

BLUE BOOK

Magazine

November

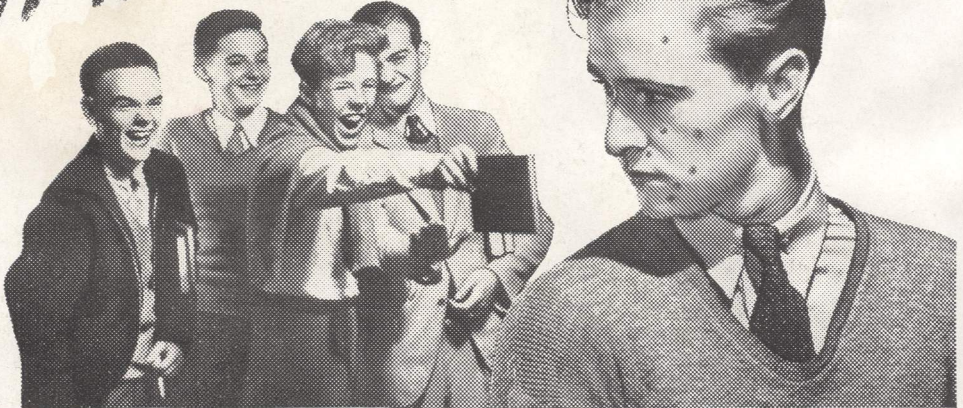
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Robert Mill, George Worts, H. Bedford-Jones,
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"Hi there, PIMPLY FACE!"



**But soon
... they
changed
this ugly
nickname**



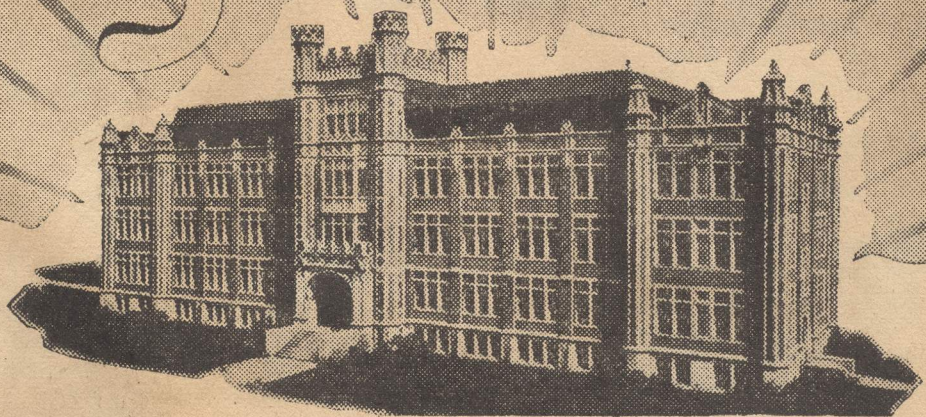
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BLUE BOOK



NOVEMBER, 1935

MAGAZINE

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By JACK BAUM

The Sailor's

More about famous sailing ships and their rigs—and about the men who build and sail them.

By **COULTON
WAUGH**

THE four-masted ship, sometimes called four-masted bark, is exactly like the full-rigged ship except that it has a small mast added aft, called the spanker mast, which carries fore-and-aft sails. This rig is found only on very large ships and has lasted to the present day. The last of the British windjammers, the *Garthpool*, is so rigged, as also are many German and Scandinavian survivors of the old tradition of sail.

But the most famous four-master ever built was Donald McKay's supreme achievement, the *Great Republic*. Into this ship, then the largest vessel in the world, the master clipper-ship builder put his heart, his soul and his fortune. She was of gigantic dimensions—three hundred and twenty-five feet long, her beam or breadth was fifty-three feet and her depth of hold thirty-nine feet. The main yard spanned one hundred and twenty feet.

The *Great Republic* carried a crew of one hundred men and thirty boys—and had cost McKay about three hundred thousand dollars.

The day of her launching, October fourth, 1853, was made a public holiday



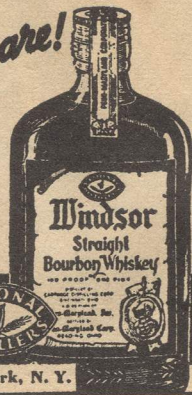
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Scrapbook



by the city of Boston. On her first trip to New York she started out behind a towboat; but she soon was sailing so fast that the tug was being dragged astern!

In New York the *Great Republic* loaded for Liverpool. She was lying at Dover Street dock, East River, nearly ready for sea, when sparks from a burning building caught in her rigging. Soon the beautiful vessel was a roaring pyre, the flames being seen for miles—and in a few hours the *Great Republic* was only a smoldering hulk. It was a national disaster. But McKay met it with heroic fortitude. In a few days he was back on the job and within a year's time he had launched nine ships, including the famous clipper *Lightning*, the fastest ship that ever sailed the seas.

IN latter days this rig has taken a leading position in the long battle of sailing-ships for survival against the encroachment of steam. By the eightennineties it was clear that the fastest windjammer ever built was no match for the steamship.

Was the sailing-ship indeed doomed? It seemed so. But a demand arose for a ship that could carry nonperishable cargoes at very low freight rates. And thus the modern sailing-ship came into existence, the last word in the long procession of windjammers. Speed was no longer a factor; these ships were built of steel and had enormous cargo capacity. Because of their great size the four-masted rig was generally adopted as being the easiest to handle.

Despite their bulky cargoes the modern windjammers have a number of records to their credit. *Eusemere* made the record passage, from the South American nitrate ports to the English Channel, of

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fifty-seven days. The *Sargiemore*, a steel vessel built in 1892 with steel masts and yards and a cargo capacity of 3,300 tons, sailed from Rio to Adelaide in forty-three days. During one day this magnificent ship reeled off 360 knots, and when it is remembered that 363 knots was the best speed made by *Cutty Sark*,—one of the fastest clippers ever built,—it will be realized that the days of sail are by no means over. Perhaps the Danish-owned *Kobenhavn* built several years ago in the British Isles may be chosen as the supreme example of the modern sailing-ship. This is a five-masted ship of gigantic proportions. She sets forty-four sails, totaling some fifty thousand square feet of canvas. She has actually twenty-three miles of rigging and twelve hundred blocks. Her deck is three hundred and ninety feet long and from the top rail to the tip of her bowsprit she measures four hundred and thirty feet.

The Man Who Lost

A powerful and most unusual story by the distinguished author of "Limehouse Nights."

