near at hand. "This is the White House," I said to myself, as I entered the front door. To my great surprise, I did not see

anybody who even looked like the President, but I said to an usher:

"I am looking for the President."

"Bud," replied the usher, "this isn't where the President lives. This is the Treasury Building."

A man in uniform offered to direct the way to the White House.

"If you will go with me, I will show you the way," he said. After walking outside, he pointed to the White House, a short distance away. "That is the White House, but you cannot see the President; this is Cabinet day."

I made up my mind that I would not take no for an answer, so I went ahead. I was attired in a gray suit, with cowboy pants. The legs of the trousers covered the boot-tops. I wore a broad-brimmed white hat. I walked through the iron gate, reaching the inside of the White House grounds, then went around into the executive offices. The blue-coats on guard gave me the once-over but none of them tried to stop me till I met their chief, inside the offices.

I did not know at the time that I was violating the rules by entering the executive offices carrying a six-shooter. Had the Secret Service men known this, I possibly would have been thrown into jail without ceremony. An usher inside the executive offices asked me for a card. "I don't carry cards," I replied. Then, a blank card was produced. I wrote my name upon the card and it was sent to the inside office. Upon the usher's return, I was told to follow, and we went into the office of Private Secretary William Loeb, Jr. The usher introduced me.

"The President will be delighted to see you, Mr. Abernathy," said Secretary Loeb; "just go on in that room, and we will talk later."

I ENTERED the room in which there was a long table. Around the table were a number of men seated. Only one chair was vacant, this seat being at the head of the table. None of the men offered to speak as I entered.

"Well, there are more real manners in a cow-camp than in here," I thought to myself as I stood there holding my cowboy hat. I said nothing, however.

I felt like a signboard, when none of the men offered me a seat. As I looked at the vacant chair, I decided to sit down in it and make myself at home. Then smiles appeared on the faces of all those men. This made me angry, for I thought they were making fun of me.

I looked at them, I guess, as viciously as I ever looked at a wild wolf, when I thought they were trying to laugh at me. I had first placed my hat upon the table, but when they smiled, I was so mad I threw the hat into the corner.

Suddenly I heard a door open from the rear. Before I could turn, I recognized the President's voice.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the President, as he began shaking hands with all of those present. He did not notice me sitting at the head of the table. Then—

"Oh, Wolfer!" shouted the President, as he noticed me. He started toward me.

I began to realize that I was in the right church but in the wrong pew, and I started to get up out of the chair.

"You are getting mighty high in the world, sitting in the President's chair at a Cabinet meeting," remarked the President as I again started to get up.

"Let me out of here," I said. "I feel just like a rat in a corn-crib." All the Cabinet members as well as the President laughed.

"Now, gentlemen, excuse me for a few minutes," said the President, as he escorted me into his private office and inquired about my family.

Reaching under the table, the President presented me with a book, entitled: "Outdoor Pastime of an American Hunter," in which is a story of the wolf-hunt. I had not known he had published a book so soon after the event in Oklahoma.

"Here is a book from the author to you," said the President, in handing his book to me. It contained his autograph.

"I want you to have dinner with me today," he then said. It was nearly eleven o'clock then, and I thought he meant noonday dinner.

"I mean dinner at six o'clock," continued the President. I said, "Oh, my old supper!" and the President agreed: "And my old supper-time, too."

President Roosevelt then took me into the rear end of the Cabinet room and said: "Gentlemen, I want you to know John R. Abernathy, the man who entertained me better than any President ever was entertained—by catching wolves with his hands."

Immediately the Cabinet members, each of whom shook my hand, were so changed in their manner toward me that they almost made me think of *Dr. Jekyll* and *Mr. Hyde*.

I left the executive offices, returning to my room in the Raleigh Hotel. I again

met Senator Long and District Attorney Johnston. "We were just fixing to drag the town, thinking you were lost," said the Senator.

"Have you been out buying something already this morning?" asked District Attorney Johnston.

"No! The President gave me this," I replied, showing them the book.

"And that isn't all, gentlemen," I said, "I am going to chew with him at six o'clock tonight." I told them of my dinner engagement with the President.

AFTER my first trip to the White House, I felt perfectly at ease. The President invited me to go and come as I pleased, making the White House my home while in Washington. I remained until ready to return home. At the dinner-table, the President said:

"What would you like in Oklahoma, Jack?"

"I really do not know, Mr. President; I would not accept anything that I wasn't capable of taking care of."

"From the judgment you exhibited and the way everything was taken care of on the wolf-hunt, I do not believe there is anything within my power to confer, but what you could take care of it."

"That is a compliment, Mr. President, that I never shall forget; I am afraid you are making that a little strong, however."

"How would you like to be United States Marshal of Oklahoma?"

"That would be a very important position. I would do my best to carry out the law to the letter."

"That's fine!" said the President, in closing the conversation with reference to the marshalship appointment. No more was said about this then, and I started home the next day.

About a month later, President Roosevelt sent a telegram asking me to return to Washington at once. I made the trip by train, arriving during the early part of the week. My name already had been sent to the Senate for confirmation as Marshal of Oklahoma Territory. The Senate was to act on the confirmation on the following Tuesday.

The President asked me to call upon the Senate Judiciary Committee on the following Monday morning. I asked the President what he wanted me to say to the committee members, and he laughed heartily.

"This is one time every tub must stand upon its own bottom," he replied. He

handed me a package of telegrams clamped in book form, which he told me to read. Then, he said, I would know what to talk about.

Charges had been preferred against me, and I was asked to answer them before the committee. The charges read something like this, in part: "John Abernathy has been a bronco-rider, reared in a cow-camp, a fiddler for country dances, a cotton-picker, a patch-digger and a friend of the outlaws—and is not a politician."

Other charges were that I would appoint Al Jennings, notorious ex-outlaw as my chief deputy; and Simon Dalton, youngest brother of the Dalton Brothers (killed at Coffeyville raid) as my federal jailer. These two charges were the greatest untruths ever spoken.

I DID not have much trouble in explaining to the Senate Judiciary Committee, when I appeared. Senator Knox said: "It seems that some of your Oklahoma friends do not think you would be a fit man for U. S. Marshal; I'll just have the secretary read the charges."

The committee had been furnished a copy of each telegram; there was a stack about six inches in thickness.

"I will tell you the part of the charges which are not true; then you will know the truthful part," I replied, when asked about the charges. "The three last statements are not true.

"I would be as far from appointing Al Jennings or Simon Dalton to any office under me, as either of you gentlemen would be if you were in my place; however, I know both Al and Frank Jennings. They once were bad men, but have reformed and are trying to live right. According to the Scriptures, 'there is more rejoicing among the angels in heaven over one sinner that repents, than there is in the repentance of ninety and nine righteous men.'"

"Well, if you were reared in a cow-camp, where did you get all that Scripture?" asked one of the Senators.

"Senator, I thought everybody knew that."

"You are a fiddler for country dances?"

"Yes sir. And there never was a dance that broke up in a row, where I furnished the music."

"How do you account for that? Were they afraid of you?"

"No sir. But I was the only fiddler

in the region at that particular time. If a row started, I told them I would get scared and quit. This is how I kept peace and order!"

Senator Knox leaned back in his chair, saying:

"Well, Marshal,—I am going to call you Marshal, since your name already has gone to the Senate,—tell us some wolf stories."

I told the Senators two stories about catching wolves, and when I started to make my exit from the room, one of the Senators said: "Don't go yet; tell us some more stories; I could listen a dry week if it rained every day, to such stories as those."

I made my third attempt to leave before finally getting away. I went back to the hotel and had been there only a few minutes, when the telephone rang. It was Secretary Loeb.