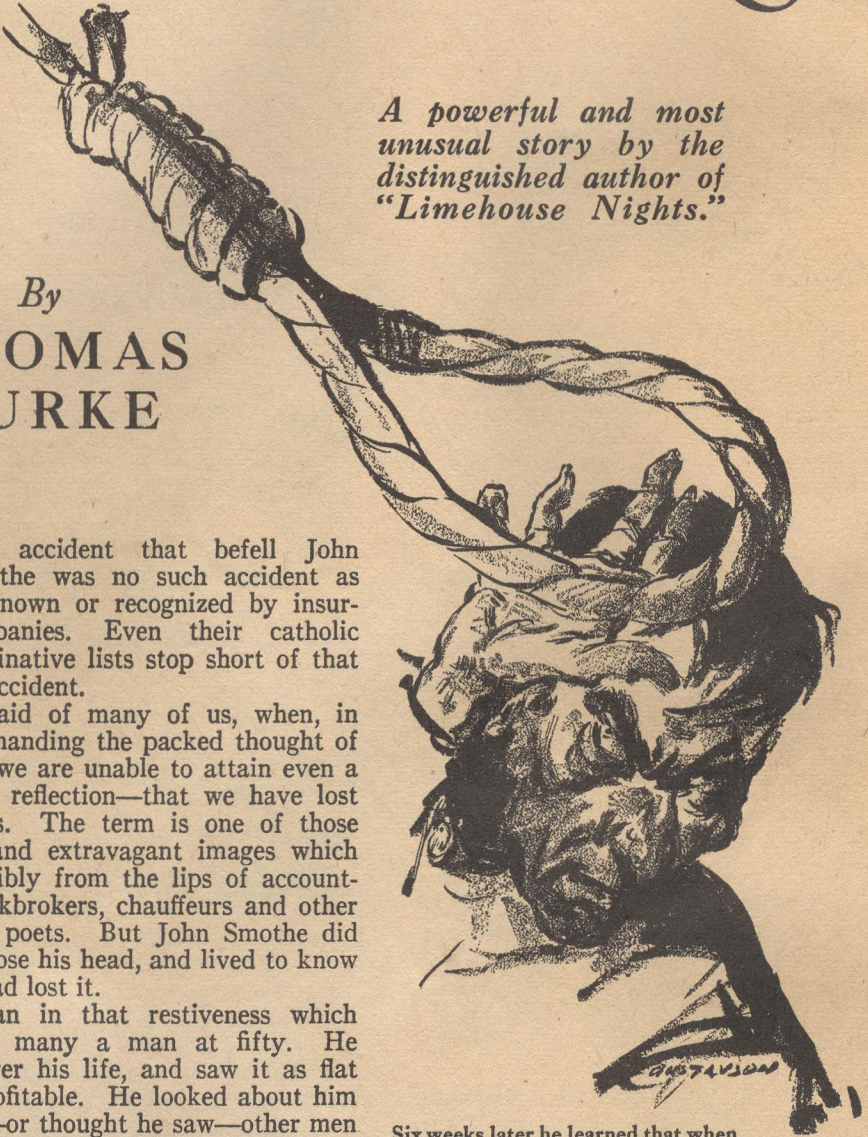
By
**THOMAS
BURKE**

THE accident that befell John Smothe was no such accident as is known or recognized by insurance-companies. Even their catholic and imaginative lists stop short of that kind of accident.

It is said of many of us, when, in times demanding the packed thought of an hour, we are unable to attain even a moment's reflection—that we have lost our heads. The term is one of those tropical and extravagant images which fall so glibly from the lips of accountants, stockbrokers, chauffeurs and other repressed poets. But John Smothe did actually lose his head, and lived to know that he had lost it.

It began in that restiveness which comes to many a man at fifty. He looked over his life, and saw it as flat and unprofitable. He looked about him and saw—or thought he saw—other men leading vivid lives, lives as full of zest and effulgence as a fire-opal; while his own had been safe, warm—and dull. He was fifty, and he had had none of that highly charged life of which he read in the newspapers. He forgot, of course, that they were they, and he was he; and that a man cannot choose his way of life. He can be only what his chemistry and his karma allow him to be. He can be only himself. To seek to be something else, is to throw the whole mechanism of his being out of gear.

But John Smothe was sick of being himself; and at fifty he decided to be



Six weeks later he learned that when a man willfully loses his true self,—or his head,—he has lost it forever.

something else—anything else. He felt it a sorry thing that a man's life should run on one set of rails. That a man should spend his little span in being but one kind of man—a soldier, an actor, a geologist, a scholar, a lawyer, a painter. Why couldn't he have a little of each? He realized that at fifty it was too late to try for a little of each, but at least he would have something different. He had had enough of his rails; and since most of his life was gone, this

His Head

was the time, if ever, while he was yet able and healthy, to try something new, something utterly alien to his previous experience.

So, upon a fine morning, he packed a small bag, and left his Kensington flat without any word of his intention; and was never again seen in it.

He had no clear plan, other than escape into a new world. A passing delivery-van gave him his first pointer. He saw the words "*Pentonville Road*," and he hailed a taxi, and said, "*Pentonville Road*." He stopped the taxi halfway up the long ascent of that road, and went down a side turning. There he took the first turning on the right. He walked down this littered street, studying its decrepit houses. One of them, not so decrepit as the rest, had a card in its window—"Lodgings for a *Respectable Single Man*." He knocked at its door, and when it was opened, he crossed the threshold of that house and of his former life.

IN that street he remained for four months. He was within a threepenny 'bus-ride of his own home, yet after a week or two, as far from it as if he were in Iceland. He became one more of the annual hundreds of Mysterious Disappearances.

And he became a new man. He ate in squalid little eating-houses. He hung about the Islington streets, and talked to all sorts and conditions of men. He consorted in bars with the less favored specimens. He learned to use their talk, and do their things, and soon to accept their thought. He told himself that he was having a high old time. He looked back on his staid bourgeois life with impatience and contempt. To think of the years he had wasted on it! He wondered how he had endured it so long. He wondered why he had looked with shivers on the kind of life he was now leading. He gave his old self a grimy laugh.

He felt that he was now leading the real Bohemian life, not the well-to-do imitation of it; and realized that it was the life he had always, secretly, wanted to lead. His friends, he thought, would



The mirror had shown, throughout all his years, a chubby face, blond hair, blue eyes.

call it *going to pieces*. He himself called it *branching out*. He thought of the anecdotage with which he could surprise them when the mood took him to return. He thought of the wisdom by which he could shock the innocence of two of them, who claimed to know things because they dabbled in social service. He did not know he was not going back.

There came a night when he met, in an obscure tavern near King's Cross, a man from whom he would have shrunk a few months ago, but whom now he saw as an Interesting Man. The creature was dark-haired and untidy; his face and hands were so unclean that they gave dreadful hints about the rest of his body. He wore a tattered overcoat with the collar turned up. The collar was buttoned, and the rest of the coat hung from him in a fork. He used the unclean hands to stress the keyword of every sentence in a way that suggested the Near East. He too was about fifty, but he had led a more tumbled life than John Smothe, and his face was lined and drawn. But the eyes were brighter and more alert than John Smothe's. They had been called to look upon strange and unexpected things in their fifty years, while John Smothe, until four months ago, had seen little that was strange and unexpected. He still had the calm eye of the club-man.

The stranger, having selected John Smothe for his audience, began to talk of things he had seen. He revealed not

only alert eyes but a brain. It was not the kind of brain John Smothe knew in Kensington and in his clubs; but he would have been disappointed if it were. The man talked of really strange things, and talked of them as casually as men talk of a visit to the theater. He talked of the Power. He talked of the *Petit Albert* as others talk of the latest novel. He talked of the sword and the cup, and of things he had seen done in Greece.

"MIND you, I don't talk in this way to these people here. It would be a waste. But you, sir, I perceived at once, are an educated man. You think. These people"—and he waved a soiled hand with its dirty finger-nails—"these people: cattle, dross for cemeteries. Impossible to talk to. But you, I see, think things out. You are not bemused by such childish nonsense as laws, and such artificially created things as crime. Dope—don't you agree? It's all dope. When I see the way that tenth-rate little humbugs in power bemuse the mass of the people with their stale old tricks, I could—" He finished on a crescendo of profanity.

John Smothe hugged himself. "Most interesting man," he thought. "Lovely type. Quite like one of these master-criminals." Aloud he said: "Won't you have a drink with me?"

"Don't mind. Make it a whisky and peppermint." When the drinks came, he said: "Suppose we sit down. Could you pull that other chair over to this table?" Smothe went over and fetched the chair. The soiled hand shot into the pocket of the soiled overcoat. The soiled hands carried the glasses to the table. The hand that had held the glass of John Smothe went back to the overcoat pocket. "Now we can talk. . . . My views perhaps may seem extreme to you; but often to reach the desirable middle, it is necessary to exert ourselves toward the extreme. There was a man I knew in Greece—an extraordinary man. You'd have liked him. Satan, we called him. I learned a lot from him. Oh, a lot. Not all I wanted to learn, or I wouldn't be in this place talking to you. But enough to be useful from time to time. *His* views I used to consider extreme, but I found he was only aiming farther than he wished to reach. Which is what I always do. I remember once in Marseilles, when I was in some trouble—"

John Smothe repeated to himself that this was lovely. He was in touch with

the real underworld of which he had read in novels. This man, talking a farrago of street profanity and sham education, good phrases and illiterate phrases, was a find. He decided that he must cultivate him.

After a return of drinks they parted on John Smothe's suggestion that they meet the next evening. The stranger thought it likely that they would. He could not be sure; affairs might detain him; but he hoped to be there. If not, some other night. As they went out, Smothe trod on a tiny empty capsule which lay by the stranger's feet. He did not notice that he had trod on anything.

He walked to his dingy room in a queer state of elation and fatigue. The man's appearance and talk had elated him, but something else about the man had exhausted him. It was as though he had sucked all vitality from the air about them, and left Smothe only the nitrogen. His head was light, and his legs were heavy. It was a clear, dry night, and still early—just the night for one of those prowls in dim quarters which had become a habit with him. But he found that he wanted only to be in bed. The ten-minute climb from King's Cross to that bed called for an effort. It seemed unattainably distant. Every hundred yards seemed a mile. But after some hours of plodding, he made it, and was surprised to see that his clock showed that he had left King's Cross only twelve minutes before.

HIS first awareness of himself next morning was that he was a living Thirst. He could not realize arms or legs, or life itself. His whole being was Thirst, and his only sense-perception came through the throat. He got up to seek water, and drained three glasses. Within a few minutes his mind and body resumed the normal coursing of life, and he felt able to wash and dress.

Having washed and half-dressed, he prepared to shave, and it was here that the normal coursing of life was again arrested, and his being became one extreme sickness. He had just taken up the shaving-stick and had tilted the mirror, when he dropped the shaving-stick and almost knocked the little mirror to the floor.

The face that looked back at him from the mirror was not his!

He had tilted the mirror in the casual faith that it would show him what it had shown him through every day of all

his adult years—a chubby pink face, a little blond mustache, blue eyes and thin blond hair. What it did show him was black, lank hair, a lined and drawn face, restless eyes, a black forecast of beard, a general air of grubbiness.

Wondering whether it were nightmare, or if he were still suffering from last night, he rubbed his hand heavily across his face, and looked again. There was no doubt of it. He was awake; from the street came the cries of the morning; from below came the familiar sounds of that dingy house; from the window he saw the bedraggled figures he saw every morning. And in the mirror he saw a face that was not his. Before he understood the full implication of what had happened, and the frightful dilemma in which it placed him, he was aware only of that sickness which comes to all men in the presence of the unaccountable. Something had happened which *didn't* happen: something out of nature, something against the sun.

WE live by a peaceable faith in the course of nature, a faith which takes so much for granted that if the morning sun were to shine upon us from the west, and the stars appear in daylight, we should stand still in dismay. For the moment John Smothe stood still in dismay. Four times he went to the mirror, and four times he sat down and stared at the carpet. The impossible thing *had* happened. He had a new face. The rest of his body was the body he had known for fifty years. His hands and legs, which he examined slowly and in fear, were his. The face was not.

At the fourth examination of it, he felt that, strange and repellent as it was, he had seen it before. He spent some minutes in trying to remember where he had seen it, and only after searching about all the queer faces he had seen in the last few months, did he recall last night. The Interesting Man in the bar! And then he recalled the unusual effect of two glasses of light beer. The face he saw in the mirror was the face of the Interesting Man.

When, in the course of an hour, he came to consider his position in relation to everyday affairs, he realized that he could not face the woman of the house. He would be a stranger. He would be a stranger everywhere. One thought came to him, the thought that comes to every man in every kind of disaster: Flight.



The officer took John Smothe by an arm. "You better come along to the station. If there's a mistake, we can soon settle it."

At eleven o'clock, when, as he knew by custom, the woman was out, he fled. He took his bag and fled, and boarded the first bus that came along. He sat in the bus with the desolate feeling of being Nobody. His light pretence in leaving home and sinking his identity under an assumed name was now changed to dismal fact. He was not John Smothe, and he was not the Interesting Man in the bar. He had achieved completely what he had thought he wanted: he had got away from himself.

He left the bus at the Strand, and took the bus behind it, which was labeled for Waterloo. He did not know why he should go to Waterloo, but he decided that he might as well go there as anywhere else. It was distant from Islington and from Kensington, and it was a quarter which, outside the platforms of its station, was known to nobody of his own sort. . . .

In a dim street off lower Marsh he found a room to let, and into it he took his misery. He hunched himself on the narrow bed and tried to realize what had happened, and to follow out its implications. But the thing would not resolve itself into thought; he could only look at it and wonder.

A wild hope came to him that as this mad thing had happened, so it might unhappen. It might last only for a

while. Whatever madness was at work upon him might exhaust itself, and he would find himself again John Smothe. He thought of his Kensington flat, and prayed that the thing might pass, and that he might be again John Smothe, and abandon his foolish antics of the last few months. Every fifteen minutes he went to the mirror. But the mirror had nothing for him.

TOWARD late afternoon his feeling of sickness increased, and he realized that he had eaten nothing. With an effort he dragged himself out to seek some secluded eating-house. But he went no farther in his search than some twenty paces.

He had scarcely left the house when two men confronted him. They confronted him very solidly, one on either side of him. The stouter of the two said: "Just a moment. We are police-officers. What's your name?"

"Er—what—er—John—er—Arthur Exford."

The man studied him. "You answer to the description of a man wanted by the Southampton police—and known as Boris Gudlatch."

"That's not my name. And I've never in my life been in Southampton."

"I see." The officer looked at the poor street and the shabby creature, and seemed trying to reconcile the street and the shabbiness with the delicate voice. He made his decision on the street and the shabbiness, and took John Smothe by an arm. "You better come along to the station. If there's a mistake, we can soon settle it." He turned to his companion and nodded toward the house. His companion went to the house, and John Smothe was taken to the station.

At first he was bewildered and incoherent, as all respectable men are when their arms are taken by policemen. He could not clearly grasp what was happening, or why, or what he should do. He could only utter feeble protests. At the station he was told that he must expect to wait awhile, as officers were coming from Southampton with witnesses. If a mistake had been made, he would no doubt understand that the interests of justice must be served even at inconvenience to innocent people.

He continued to protest: "I don't know what it's all about. I've never been in Southampton in my life, and my name isn't the name you mentioned.

I'll admit that it isn't the name I gave." Under this new trouble he forgot the trouble that had come upon him in the morning. There was no mirror in the station, and he talked to them as to himself. "No. It isn't the name I gave. I had a private reason for giving that. Nothing to do with anything that would interest you. I've just been going about London seeing life. Actually, my name is John Smothe. My address is Helsingfors Mansions, Kensington. You'll find me in the telephone-book. And you can ring up and ask my man to come along."

"You were there yesterday?"

"Er—no. No, I wasn't there yesterday. I haven't been there for a month or so. I told you I've been wandering about London. But I left my man enough to go on with, and he'll probably be there."

"Well, we'll ring him up."

They rang up, and they told John Smothe that his man was coming along by taxi, and had expressed some anxiety concerning the disappearance of his employer. The officer, not certain whether he had an amiable eccentric, or a bluffing criminal, gave the benefit to courtesy, and assured him that if he were the man he claimed to be, everything would be all right, save for the inconvenience, which couldn't be avoided.

WITHIN half an hour his man arrived, and he got up from his hard chair with a gasp of relief.

"Hendrick!"

But Hendrick took no notice. He turned to the officer: "Where's Mr. Smothe?"

The officer said: "There."

Hendrick looked round the room. "No. That's not him."

John Smothe became indignant. "What's the matter with you, Hendrick? I *am* here."

Hendrick looked again at him. "Don't know what you're talking about. You're not *my* Mr. Smothe."

"But I *am*. Hendrick—my parrot—Mulvaney. You know the parrot, Mulvaney. And my collection of enamels. And the cabinet in the corner with the Bohemian glass. Hendrick!"