Mr. Loeb asked me to come to the White House at once. Not knowing what this meant, I lost no time in going to see the President.

"I want to know what you did to those Senators," the President demanded. "Every one of them to a man has called me," he continued, "and they have said some pretty good things about you, too."

Thus, President Roosevelt gave me the marshalship appointment of Oklahoma Territory and the Senate confirmed the nomination. The position was one of great responsibility and trust. The salary was five thousand dollars a year and expenses while in discharge of duty. I returned to Guthrie, Oklahoma, where I took charge of the office. Guthrie was the capital in territorial days.

REMOVAL to Guthrie after five years' residence in the western part of Comanche (now Tillman) County was quite an event to my family, especially in the lives of the children. Incidentally it may be mentioned that I took all of my dogs and Sam Bass and Brownie, which had been trained in coursing wolves. Naturally, I was kept busy most of the time in the charge of my duties but my wife never shirked responsibility in such an emergency. Like my mother, she was a wonderful woman, a pal as well as a wife and a mother. Her death, May 7, 1907, only a little over a year after I had reached a place in life where I could make her lot more comfortable as well as happy, was a great loss to me.

Further episodes in the remarkable career of our Son of the Frontier will be described in the next issue.

It Sure Was Ducky!



By WHIT NORQUIST

DUCK season again. And I, like a schoolboy with spring fever, began having dreams over my desk of duck-hunting—that long tramp through the pungent woods, after months of sticking closely to a desk, across the foothills to that reedy lake where the ducks, according to all reports, fairly swarmed, waiting for the hunters to shoot them. Bill, whose desk was next to mine, was having his duck dreams too. Neither one of us had ever been duck-hunting; and we were pretty soft, for we hadn't walked farther than around a city block or two for months, but we thought it a swell idea; and besides, it being open season, the ducks would be expecting us.

Tough on trial-balances to be thinking of ducks, talking of ducks, shooting them and smacking your lips over them. Bill had a gun and so did I. But no dogs. We might as well go duck-hunting without a gun as without a dog, we thought.

For a whole week Bill and I talked ducks, lamenting that we had no dogs, when suddenly Bill said: "Say, boy, why didn't I think of that before! My wife's uncle has a pair of duck dogs that are beauts, and peachy retrievers, and he said I could take them any time."

So take them we did. And beauties they were! A pair of the finest spaniels I ever hope to see. Chummy little fellows too, that liked to snuggle a cold nose into your palm. After getting them lined up we did lots of talking about hunting, and the office gang kidded us plenty; although our enthusiasm never waned, we had a sneaking fear that we'd be in for a winter of panning if we went after ducks and came home empty-handed.

We went to a sporting-goods store and bought everything the salesman suggested, also some things that looked tricky and that Bill and I thought would come in handy on our eight-mile hike through the foothills to reach this lake of lakes after our drive of fifty miles.

We started before daylight so as to reach the lake early, and right from the start those two dogs were as enthusiastic as we were. We parked the car near an old tumbledown log cabin that had been described to us as the beginning of the trail over the hills to Pine Lake, strapped our packs to our backs with frying-pans and kettles dangling around us like tin-peddlers. Funny now to look back on it, but at that time our enthusiasm blinded us to our amateurish methods.

That was the worst trail I ever hope to see. The ravines were deep, the paths stony, heavy underbrush ensnaring us, blackberry vines reaching out and swiping us across the face, and our boots getting heavier at every step.

The farther we went, the oftener we rested to take a smoke and to rehearse what we'd tell the gang when we got back to make their eyes glitter with envy. It was fun, too, to take up our guns and aim at an imaginary duck; and say, did those dogs get excited whenever we did that! It was nice in those quiet woods to sit and talk; and with every rehearsal, the ducks got bigger and better and more of 'em, until we staggered under the load going home. You know how it is when a couple of fellows go hunting.

By the time we reached the lake our packs felt as though everything in them had turned to lead, and we were so dog-goned tired we decided to rest awhile before the massacre. Anyway, there wasn't a duck to be seen; and another anyway, when we stopped, having finally reached our destination, we had more aches and pains than a before-taking person in a patent-medicine ad. We spread a couple of blankets, and even though the dogs were circling round us all ready for the hunt, their enthusiasm didn't revive us.

We stretched out on the blankets; and I'm telling you I never ached so much in all my life as I did at that moment. The sun shone warm; a fly buzzed lazily. . . .

When I awoke, I sat up in amazement. I rubbed my eyes, stretched out my hands to touch the things. Yes, it was really true. There they were, brown and soft, with limp necks a beautiful green. I looked at Bill. He had a dead duck on his stomach, another on his chest, and birds nestled all around him—and he snoring so peacefully! I gripped his arm and shook him.

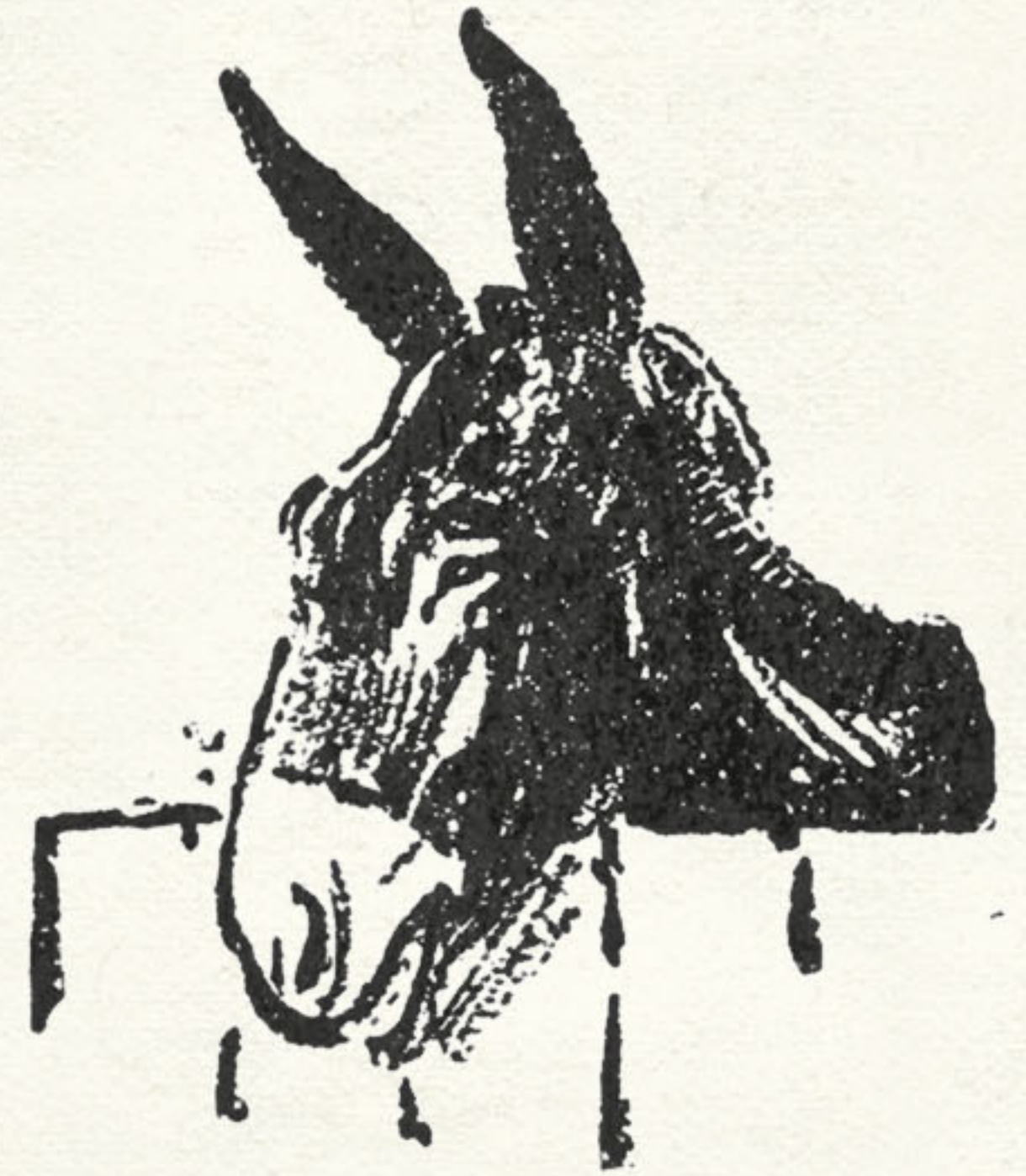
He sat up and rubbed his eyes.