The officer looked at both of them. Hendrick looked at the officer and indicated John Smothe with a nod. "Seems to know a lot about Mr. Smothe's habits and his flat. But that aint Mr. Smothe. I been with Mr. Smothe eleven years. I ought to know him. He went off sud-

den-like some months ago, and I haven't seen him since. But that aint him. My Mr. Smothe was yellow-haired and pink. Chubby face, sort of. Blue eyes. Always neat—what you might call spruce. *That's* no more him than I am."

"But Hendrick—"

Hendrick was thanked for coming, and John Smothe was left alone. He was left alone for half an hour, which gave him time to realize his folly in sending for Hendrick: The impossibility of explaining to Hendrick that though he had lost his head, he was still John Smothe. The impossibility of explaining to police officers that a man could lose his head, and go about with a head that didn't belong to him. The impossibility of explaining anything.

AND then his loneliness was broken. Four other men came into the room. They were ushered in by an officer, and they sat down on chairs, gingerly and self-consciously. An odd lot: A man who looked like a clerk; a man who smelled of fish; a man who looked wicked enough to double-cross Satan; and a man who couldn't look anything, because his eyes were everywhere and his face was constantly changing. The only point they had in common was shabby appearance.

They had had only the time to look round the room and grin or grimace at each other, when a big man came in and presented a young girl to the company. She stood in the doorway and looked them over. The big man said: "Well?"

Without hesitation she pointed to John Smothe. "That one."

"Sure?"

"Absolutely. Wearing different clothes, but the face is unmistakable. I saw it quite clearly when he stood in the light before he started running."

"Thank you." He called through the door: "Take Miss Jones to the next room. Don't let her see the young man. Then send the young man."

A young man came in. He too studied the company. The officer lifted his head in inquiry. The young man nodded. "Yes—over there by the window. That one." He pointed to John Smothe.

"Sure? He says he's never been in Southampton at any time."

"I'm certain that's the man I saw. Different clothes, but the face—I saw it quite clearly for some seconds. Don't see faces like that every day. Not in Southampton, anyway."

The young man was waved out, and when he was gone, the four other men in the room were waved out. The officer turned to Smothe.

"Two witnesses have identified you as a man wanted by the Southampton police. I hold a warrant for the arrest of that man, known among other names, as Boris Gudlatch, on a charge of murder."

"Mur—"

"It is my duty to detain you and take you to Southampton to answer a charge of robbery at a jeweler's shop in Humstrum Street at five o'clock yesterday afternoon, and of murdering John Smith. It is my du—"

"But I tell you again I've never in my life been in Southampton. It's ridiculous. It's rubbish. These people are making a mistake. I—"

"You are at liberty to make a statement, or not, as you please. If you wish to make a statement, it is my duty to warn you that anything you may say may be used in—"

"I've not been out of London at all the last four months. I was in London all day yesterday. I was wandering about all the afternoon, and I can call witnesses who saw me at nine o'clock near King's Cross, and—"

The officer had held up his hand, but it wasn't the warning hand that made John Smothe break off: it was the realization that he had spoken to nobody through the whole afternoon, and had stopped nowhere; and the realization that a man could have been in Southampton at five o'clock and yet have reached a King's Cross bar by nine o'clock.

"If you don't wish to make a statement," the officer said, "it would be better to say nothing for the present."

SO John Smothe said nothing. He saw the utter futility of making a statement. He saw the impossibility of an alibi, and the idiocy of telling this man, or any men, that somebody took his head away last night and gave him his present head in exchange. He allowed himself to be taken to Southampton and confronted with three more eyewitnesses. . . .

Six weeks later he learned his lesson. He learned in exaggerated form what every man learns in some degree who commits his folly. He learned that when a man willfully flies from his life, when he willfully loses his true self,—or his head,—he has lost it forever.

Shock Troops

III—"TURN ON THE HEAT" shows the Department of Justice men backing up a clever trick with a courageous attack to capture a ruthless public enemy. . . . This story, you will realize, is firmly based on fact.

ALL in all, it was a great day for the afternoon newspapers of Druton. The noon editions screamed the startling fact that five armed men had robbed the Tradesman National Bank, escaped with sixty-two thousand dollars in cash, and left behind them a dead policeman and a dying teller.

The "Postscripts" declared the robbery was the work of one Slick Gracort, and the members of his gang. A high police official was authority for the statement.

Then the vigil other reporters had kept in the Druton field offices of the Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, bore fruit. The harassed agent-in-charge emerged from seclusion long enough to admit the robbery actually was staged by another band, clever enough to adopt every method of procedure used by Mr. Gracort and his followers. That fact caught the "First Financial."

The next contribution came over the wires, and it was received in time for the "Complete Prices." Washington reported that Department of Justice agents and technical men were being rushed by airplane to Druton. There had been no official announcement, but one keen-eyed reporter had recognized Special Agent James (Duke) Ashby among the passengers on the plane. That fact rated special headlines. Then another news-hawk spotted Carl Sherman, head of the great laboratory of crime. Every paper began to "replate," and Ashby and Sherman shared honors.

In the "First Sports," baseball was pushed unceremoniously to one side. The dynamic Director of the Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, had spoken. His words rated italics in any man's paper. And they slapped in his picture for good measure, barely beating the deadline.

The robbery, the Director admitted, was the work of Toodles Hapont and his gang. Even the rawest cub reporter



Ashby and Hapont wrestled about

sensed the dynamite in that announcement. Toodles Hapont was Public Enemy No. 1—the slayer of Special Agent Luther Thomas, who, five months before, had attempted to arrest him.

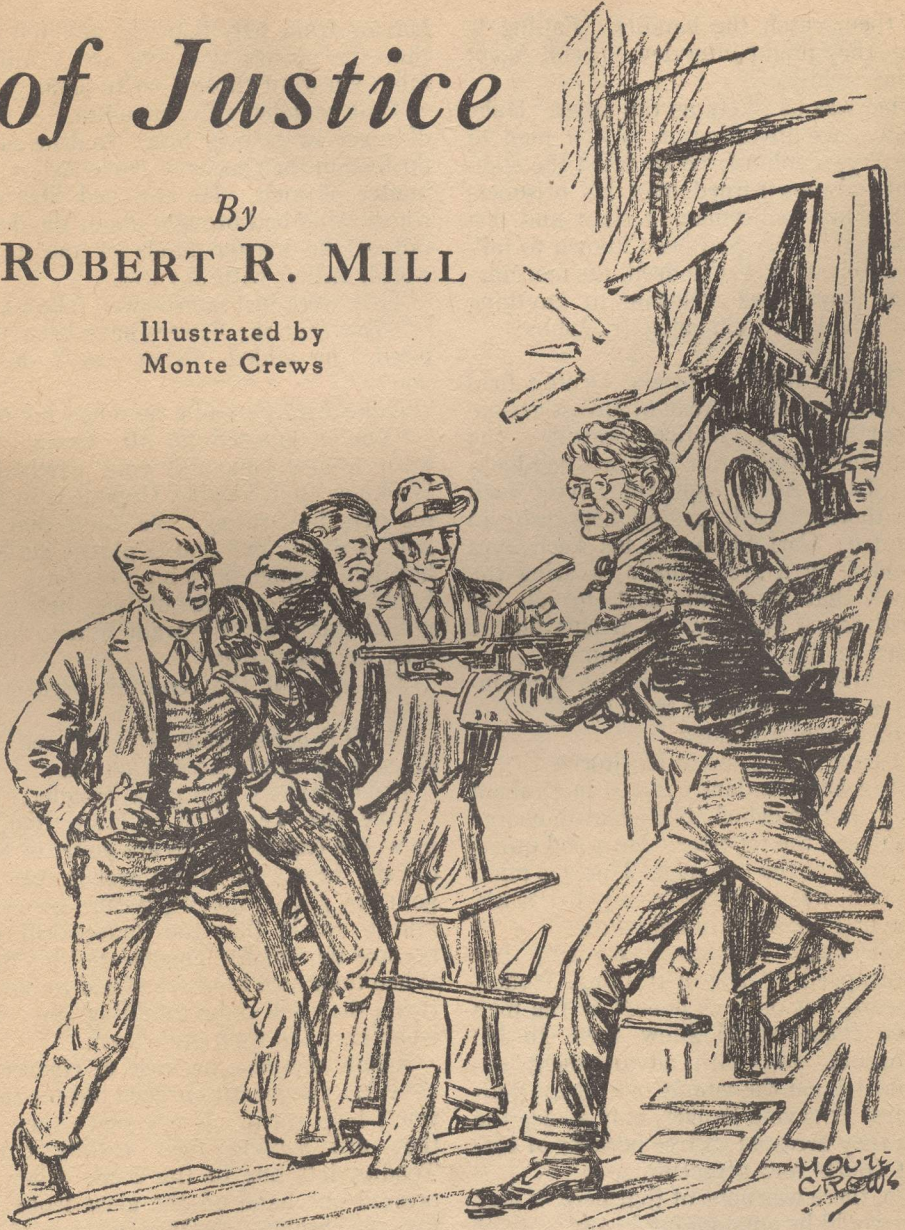
There wasn't time to do it full justice in the "First Sports," but they more than made up for that in the final edition. Toodles Hapont, who had played hide-and-seek with the much vaunted G-Men for five months, felt sure enough of himself to come out of hiding and rob a bank. He staged that robbery in Druton, where the F.B.I. had a field office, and

of Justice

By

ROBERT R. MILL

Illustrated by
Monte Crews



the room. . . . Each man tried to force the weapon down to train it upon the other.

which was only a few hundred miles from their headquarters in Washington. All of which warranted the assertion that said robbery had been pulled right under their very noses.

THE high police official also had another contribution. He declared the chase got under way so soon after the robbery that it had been impossible for the fugitives to leave Druton. Every possible means of escape was being guarded. Therefore the bandits would remain in Druton.

Whereupon the afternoon newspaper men heaved a sigh of relief and called it a day, departing for their homes with the comforting thought that about every possible ounce of nourishment had been extracted from the story, leaving only thin crumbs for the men who produced the morning papers.

The morning men were welcome to what remained. They had the hackneyed, "Police Comb City!" Also theirs would be the tips that would be forthcoming from cranks and well-meaning meddlers. If they wanted more—well,

let them catch the bandits. Failing in that, they might interview Special Agent James Ashby.

One was as likely as the other. Duke Ashby, ace investigator, was a man of mystery, a sphinx; he shunned the spotlight; always turned over his prisoners to the first policeman in sight and disappeared; never had been known to talk for publication. Yes, indeed, the morning-paper boys were welcome to anything they could get from said Mr. Ashby.

THREE men sat in the Druton field offices of the Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice, waiting: the agent-in-charge, grim and worried-looking; Duke Ashby, tall, thin, every inch the thoroughbred, pacing nervously to and fro; Carl Sherman, his keen eyes shielded by a green shade, wearing the smock that made him look for all the world like a sculptor, his artist's fingers folded on the table before him.

"You'll like Craig," said the agent-in-charge. "And you can trust him."

Duke Ashby nodded.

"I have read some of his stories."

Then an attendant ushered in Graham Craig, and vanished. The agent-in-charge introduced the reporter. He stood quietly, gazing at the two men. This, his mind told him, was a far cry from police work, as he had known it in his youth:

Policemen, intelligent enough, but handicapped by lack of training. Honest at heart, but only as honest as the men above them would allow them to be. Ambitious, but with advancement dependent upon the whims of corrupt politicians. Braving danger, only to see the men they arrested go free because of corrupt courts and prosecutors.

No, there was none of that here. These men would be outstanding in any walk of life. Behind them were all the resources of the United States of America. The greatest expert in every line was at their beck and call. At their head was a man whose every act in office had been an inspiration to them and to the world. They and their chief served only one master—law and order.

Graham Craig, veteran reporter, hard-boiled and cynical, saw the realization of an almost forgotten dream in these men. He had stood unabashed in the presence of men the world rated high, but he felt shy and diffident as he attempted to put his thoughts in words:

"I have written many a story about you two gentlemen. Now I can only

borrow from Mr. Kipling, and tell you that the stories you live are a million miles ahead of those I write about you."

That sounded silly, maudlin. A wave of anger swept over him. And he saw a flush stain the cheeks of Duke Ashby, the hunter of men. He watched Sherman, whose mind had brought about the downfall of the master-minds of the underworld, stiffen with shyness.

They were just men—swell fellows.

"Now that the flowers have been scattered," he added, "what can I do for you?"

Duke Ashby's smile matched his own.

"You've guessed it, Mr. Craig. We want to use you, and your newspaper. We know that Toodles Hapont is in hiding here in Druton. We know that his hair is dyed, and that a plastic surgeon has done a splendid job on his face. We know he had a hide-out long before he pulled this job. We want him to know that we know this."

The eyes of the reporter were twinkling.

"Isn't it considerate of you to tell Mr. Hapont all this!" he murmured.

Duke Ashby's grin grew broader.

"We also want him to know that, as he would express it, we are going to turn on the heat. In other words, we are going to put so much pressure on every known crook, that the underworld will become too hot for Toodles and his men. When their own kind are afraid to harbor them, they will come tumbling out. And when they do, we'll grab them."

Ashby offered a package of cigarettes.

"What the plastic surgeon did for them won't help them. Every place they go, they are leaving their calling cards. Toodles left one in the bank, when he pressed one hand on the glass ledge before the cashier. Another member of the gang left one when he was playing at a desk in the lobby, waiting for the signal. We had complete sets on most of the outfit from former jobs.

"Mr. Craig, those fingerprints are calling-cards that can't be forged or changed. They can't be thrown away. And sooner or later, they are going to lead us to Toodles Hapont."

ASHBY'S eyes narrowed. His words were audible, but they were merely the utterance of a thought, and not addressed to the other men in the room: "Sooner or later I'll have to kill Toodles Hapont. We owe that to Luther Thomas. We've allowed the debt to run too long."

A shadow flitted across his face and vanished. It was replaced by a flush as he turned to the reporter.

"Please forget my theatrical outburst, Mr. Craig. That is all we have for publication. As our friend, you are welcome to anything."

CRAIG propounded the question that had danced in his mind all day:

"Wasn't it foolish of Hapont to pull this job at a time when you had no idea of his whereabouts?"

Carl Sherman answered:

"Yes, and no. Necessity probably prompted it. The horseleech with his two daughters crying, 'Give, give,' had only minor troubles compared to those of a fugitive from justice. His safety depends entirely upon the loyalty of those around him, and their demands are based upon his danger and importance. He has only one means of raising money—another crime. Necessity, not bravado, prompted the job today."

The reporter nodded.

"But why pick Druton?"

"A criminal operates where he has the best facilities. We have known for a long time that Hapont had good connections in the underworld here, and some even better that are not in the recognized underworld."

The reporter leaned forward.

"Why not let me explain that?" he begged. "The public thinks this robbery was staged purely as a challenge to your organization. It puts you under a cloud."

"Only temporarily." The quiet statement came from Duke Ashby. Craig turned to face him.

"I believe you're right, Mr. Ashby." He extended his hand. "Good night, gentlemen. I hope the *Star* delivers your message. And please remember me when the finale comes off."