"What the—" he began; then we looked toward the lake. Swimming toward us were those dogs of ours, each with a duck of some other hunter in his mouth. Dripping and happy, they laid those ducks at our feet, and wagged their tails proudly.

Those dogs were beauts, all right. And were they retrievers!

Old Gray Mule

Tex O'Reilly had been city editor of a Chicago newspaper when he went to Mexico as war-correspondent. He found it was not a private fight, but that anyone could join in; his Irish blood called, and for years thereafter he was an aggressive soldier of fortune. Here he tells a curious incident while campaigning with Villa.



By EDWARD S. (TEX) O'REILLY

WHEN Pancho Villa first rode into the world's front page, he won a reputation for savage ferocity in combat. On one occasion, however, I was an eyewitness to an act of simple kindness to an animal on his part.

At that time I was an officer in Villa's army. The incident occurred during the fight which ended in the capture of the city of Zacatecas.

As a natural fortress the city is unique. It is an old silver-mining town, literally built in the crater of an extinct volcano. Mountain walls surround the city, which is huddled in the cup of the old crater. There is only one outlet, a road leading through a gap in the rim-rock.

From the north the railroad winds up the mountain, cuts through the rim and circles around the town on the inside of the basin. To the south, a paved highway runs down through a cañon to the town of Guadalupe, nestling at the foot of the mountain. That road had been heavily fortified by the Federal garrison. Trenches and barbed-wire entanglements crossed the narrow valley. It was here that the insurrectos under Natera had attacked and been repulsed.

Down that cañon road runs the strangest trolley line in the world. A big old gray mule pulled the dinky little street-car the four miles up the slope from

Guadalupe to Zacatecas. Then the conductor would tie the mule in a box stall on the rear platform, and the car would coast down the long hill on the return-trip. The old gray mule thus had a free ride on the downward journey.

Instead of attacking up the fortified road, Villa sent his army from the north up over the lip of the crater. The Federals had the advantage of position. Our men had to fight up the slope in the face of a withering fire from the crags above.

My outfit, consisting of four machine-guns, was ordered to work along the railroad. It was desperate fighting. For two days the Villa forces fought step by step up the mountain. On the morning of the third day my company had cleared the railroad out and gained a position overlooking the city. At other points the Federals held an unbroken line.

They had dug trenches on the crest of the mountain, and it seemed impossible to dislodge them. For three days and nights Villa's men had been fighting desperately. They were worn out. It seemed as if we would have to retreat.

On our left across the city loomed the mountain wall of the crater. On the crest was an ancient monastery called La Bufa. The morning of the third day a heavy fog settled down over the mountain-top, concealing the crest like a cur-

tain. Below the fog, the city was clearly visible in a ghostly twilight.

Suddenly I saw shadowy figures in the edge of the fog on the slop of La Bufa. Then I saw a sight which I will never forget. It was like a thing in a dream or a weird stage setting. Out of that blanket of clouds swooped a line of howling, yelling horsemen, charging down the incline into the city.

Villa, as usual, had outguessed the enemy.

Under the protecting mantle of the fog, he had climbed La Bufa from the north, with a force of more than two thousand cavalry. Believing the mountain impassable, the Federals had no trenches on that side of the city.

WAVE after wave of yelling riders swept down out of the clouds like an army of ghosts. The effect was uncanny. It seemed as if those lines of charging men and horses were dropping down, company after company, from the sky above.

Into the outskirts of the city they charged, a shooting, cheering, galloping mob. As I watched from my perch on the opposite side of the crater, I saw men leap from the backs of their horses to the low roofs of the adobe houses, running along the house tops, shooting the Federals in the streets below.

The fury of the attack was too much for the Federals. They broke and began to retreat. Villa's infantry was able to enter the town. The pressure on our side of the valley was relieved, and we were able to advance and capture the railroad station.

In the city the Federals were still fighting with fanatic desperation to hold their ground. Every street was a battlefield, and every house a fortress. At last the Federal troops began to retreat down the cañon road toward Guadalupe. They were in the open now, and our forces on the hills on either side. Soldiers were falling every step of the way. The retreat was fast becoming a panic.

From my position on the roof of a house where I had mounted two machine-guns I could command the scene as if looking down at a game in a stadium. In the street I could see that dinky solitary little street-car, with the old gray mule sticking his head out from the rear. As I watched, the conductor evidently decided to quit the country. He jumped on the front platform, released the brake, and slowly the car started coasting down.

To reach a haven at the bottom, that car would have to run the gantlet of our fire.

And that road was buzzing like an angry swarm of bees as thousands of bullets from our cross-fire swept back and forth. The car and mule were in the open, unprotected; yet by some miracle the animal was not hit. Suddenly the machine-gun on the road ceased firing. Angrily I turned to Bill, the half-breed gunner:

"What's the matter? Keep that gun in action!" I yelled.

"But Major, I can't. I might hit the mule!" he shouted back.

It was a strange kink in human nature that permitted men to kill each other without compunction, but would risk their lives to save a dumb animal. I had felt the same way about it, and had changed the line of my own fire. Then I realized that hundreds of our men were doing the same. They were deliberately aiming to miss the car and its passenger.

Suddenly I heard a shout on the railroad track below. It was Pancho Villa himself, riding like a wild man down the track, waving his hat.

"*Quedado por la mula!* Don't shoot that mule! Cease firing!" he yelled. The din of battle ceased. Silence while that car coasted down to safety. In majestic serenity the old mule stuck his head out from the back platform, flapping his ears. He looked like a Prophet disdainfully gazing upon the follies of mankind.

"Hee-haw-haw-haw!" he blared forth. And fifteen thousand men stopped in the midst of the bloody mutual-murder to laugh!

Car and mule disappeared around a bend in the road, and Villa gave the signal to resume the slaughter. His heart had been touched by the danger of the animal, but he had no pity for the men in the enemy's ranks.

DOWN that Via Dolorosa we drove the fleeing Federals, and that night captured Guadalupe, driving the soldiers in a running retreat to the south.

The firing had hardly ceased when I heard Villa's voice inquiring for the mule. I too was curious, and walked over to the little car-barn. The old mule was led from his stall and examined for wounds. We couldn't find a scratch.

More than six thousand men had died in that city, most of them along that road; yet the mule was safe because—well, because he was a mule.



My Ten Years

The deeply interesting climax of this Iowa boy's vivid story of battles under the tricolor.

WE took a train to Meknès. From Meknès we went by train to Marrakesh; here we stayed two days. After that there was no more riding on the train. Days of marching were ahead. We started early in the morning. By the way the mules were loaded down, the amount of ammunition they carried, we knew we were engaged on serious business. Where we were going we did not know. But day by day the mountains came closer.