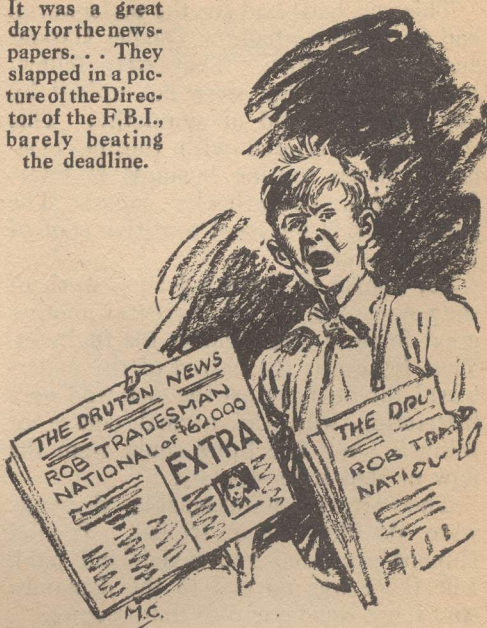
Duke Ashby's hand rested on the shoulder of the reporter.

"We have used you shamelessly, Mr. Craig." His eyes twinkled. "Perhaps we can make it possible for you to be with us at the finale."

So they "turned on the heat." Quiet-spoken but determined young men appeared at vantage-spots in Druton's underworld. . . . There was no bluster, no abuse; but their voices were filled with sincerity as they delivered the ultimatum:

The Federal Government wanted Toodles Hapont and his men. What it wanted, it would get. It also would take

It was a great day for the newspapers. . . . They slapped in a picture of the Director of the F.B.I., barely beating the deadline.



anybody and everybody sufficiently misguided to think they could get away with harboring or aiding Toodles and his outfit.

The young men spread their message well. It was delivered in person to keepers of shady resorts frequented by criminals, receivers of stolen goods, illegal traffickers in firearms, fixers, crooked bail-bondsmen, and a host of similar gentry. It was repeated, second-hand, until it carried the full length and breadth of the underworld, heard by the high and the low.

Nor were the young men content with that. They visited certain lawyers, political leaders and other men of position. With them their manner was impersonal. They absolved the person they were talking to, but spoke of rumors concerning other persons in the same calling, and deplored the fact these other persons had apparently yielded to the lure of easy money. They also speculated freely regarding the ultimate fate of these persons.

Then, almost as suddenly as they had appeared, the young men vanished. They left in their wake a steadily rising river of fear. It flowed through the heart of the underworld, with its branches extending to every nook and cranny. Its tributaries carried beyond the confines of the underworld, reached the ranks of petty officialdom and, underworld rumor declared, extended to the very door of City Hall.

This was bad: bad for the underworld, bad for politics—bad for Toodles Hapont and his henchmen. They were fellow-sufferers, but they were not united by any common bond of sympathy. This condition interfered with routine business. When routine business is interfered with, pocketbooks suffer. The pocketbook is the most sensitive spot of the underworld.

So, thanks to the missionary work of the young men, there was created another great force to work against the fugitives. That force was the hatred of the underworld, directed against the men who were interfering with the normal course of things. Only one thing could stem the flow of that hate—money.

The always unreasonable demands were doubled, then tripled. Toodles Hapont protested and raved—but paid. But there was no end to the demands. And there was no end to the pressure.

WHEN the fears seemed about to subside, the young men appeared again. Once more they “turned on the heat.” And each other time that operation was performed, whether by accident or design, their apparently random visitations drew nearer to the hiding-places of the gang.

And each time they appeared, Toodles Hapont paid more. Soon he was near the breaking-point, a raving, snarling animal, confronted with a force he only dimly understood. Now he was dangerous to friend and foe alike. He was at war with the whole world; for the whole world, as he saw it, was divided into two classes: one portion was composed of quiet young men, with a deadly glint of purpose in their eyes; all the other portion had extended hands, hands that begged for money. There was no satisfying those hands. One payment was followed only by more and greater demands.

Soon the demands would be doubled. The young men would return. He had timed their visits. They showed up every three days.

Always dancing before Toodles Hapont's eyes was the two-bladed sword of exposure. A whisper from some man who resented this interference with his own plans. A squeal from another, who felt the payment he received was not ample recompense for the danger he ran. The “heat” added those possibilities to the always-present danger from informers.

Toodles Hapont drank almost constantly. Each bottle cost more than the

former. Damn them—all of them! Did they think he spit money? . . .

Heels Codart was a humble package thief. He owed his first name to his ability to show his heels after having selected a likely-looking package from the platform before some express office. There were others unkind enough to say that the name was apt for another reason.

AT the moment, Heels' morale was at a low ebb. Three weeks ago he had made the mistake of selecting a package from an interstate shipment. That brought him to the attention of the Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice; and Heels wanted no part of the G-Men.

Added misfortune had come in the form of a clerk, who had seen the man who fled with the package. At the Rogues' Gallery of the local police department, where Heels had been given frequent sittings, the clerk identified what would have been an excellent picture of Heels, if it had not been marred by some numbers and other data.

Therefore the police and G-Men were hunting a particular package thief, to wit, one Heels Codart. That made things tough. The plastic surgeon then getting the play from the underworld had agreed to cut-rates for a lesser light; but Heels, after viewing himself in the mirror, decided he had been given cut-rate workmanship. And even the bargain price had taken a heavy toll of Heels' resources.

Right now it behooved Heels to do a job of work and collect some jack. But going to work while the G-Men were turning the heat on Toodles Hapont and his outfit was like walking up to the guy at the gate at the Big House and saying: “Mister, have you any vacancies?” The F.B.I. men were looking for Toodles, but they were willing to take anything else that came along.

Heels knew where Toodles and his mob were lying low. Ratlike, he had weighed the possibility of taking that information where it would be most eagerly received. If it was the cops, Heels was sure he could do business, and get the rap on the package canceled or forgotten; but those G-Men were funny guys. Furthermore, although he was sure the bank would pay the reward offered, he was equally certain that the boy who received it would not enjoy good health for any extended period of time.

Heels loved money; but he loved his



Heels, his left hand clapped against his injured nose, felt a burning sensation in his right hand.

life more. So he decided to concentrate on the affairs of Heels Codart, or John Chentoy, as he called himself since the plastic surgeon had produced what was supposed to be a new man.

It was tough, being on the lam. Gave you the willies sitting around a room. Had to take a chance and step out now and then, or you would go bugs. Heels put on his hat and headed for Mac's place and a sociable game of pool.

There was the usual crowd: some of the gang, a few strangers.

Mac didn't act any too cordial as he entered. Probably didn't want a guy on the lam hanging around while the heat was on. To hell with him! He, Heels, had scattered enough sugar in this joint to rate something.

Heels squeezed by the first table; and as he did so, the elbow of a player came back, striking Heels and ruining his shot. "Scuse it," murmured Heels.

The player, who was a stranger, threw his cue aside and turned to face Heels.

"Yeah! Your mamma ought to put a bumper on you before she lets you out. And I aint so sure I like your face."

HEELS hesitated. He never craved a fight, and now least of all. But the silence in the room proved all the gang were listening and watching, and a guy had to save his face.

"You aint been asked to take no vote on it, has you?" demanded Heels.

"If you ask me," retorted the stranger, "I'd say the thing to do with that face was to rub it out, like any mistake."

"You and how many is taking on the job?" asked Heels. He felt a hollow feeling at the pit of his stomach.

"I aint got nothing running in the paper under 'Help Wanted,'" declared the stranger. His left fist shot upward, connecting with Mr. Codart's nose. His right hand darted forward, and the lights flashed on metal.

Heels, his left hand clapped against his injured nose, felt a burning sensation as a blade was drawn along his right hand, near the ends of his fingers. He howled with pain.

A babel of sound went up. Men rushed forward. The stranger, taking advantage of the confusion, darted from the room.

Heels noted his departure with relief. He attempted to regain his lost prestige: "Yellow, that's what he is! Pulls a shiv on me, and then takes a powder."

There was a chorus of assent. A man whose hair was gray about the temples—Heels did not remember having seen him before—stepped forward and examined the injured hand.

"That's a nasty cut. Better come across the street to my room and let me fix it up."



"Jees!" the patient cried. "That stuff feels like it was eating me hand away! What is it, Doc?"