Though we were going into the mountains, for several days we were forced to march across the desert. For two days we struggled through sand. At times it was over our shoe-tops. We had to pull the mules along. And of course our overcoats were always on, their flaps buttoned around the waist.

We had one suicide, an English boy not over twenty—tall, blue eyes, blond hair. He had been in the Legion for over a year. Had just been sent up to my company. The long marching through the desert bothered him. He did not appear strong. Ten minutes after going on guard duty, a little after midnight, he blew out his brains.

The suicide of the Englishman made our corporal angry. We were delayed the next morning while we buried him. To dig the grave the usual five feet was a task; sand kept sliding into the hole.

"*Chien de l'enfer!*" growled the corporal. "Why did you not wait? Why use one of our bullets? A few days, and the Susi would have got you."

The mountains had been reached. It was a savage region. Narrow roads,

bordered by deep precipices. There were streams tumbling down to the plains. Villages had vanished. We knew the tribespeople were around. Once in a while we would see a form vanish around a rock. We were constantly spied upon. But as yet no one had sniped at us.

There are really five chains of mountains. Those we were entering were almost impassable. That is, except on foot. You pass over the first chain of mountains and come into a valley. Rather, there are hundreds of small valleys. Then come more mountains, growing higher every mile. At last—the stern cold peaks of the main range. Always they are snow-covered.

They call this region the Sus. The tribespeople are called Susi. I never saw one of them that was fat. Thin, wiry people, each wears a short coat, always brown and white; they do not wear turbans. And they are fierce fighters. Unlike the rebellion that came to an end when the Riffs gave up, these people fight always. As a rule they fight from ambush. Only when they greatly outnumber their foes do they make a direct attack.

Suddenly our company was sent ahead of the others. In a sense we were more than a company. Over a hundred men had been added to our number. It was a machine-gun detachment. The guns were a new type. When we were sent up the mountain trail ahead of the battalion, we realized trouble was on the way. It came sooner than we expected.

It may have started with the capture of a spy. We camped just at dusk, on the side of the mountain. Below us we could see the wide valley. For the first time in days we built walls. While they were being built, some one saw a clump of bushes move, and begin to creep away. Knowing that trees do not creep, we made a rush for the moving object. Under the bushes we found a tribesman.

He had nothing to say when brought into camp. One had to look twice even to be sure it was a man. He was hid-

in the Foreign Legion

By

ORVAL CHENEVOETH

den by small branches, bushes, twigs, which were tied around his body. He had no gun. But under his disguise we found two knives, and four daggers.

He was either a spy, or had been waiting for darkness. When it came, he would have crept into the camp. Some one would have been killed. If he had kept still, he might have got away with his trick. From a few feet away one could not tell that a man lay concealed by the branches. There was but one thing to be done with him: We stood him against the wall, and shot him.

The next morning we started at daylight.

Below us was a wide valley. To reach it we had to descend a narrow, winding trail. On one side of us were sheer upright walls of rock. On the other the trail fell away into a deep precipice. It was impossible for more than two men to walk side by side. We were heavily loaded. The usual equipment, knapsacks, parts of tents, rifles, and parts of machine-guns. I happened to be almost at the very end of the company, carrying a portion of a machine-gun. Edmund was the last man. When we were one third across the valley, there rang out a sudden shot, and a man fell.

Then, pouring down the hills from every side, came what looked like a wild, yelling mob. There must have been at least three thousand of the tribesmen. We were but two hundred and thirty. One glance, and Lieutenant Fritz ordered us to find cover. We flew to the shelter of the nearest rocks.

I—with six others—was almost at the end of the trail we had just come over. The rocks we took shelter behind were higher than those that hid the others. We put the machine-gun together, slipped in the ammunition. Then we began to fire. There was no trouble in finding a target. The Susi were rushing forward *en masse*. It would have been impossible to stop them.

One thing was bad. The company was widely scattered. Men had taken cover

behind rocks, but they were widely apart. Amid the yells, the crack of the rifles, the steady *pit-pat* of the machine-guns, we had to see those of our company the farthest ahead cut down. They died fighting. The Legion always did that.

It must have been about ten o'clock when the fight started. For two hours it went on, while we managed to hold our positions—hold them after a fashion. After their first wild charge the Susi changed their tactics. They began to pick off the groups which were the farthest out in the valley. There was nothing we could do to help these men.

We would see perhaps six men behind a rock. One would fall, then another. By and by there would be but one man left. Around him would be dark, silent objects. The one man, alone, knowing the end was coming, would fight on. There would come the moment when he would fall. Then the enemy would creep up and occupy the rock themselves.

ONE by one they were taking these positions. The air was filled with the smoke of powder. Noise everywhere. Somewhere ahead of me, above the sound of the machine-guns, some one was singing. Above the battle rose the stirring words of the Legion marching-song. We knew the voice. It was Leon's. He had been a cabaret singer in Paris. A stabbing affair, and he had fled to the Legion. Now with death facing him, battling for his life, he was singing our marching-song. Once he went through it. Then suddenly his voice was silenced.

Time had vanished. In fact, all one's senses seem to vanish in these encounters. You fight like a machine. You are not brave, nor are you afraid. There is but one thing you can do: keep fighting.

Our lieutenant was brave. He crept from rock to rock, giving each a kindly word. He would snatch a gun from a soldier, sight and fire. He shared his cigarettes. The wounded he could not help. But he spoke to them, said help might come.

There was a chance it might. We were the advance company. We had walked into a trap. But sooner or later the other companies would arrive. We had sent a runner back over the trail, but it would be night before aid could arrive.

We were falling back. I was still in the last group. That is, last from the enemy. But by now the others were very close. And they were very few. The Susi had again resorted to mass attacks. They would rush. We would give them a wave of machine-gun fire. They would fall. But always we lost men. And as if knowing it, the Susi would again charge.

ABOUT two o'clock it became evident we could hold out no longer. Lieutenant Fritz went from man to man. What he said is almost never said in the Legion.

"Every man for himself!" he commanded.

Below us the men began to creep back from the trail. But our lieutenant disdained to do what he had ordered his soldiers to do. Taking a machine-gun, he stepped away from the shelter of the rock. Kneeling as coolly as if he were at target practice, he fired away until a shot brought him down.

Only ten out of our entire company were saved—the six with me, and three others. At the command to flee, we had started up the trail. A few hundred feet, and we found a natural fort. At a curve in the trail, a high rocky ledge formed a barrier. Behind it was the smooth side of the mountain, rising hundreds of feet in the air. From this position we could command the approach from the valley. Here we decided to make a stand. And it was here that three fleeing Legionaries were able to join us.

Twice the tribesmen tried to storm us. But as they could only approach three at a time, there was little difficulty in cutting them down. After two attempts they decided to leave us alone. They had work to do in the valley.

Perhaps what happened in the next hour was more horrible than what we had gone through. We could see the valley below us. And for an hour we had to watch the tribesmen go from rock to rock. We knew what they were doing. There was no help we could give. Though the wounded were being killed before our eyes, we were unable to do anything.

It was about four when aid arrived. Down the trail came another company

of the Legion, and behind them others. But the enemy had vanished, had fled.

We had to bury our dead that night. There were about two hundred and twenty killed. All of our company save ten. It was the worst sight I have ever seen. Even the photographs I have of that valley cannot describe it. Hundreds dead, and most of them with their heads cut off. Many were naked. These had been mutilated. Out of two hundred and twenty men lying on that plain, all were dead but two—who were buried in the earth to their necks. Their heads had been covered with some sticky stuff, honey perhaps. And when they came upon them, their faces were black with flies and ants. But they were still alive. Why they had been buried this way, not killed like the others, we did not know.