Heels followed him blindly as he led the way to a second-floor room. There was a cabinet filled with bottles of various sizes. One drawer was crowded full of gauze, tape and cotton. Another yielded an imposing array of surgical instruments.

"You a doc?" asked Heels.

The man, gauze in hand, hesitated.

"They call me Doc Prencro. I—I practiced medicine—once."

He worked expertly.

"Lived here long?" asked Heels.

"Moved in four days ago." A pause.

"I—you see, I have been away for some time."

The treatment engrossed his entire attention. He approached with a wad of cotton that had been saturated in some liquid.

"This will hurt," he warned. "But it is better than blood-poisoning from a rusty knife."

He daubed away at Heels' fingers.

"Jees!" cried the patient. "That stuff feels like it was eating me hand away. What is it, Doc?"

The man of medicine smiled.

"A little preparation of my own. I had lots of time to experiment while I was in—while I was away."

He sponged the injured fingers carefully.

"It wouldn't do to get any of this on

the tips of your fingers. If I should make that mistake, your fingerprints would be useless for purposes of identification with the former prints. You wouldn't want that to happen. And if the police knew I had anything of this sort, they would become inquisitive and annoying. Peculiar people, the police."

He tightened the bandage.

"There you are."

"Thanks, Doc." Heels made a half-hearted motion toward his pocket. "What are the damages?"

The physician smiled.

"My first patient since—since my return. Put away your money."

He lowered his voice:

"For certain reasons, I don't intend to hang up my sign. But you might hear of some of the boys who need a bit of patching up, and who would appreciate a discreet physician. Send them my way, will you?"

"I sure will, Doc," Heels promised. "Thanks a lot."

NOW the "heat" was growing stronger, and underworld jackals were using it to their own advantage. The price per day of the hide-out of Toodles Hapont went up like a line on a chart recording a bull market. Toodles cursed and threatened, but to no avail. He paid.

He had only one contact with the outside world: the newspapers. He literally devoured edition after edition. One story he read over and over, though the date on the paper containing it showed it was days old. It was an interview with Special Agent James Ashby:

"We are going to make the underworld too hot for Toodles Hapont and his men. When their own kind are afraid to harbor them, they will come tumbling out. And when they do, we will grab them."

"Won't plastic surgery make identification impossible?" Special Agent Ashby was asked.

He smiled.

"Every place they go, they will leave their calling-cards. Those cards can't be forged or changed. They can't be thrown away. And sooner or later, they are going to lead us to Toodles Hapont."

Beside the article was a picture of a set of fingerprints. Above the picture was the caption:

TOODLES HAPONT'S CALLING CARD.

The bandit swore a mighty oath as he threw the paper aside. No, the so-and-

so wasn't bluffing. He was dead right. That was what kept Toodles chained here among these bloodsuckers. It was hell, just plain hell. Made a guy almost wish he had been sap enough to work.

HEELS CODART, shuffling his way along a street in the tenderloin of Druton, gave a start of surprise and fear as a young man approached and placed a light hand upon his shoulder.

"Special Agent George Cassidy, Department of Justice. Come along, Heels."

Heels attempted to bluff it out.

"You got me wrong. Me moniker is John Chentoy."

"No doubt," Cassidy agreed. "But a rose under another name—"

"Say!" sputtered Mr. Codart. "Was youse callin' me a pansy?"

"Perish the thought," said Mr. Cassidy. "Come along, Heels."

"This," protested Heels, "is a bum rap."

"Nothing to brag about," Cassidy agreed, "but I've seen worse. Keep moving. And if you want anything out of your pockets, I'll get it for you. That's fair enough, isn't it?"

They made their way to the field offices of the Department of Justice, and entered an inner room, where a man wearing a white gown looked up with an inquiring smile.

"This is Heels Codart," said Special Agent Cassidy.

"Me moniker is John Chentoy," said Heels.

The smile of the man in white became a little broader.

"A slight difference of opinion, apparently. Well, we'll soon see."

Gently but firmly he grasped Heels by the hand. He pressed that hand upon a pad. Then, one by one, he applied the tips of the fingers to squares on a white card. He repeated the operation with the other hand.

Next he drew out a card bearing black smudges. Heels could see the name on that card. It was his own.

The man in white peered through a microscope.

"The right thumb checks. —Hello, what's this?"

Cassidy was at the side of the scientist. Together they bent over the cards. They spoke in low tones, but Heels could catch stray words and phrases:

"One whorl completely missing. Difference of four on the ridge count. . . . Can't seem to locate one core."

They inked Heels' fingers again, and repeated the process. Bewilderment was stamped on their faces. Then, after a long examination, the man in white shrugged his shoulders in resignation.

"Something is radically wrong here. If it is what I am afraid it is, we might as well throw our entire system of identification in the discard. Sooner or later we will have to go to bat on a test case. But I frankly admit I would need more data to attempt to cope with it."

He turned to Heels.

"Who has been tampering with your fingers?"

"Nobody," said Heels sullenly. "You got me wrong."

The agent and the laboratory man exchanged glances.

"Get out!" Cassidy ordered. "Scram!"

Heels obeyed with alacrity.

Smiles of satisfaction spread over the faces of Carl Sherman and Special Agent Cassidy.

"That should do it," said the former.

Cassidy nodded as he glanced out the window at the sun of late afternoon.

"I predict a busy night."

Anxiety clouded the face of the laboratory man.

"And a dangerous one for Duke Ashby," said Carl Sherman.

THINKING, with Heels, was a gradual process. He left the field offices of the Department of Justice with one thought uppermost in his mind—he was free after what looked like a certain pinch.

Sometime later he realized that for some strange reason his fingerprints had undergone a radical change since the last time they were taken. There was only one explanation for that. That Doc—he called himself Prencó—had babbled something about keeping his dope away from the tips of the fingers because it would destroy prints. Heels had been too much interested in his injuries to pay much attention at the time, but some of the stuff must have run down. And was it the McCoy! The demonstration just staged had been both convincing and gratifying. Heels expanded to the extent of wishing he could do something for Doc Prencó.

He was in the building, and on his way to his room, when the idea came to him. This was something! It was something big! It was something every "gun" would go for in a big way. It would put Doc Prencó on Easy Street. Guile



Five armed men had robbed the Tradesman National Bank, escaped with sixty-two thousand dollars and left behind a dead policeman and a dying teller.

entered his reasoning. No reason why it should not perform the same service for Mr. Heels Codart.

Heels was jubilant. He had something to sell. He knew the most logical customer. He entered a telephone-booth and dialed the number of the building in which Toodles Hapont was in hiding.

Little Otto, the proprietor, answered. Heels announced his identity and his whereabouts.

"I got something the Big Fellow should know right away. How about you comin' over?"

Little Otto pondered.

"Nothing doing. Maybe you is hot. I call another guy. He comes to see you. Then he calls me back, and we makes our own lay."

Heels sensed what Little Otto was doing. His plan prevented anybody who might be watching Heels from following the messenger back to the hide-out. Also, in case of a double-cross of any kind from Heels, it eliminated Little Otto as the victim of that double-cross. Brotherly love, in the underworld!

"O. K.," said Heels. "But make it snappy."

"THIS," warned Carl Sherman, "may be a long session. It may take minutes, hours, or even days. There is no schedule."

Graham Craig, the reporter, smiled.

"I would wait weeks for this, Mr. Sherman. I can't tell you how decent of you it is to recall your promise and allow me to watch the finale."

"You owe Ashby for that," said Carl Sherman. "I frankly admit the promise had slipped my mind. We hope you will find this interesting, Mr. Craig. Perhaps a little explanation will prepare you for what we hope will follow." He filled a pipe and lighted it. "At any rate, it will serve to kill at least some of the time."

He leaned back in his chair.

"As you know, the underworld tries to keep abreast, or a little ahead, of the scientific developments in crime-detection. Fingerprints are the most potent weapon we have in identification work. Therefore all the brains of the underworld hope some day to be able to discover something that will make fingerprints useless.