Ten of us escaped with our lives. Were we given any rest that night? No. Did we receive any medals? Not one of us. We were ordered to aid the detachment which was burying the dead. And until early morning, worn and tired as we were, we went about this duty. There was much to do before the graves were dug.

Every one of the dead had to be searched. All letters, everything on the body was noted; then it was brought to a common place for burial. It was a gruesome task. We first picked up a man's body, then had to pick up his head. By early morning they were all buried. And the captain outdid himself when he made his speech.

When it was over we were ordered to fall in and march away. I had fought all the previous day, worked all night. I was tired. As we marched out of that fatal valley and began again to climb a mountain-side, I thought of those who had been in my company twenty-eight hours ago. There had been two hundred and thirty who descended into that valley. Ten were going out—but fourteen hundred of the Susi we were leaving to the birds and the jackals.

WE went farther into the mountains. The country became more desolate. There were many little valleys, countless ravines. It was cold. Even with our overcoats we could not keep warm. And the wind, sweeping off the snow-covered mountain-tops, shrieked like a lost soul.

We stopped marching at four o'clock in the afternoon. There were always the walls to build. We managed to use the great rocks as a sort of background. Our

captain tried to make camp at places where it would be impossible for the tribesmen to slip down the mountain-sides. Often this was impossible.

There had been ten left in my company. As it was impossible to secure reinforcements, we were sent into another machine group. Edmund went with me. I knew no one in this company. Save for one Englishman, they were all German or Italian.

We did not know where we were going nor why we were out in the mountains. It was the practice to send a machine-gun detachment in advance of the leading company. These detachments were always a sergeant and thirteen men. With them would be three machine-guns.

THREE days after the battle where my company was wiped out, at three o'clock in the morning, I was sent out on such a detachment. It was cold when we stepped outside of the walls, cold and dark. We began to climb a narrow mountain trail. It was slippery with ice, and ran around the edge of a precipice. Where it led we did not know. Our orders were to advance five miles, then wait until the company came up.

We did not go five miles—not over three, in fact. The sergeant was new to me. My six feet and seven inches astonished him. He was a little Italian. Keeping by my side, he began to ask questions. He could speak English, told me he had served as steward on an Italian steamship sailing from Naples to New York. And he was very curious to discover what I was doing in the Legion.

"Slim," he grunted as we toiled up the trail, "why in hell did you come into the Legion? Where did you come from?"

The first I could not answer. For eight years I had been wondering myself why I was in the Legion. Iowa was the answer to the second. The name seemed to amuse him. He asked what Iowa was like. I did my best to picture the great farm state. Spoke of the wide fields of corn. Then he asked:

"The wine, is it good there?"

My reply that there was no wine in Iowa caused the greatest consternation. Perhaps never was there such a heated prohibition argument—and in so odd a place—as the one which then broke out. Prohibition was something the sergeant could not understand. He paused and spoke his mind to his thirteen. Then he looked at my six feet and over. With a shrug of his shoulders, he shook his head:

"No wine! These Americans are all crazy. Why, a man cannot live without wine."

There might have been a retort. But the sharp crack of a rifle broke the silence. We heard the ping of the bullet as it hit the side of the mountain.

"To cover!" yelled the sergeant.

It was about ten o'clock. We had climbed one side of the mountain and passed halfway down the other. In front of us was a large clearing, broken by high rocks. To our right the ground sloped upward. The pitch was so steep that we could not climb it. But there was a group of stones here. They formed a half-circle. Here we took shelter.

We had plenty of ammunition. There were three machine-guns, and we each had a rifle. The first shot had been followed by a volley. They all came from in front of us and did no damage. Yet as we crouched down behind our barrier, we knew we were in for a hot time. The sergeant had found a space where he could see down into the clearing. One look—and he threw out his arms.

"*Milles!*" he cried.

Ahead of us the ground dropped down for a way, then rose. It was covered with stones and what appeared heaps of earth. A little distance away was a sort of crest; it was there we could see the enemy. There seemed to be a great many, far more than one liked to think of. Yet for the time being we were safe.

At first nothing came but isolated shots. They did no damage. Once or twice, just to let them know we were there, we fired a machine-gun round. I doubt if that did any damage, for we saw no one to fire at. The Susi had taken to cover like ourselves. For over an hour there were only these isolated shots. Then all at once there came a shout from the sergeant.

"*Très bien!*" he yelled, as he leaped for a machine-gun.

OVER the clearing were coming what seemed thousands of yelling tribesmen. Later we discovered we had been attacked by a little over two thousand. They were firing as they came, but wildly. It was impossible to miss them. Our three machine-guns swept them down like flies. The rifles picked them off as if shooting at clay pigeons. To miss them was impossible.

But they almost rushed our stone barrier. They were only a few feet away when they turned and broke. As they

rushed back across the clearing, the sergeant rose. Coolly he swept the gun from right to left, then back. As the last man dropped to cover, the sergeant shrugged his shoulders, dropped the gun.

"*C'est bien,*" he smiled.

Until three o'clock in the afternoon nothing happened to us. Once in a while there would come a wild volley, and we could hear the bullets hit the rocks we were lying behind. Once in a while, we would fire a round of ammunition. But no one was injured and there was not another mass attack.

In fact, the incident grew rather tiresome. The sun was beating down upon us. Though there was snow everywhere, the sun was hot. We smoked countless cigarettes, drank again and again from our *bidons*. But it was monotonous. Then about three came something new.

We heard above our heads a disturbing sound—of something falling down the mountain-side. Before we could even glance up, a great rock hit the ground in front of our barracks. It was followed by another—then another. Luckily they all passed outside where we lay. They had climbed up behind us, and were trying to send us out into the open by dropping rocks on us. For some reason they didn't fire down upon us. Evidently there was a reason. No doubt the steepness of the mountain-side made it impossible for them to see us. And after the first fright, as the big boulders flew over our heads, we were not afraid.

They would come dropping down the mountain. But always they would hit some projection that would fling them over our heads. We, it is true, eagerly kept our eyes on them—could watch the rocks dashing downward—smiled when they hit the ledge and leaped out into the air. After a few minutes the tribesmen evidently decided they couldn't reach us with the rocks. No more came.

BUT at half-past three help came. The company which came around the bend in the side of the hill gave us one look. Our sergeant rose and strolled over to the captain. A few words, then an order. Bayonets were fixed, and we watched the company charge over the clearing. No shots were fired. One look—and the foe vanished.

The Susi are brave, are good fighters. But there is one thing they cannot stand. That is cold steel. A bayonet charge, even if they outnumber the chargers ten to one, throws them into confusion. One

sight of the cold shining bayonet, and they vanish. I often wondered at this, seeing they use their curved knives far more than they do their rifles.

WE marched for days. No one knew where we were, nor just what we were doing. Almost every hour snipers tried to pick off our men. Once in a while they succeeded. Rarely did we see the enemy. Our march ended at a place where four low mountains overlooked a high valley. Beyond were high snow-covered peaks. These, however, we did not march toward. Instead we built four posts. It was winter, the hills were covered with snow. The work was hard. Again and again it would be below freezing. Yet daily the walls of the post went up. No one was excused from work. All got their share of digging the rocks from the frozen ground. The next day we would stand guard duty.

Those four little forts were the most desolate service I saw in the Legion. After the deep snows set in we were not bothered by the tribes. Life became merely a matter of drills, inspection, and guard duty. The food was horrible. Supplies could not be brought over the mountain trails. The nights were cold. Guard duty on the flat roof of the post became a torture. I stood guard duty when it was thirty below zero, when the wind almost swept me off my feet. . . .

Spring came. Yet even then the snow remained. One day the captain called me into his room. I saluted, waited.

"Chenevoeth, your time is up. Do you wish to reënlist for another year?"

What he meant was this: Under the rules you could not enlist for foreign service longer than two years. For Morocco distinction was made. It was not considered exactly foreign service. Morocco was part of Africa. True, you had to enlist for the service there; but you could do it for three years. What the captain meant was that my term of service in Morocco was almost up. I still had two years to go in the Legion.

Before I could reply he barked:

"You can reënlist for a year more. You are a lucky soldier. You escape bullets, sickness. Do you wish another year?"

"*Non, mon Capitaine,*" I said.

He made some sort of grunt, fingered in a desk and brought out some papers. Two I had to sign. Then he gave me a medal. It was the only one I ever received. All I ever was in the Legion was

a first-class soldier. The medal simply said I had served three years on a foreign service. They must have meant in Morocco. Counting China, my foreign service was five years.

It was not until July that I was sent back to Fez. There I had to wait nearly two months before there was a detachment to send back to Bel-Abbès.

Not until early fall did I take a train to Bel-Abbès. I had come out with several hundred men. Of those who came out with me, there were only eighteen. Of my old company, only seven. We were a merry group—we had escaped!

The first person I saw, when I stepped off the train at Bel-Abbès, was Lieutenant Hamilton. I hadn't seen him since the first days in the Legion. I hardly knew him. One side of his face was a mass of scars and cuts. But he recognized me, came to my side.

"Slim! Still in the Legion! Lucky man at that! No wounds like this."

HE touched his scarred face. Later I heard what had happened: He had secured a leave of absence of a hundred and sixty days. In it he had gone to New York to visit his family. He returned. He had three more months to serve. And as was usual, he was sent to the most dangerous sector in Morocco. There a sniper's bullet tore off half his face.

This set me thinking. For I found a letter from my mother at Bel-Abbès, the first in two years—the mail service in the Legion is far from good. In it were two statements of great interest. The first was that the entire family and influential friends were at work trying to get me out of the Legion. If they succeeded, they would send me the money with which to come home.

The second statement was very simple. She wrote she was enclosing two five-dollar bills; but no five-dollar bills were in the envelope. Instead were two five-franc notes, worth about twenty cents each. And they had certainly never been sent from Des Moines, Iowa. . . .

I was sent into a new company. Again I was placed in the Pioneers. This was not so bad. True, it meant hard work: they were building new barracks, and needed carpenters. The fact I had been in a Pioneer division in Morocco made them order me to a similar division at Bel-Abbès.

So day after day I worked on doors and cabinets. That is, I did this work

for two days; every third day I had to stand guard for twenty-four hours. Two hours on guard duty, four off, then back again. Every soldier in the Legion, no matter what duty he may be assigned to, stands guard.

NEVER will I forget the 27th of May, 1933. The sergeant called for me. "The captain wishes to see you. At once."

In the captain's room, he asked me: "Do you wish to go home, Chenevoeth?"

Go home! I could only nod my head. He passed by my breach of discipline.

"The Minister of War is asking certain questions," he said. "Does this man have a good conduct score? How many days does he wish to be away?"

They could not question my good conduct. I had never been in the guard-house, except on duty. How many days did I wish to be away?

"One hundred and sixty, sir," I said.

I was sent into the colonel's office. Colonel Nicholas was about fifty-five, a veteran of the World War. He gave one quick glance at the papers the sergeant laid down upon the desk. Then:

"Is there any way you can pay your fare home if permission is given you to visit your mother?"

I replied that I could secure the money. He nodded gravely.

"I will send this back to the Minister of War. In four weeks you will receive the proper papers. You must be ready to leave."

Saluting, I went out and at once wrote to Iowa. In four weeks I received a ticket. It would take me from Bel-Abbès to Des Moines. It was yards long. With it were eight hundred and fifty francs. I asked the captain to keep the ticket and the money for me.

Then I waited. Days passed into weeks. I heard nothing. I was doing my daily duty. Building doors and cabinets, standing guard every third day. Four months passed—then five. The company to which I was assigned was to be sent to an outlying post in the desert. We would be there for months.

What to do was a problem. I had given up all hope of getting home on a visit. My term of enlistment would be up in a few months. But there came a day when our companies set out—to march thirty miles, then take the train.

It was warm; we were heavily loaded with equipment. I had made up my

mind I would never see Bel-Abbès again. Luck had held with me over nine years. It could not hold out forever. The fighting in the Atlas mountains was still going on. We heard it was even worse. In my heart I believed I was not coming back.

IT was two in the afternoon. The companies were strung out over a dusty road. There was no singing now. Everyone was tired. Suddenly an orderly came down the line, calling my name. When he reached me, he thrust a telegram in my hand. One look: It said I was to report back to Bel-Abbès, that permission had been received for me to return to America.

I gave a yell. I turned to the soldier marching beside me. The knapsack was ripped off my shoulders. I flung it ahead of me on the ground. The rifle followed. I said: "You can pick them up or leave them there. I am going back."

Trucks were passing us in both directions. I leaped upon the first one that came along.

"I am going home! Back to America!" I shouted.

We passed through the gate at Bel-Abbès. In front of the barracks I leaped off the truck, ran to the captain's room, thrust the telegram across the desk. Not until he spoke did I actually believe it was true. But it was.

There were papers to be signed. This done, one was handed me. As I glanced at it, the captain spoke: "You have sixty days' leave of absence."

Sixty days! I had asked for one hundred and sixty. It would take fifteen days to reach New York, three more days before I would be home. That meant thirty-six days of travel. I would have but twenty-four with my mother.

I bought a suit in a shop in Bel-Abbès. Then I had to turn in my uniform. Every piece was numbered, the

record put down on a piece of paper. I was told I would not be allowed to take a single thing with me. Medals, pictures, uniform, must be given up. That night when I went out of the barracks to catch the train to Oran, I was searched from the head to foot.

I did not sleep that night. From Oran I went again to Marseilles. Then I went to Paris. Here my papers had stamps and seals affixed. Then from Havre I sailed on the *Ile de France*, third class.

It was a good boat. Everyone was kind to me. I slept most of the time. It was difficult to eat. After the poor food of the Legion, the long menus on the boat seemed difficult to understand. And it was hard to sleep in the soft bunks. After years of sleeping on the ground, on hard mattresses, planks, the bunk seemed far too soft.

ONE morning we sighted a low cloud. The coast appeared. At quarantine we met the officials. They were very easy with me. The doctor and immigration inspector gave one look at my papers. "You are the big boy," they said. They passed me in.

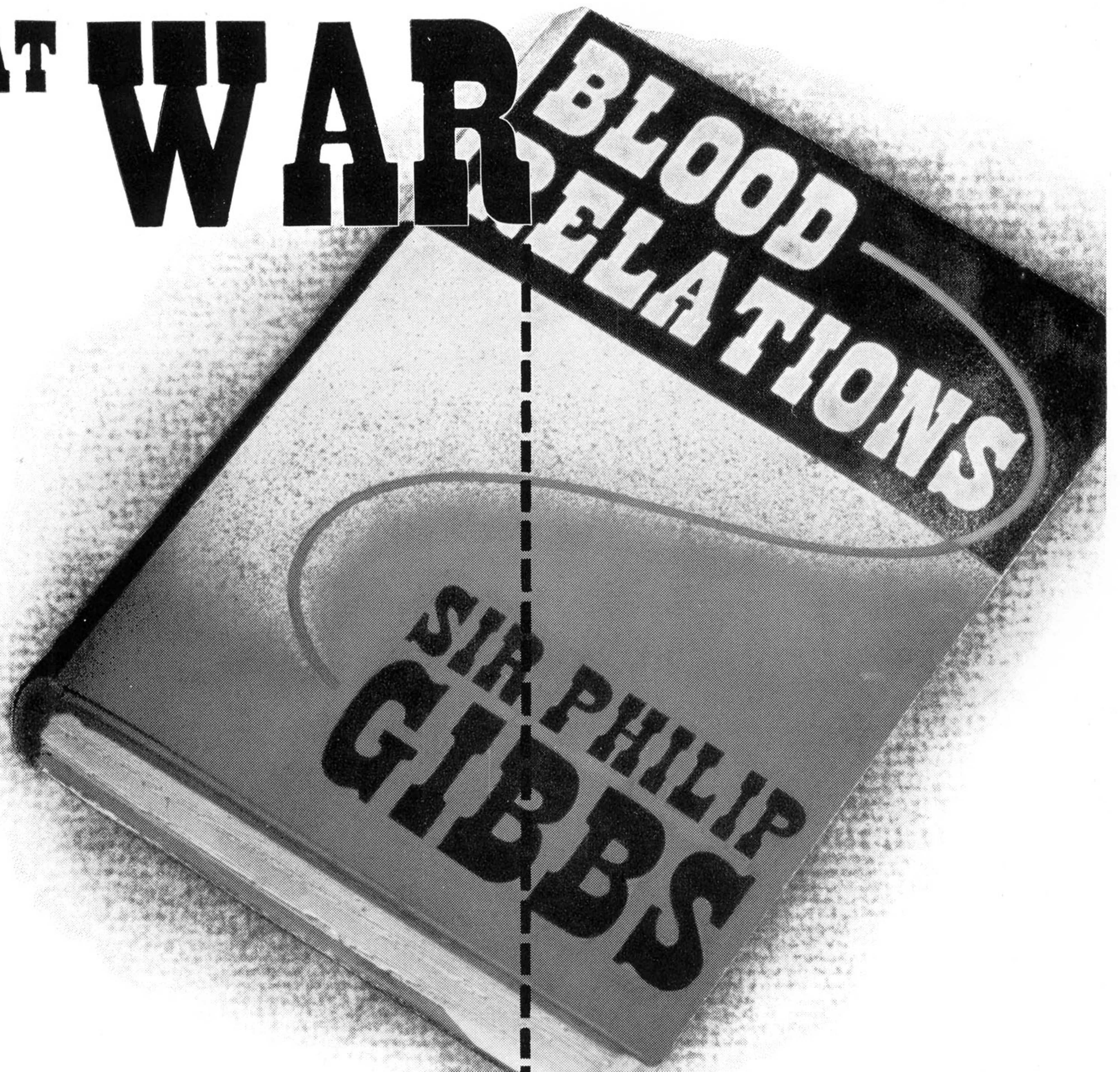
We sailed by the Statue of Liberty, given by France to the United States. In a few moments I would be off the boat, back again in my native land. It had been sixteen years since I left it. I must be the last American soldier returning from the war. When the skyline of New York leaped before my eyes, I had made up my mind. For nine years and ten months I had been in the Legion. My leave of absence was only for sixty days. I had that number to serve to finish my second enlistment. In a little over six weeks I would have to be back at the Legion post in Bel-Abbès. At once I would be sent into a dangerous sector. I grinned at the thought. It meant nothing to me. *I was not going back.*

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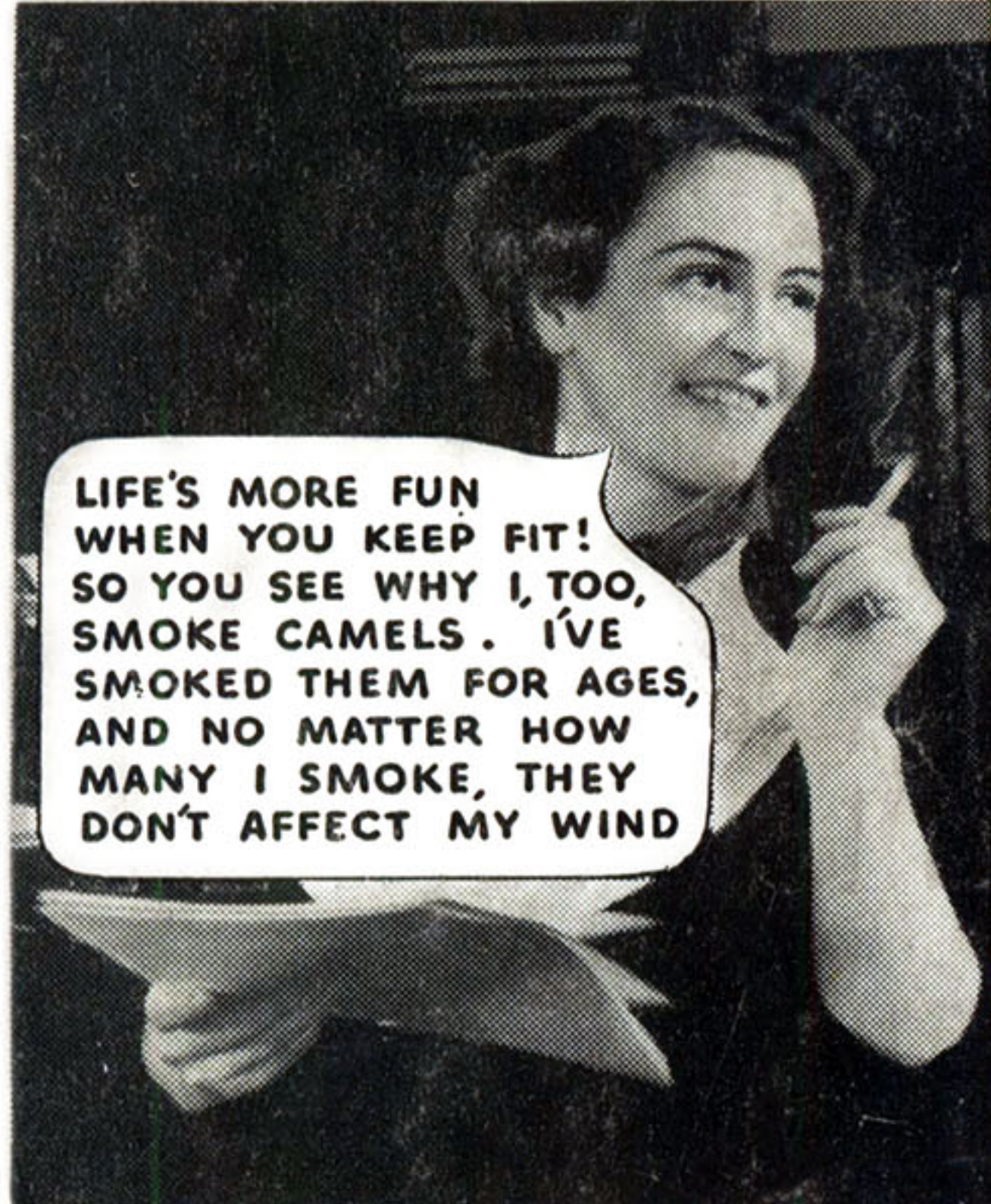
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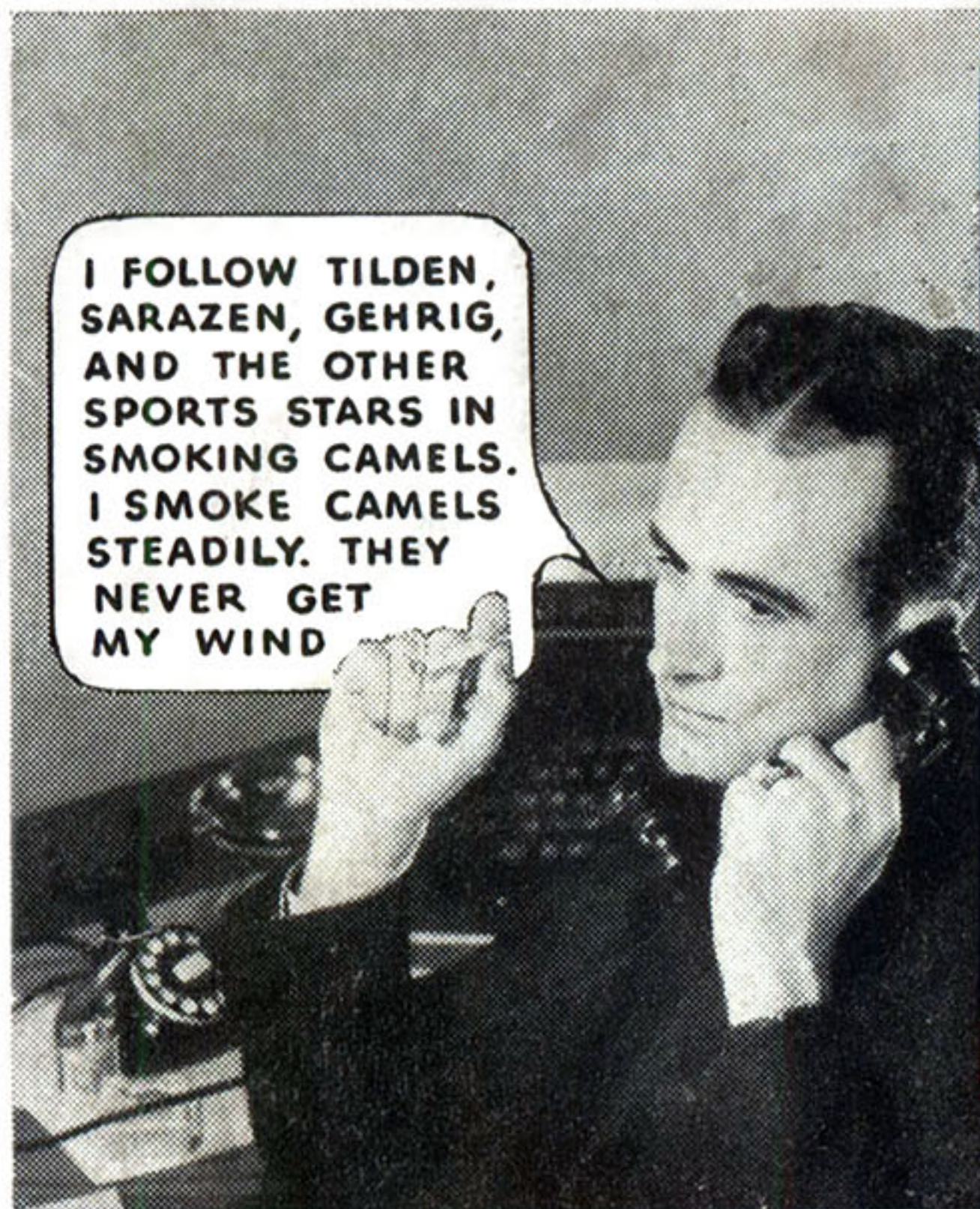
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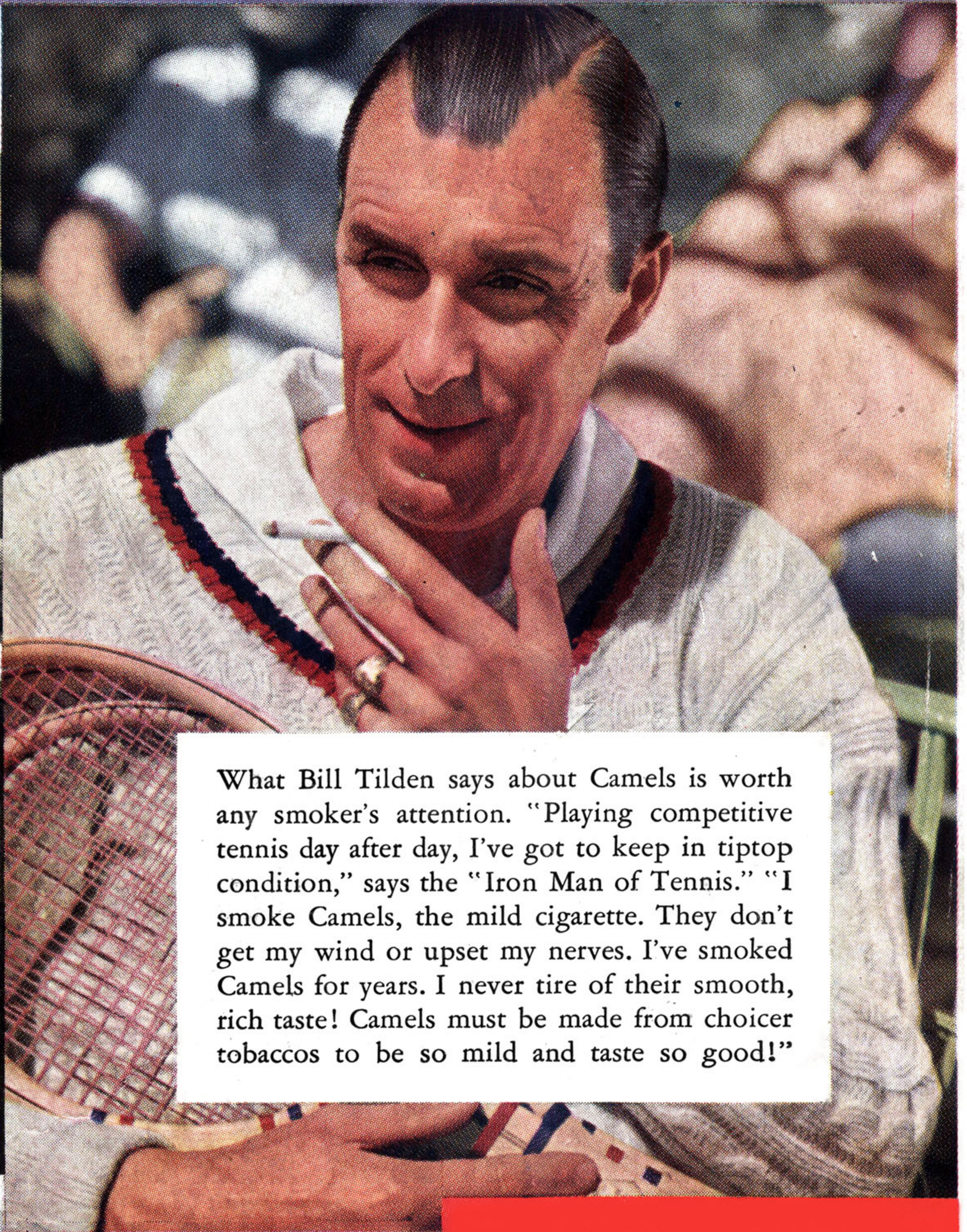
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WRITER—Eileen Tighe



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