"Every intelligent person familiar with the subject knows that the only way to alter fingerprints is to remove the skin and flesh from the fingertips. For a person to have hands in that condition would be equivalent to an admission that he was a fugitive from justice.

"Despite these facts, the underworld keeps on hoping. Every now and again some faker circulates the word he has the magic formula, and he collects thousands of dollars before he departs to es-

cape the wrath of his victims. The late John Dillinger paid five thousand dollars for an operation of this sort; yet all our clerks were able to identify the altered prints, taken after his death, as those of Dillinger."

The man in the white smock put aside his pipe.

"Nor does the underworld have any corner on this sort of gullibility, which is born of desperation. Look at the fortunes paid to quack doctors by sufferers who have been refused hope by reputable physicians. But enough of that."

A smile lighted up his intelligent face.

"We have given Toodles Hapont a chance to have his fingerprints altered. We are almost positive he will take it."

A BUZZER sounded. Carl Sherman's face became grave as he lifted the receiver of a telephone.

"Yes?" He listened in silence.

"Good." He turned to the reporter.

"A package-thief named Heels Codart has just had a caller."

He saw Craig's bewilderment.

"Over a week ago Heels was stabbed in the hand during a fight in a poolroom.

His assailant escaped. It so happened that a disbarred physician named Prenco was in the crowd, and he took Heels to his room and bound up his injury. He must have altered his fingerprints, for when we picked up Heels today on an old charge, we were unable to make identification. We were obliged to release him. Quite a chain of circumstances, isn't it?"

The reporter leaned forward.

"How many of them did you and Mr. Ashby arrange?" he asked.

Carl Sherman smiled.

"It is not a pleasant task to pick a fight with a man and stab him in the hand. A special agent did it. We are at war with the underworld, and a soldier is asked to do many unpleasant things."

"You knew this Dr. Prenco was in the room?"

"We waited until he was there."

"He is an ex-convict?"

"His kind usually are. Probably an abortionist. But we have nothing on him in our records."

"But how did you know he would offer to alter Heels' fingerprints?"

Carl Sherman smiled.

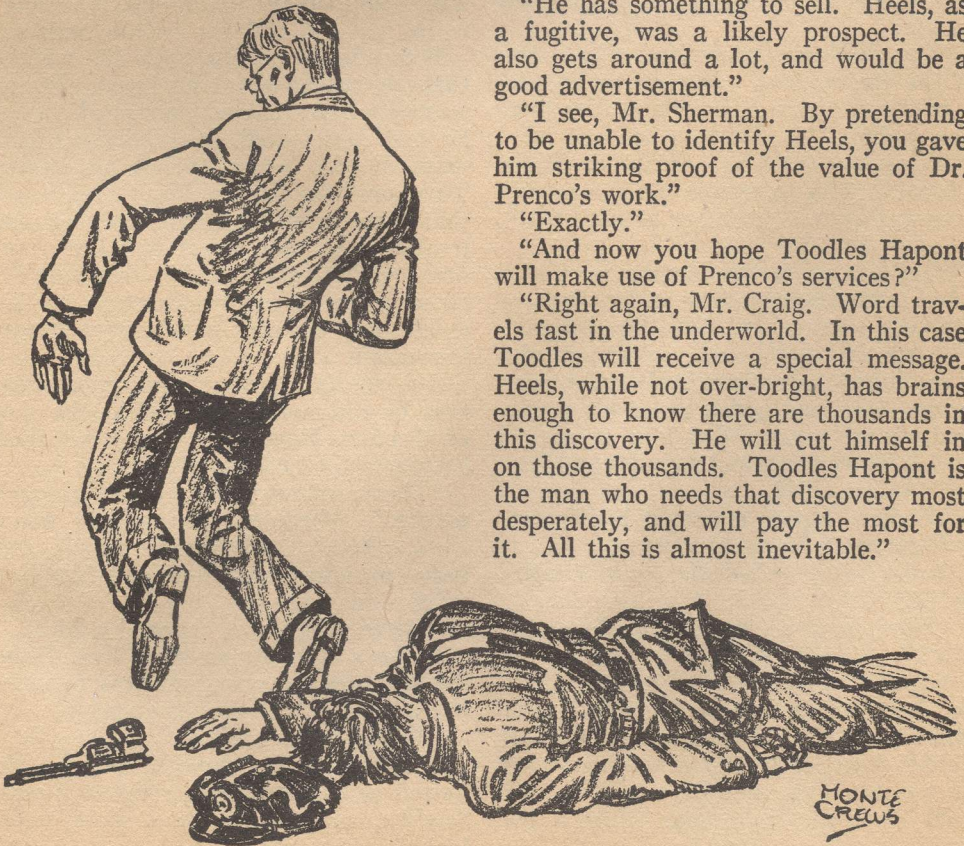
"He has something to sell. Heels, as a fugitive, was a likely prospect. He also gets around a lot, and would be a good advertisement."

"I see, Mr. Sherman. By pretending to be unable to identify Heels, you gave him striking proof of the value of Dr. Prenco's work."

"Exactly."

"And now you hope Toodles Hapont will make use of Prenco's services?"

"Right again, Mr. Craig. Word travels fast in the underworld. In this case Toodles will receive a special message. Heels, while not over-bright, has brains enough to know there are thousands in this discovery. He will cut himself in on those thousands. Toodles Hapont is the man who needs that discovery most desperately, and will pay the most for it. All this is almost inevitable."



The reporter nodded.

"So Toodles Hapont will go to Prencoco?"

"Or Prencoco will be taken to Hapont," Carl Sherman amended.

"And then you will have him?"

"Exactly."

His hand darted forward as a buzzer sounded.

"Yes? . . . What's that? . . . Good God!" He passed a trembling hand over his forehead. "Call my car as soon as you spot it. And for God's sake, hurry!"

He jumped to his feet.

"Come, Mr. Craig. We'll keep in touch from my car by short-wave radio. Three men called at Prencoco's room and took him away with them in an automobile. The agents who were trailing lost the car."

There was a grim quality almost akin to despair in Carl Sherman's voice as he continued:

"I was saving this to add drama to what you call the finale." There was a catch in his voice. "Dr. Prencoco is Special Agent Ashby."

Carl Sherman seated himself at the wheel of his car. He pressed a button, and almost immediately the radio came to life:

"Car Eighteen reporting. No trace of the fugitive car. Any instructions?"

Sherman threw a switch on the two-way radio.

"Sherman speaking. Pick up Heels Codart." His voice was harsh, and his face was grim. "And turn on the heat!"

THE operation was completed. Duke Ashby, masquerading as Dr. Prencoco, stepped away from Toodles Hapont. The special agent cast a glance at the three huskies standing behind the gang leader, who had appeared at his rooms and virtually compelled him to gather up his instruments and supplies and hasten to their chief.

Toodles Hapont stared at his fingers, still smarting from the caustic.

Duke Ashby smiled slightly as Toodles asked:

"How long before this stuff works, Doc?"

"Almost at once," he answered. There had been ample time for the agents, who had trailed him, to close in, swiftly and quietly overpower the other occupants of the building, and be ready for the final stage of the drama. "You'll get action soon."

Duke Ashby cleared his throat and gave a loud cough, the signal.

"And plenty of action," he added, as he braced himself for the expected conflict.

"Yeah!" Only the harsh voice of the murderer of Special Agent Thomas was heard in the room.

DUKE ASHBY'S heart skipped a beat. Something was wrong. He coughed again.

Toodles Hapont held a water-glass in one hand. He struck a match, and held the flame against the glass. A black smudge formed. He allowed the glass to cool. Then he pressed his fingers in the black smudge, and made a perfect set of prints on a piece of paper.

"This racket aint quite Greek to me," he growled. Then he picked up a newspaper, folded open at a certain page, and pointed to a cut that bore the caption:

TOODLES HAPONT'S CALLING CARD.

"Those was my prints before." He pointed to the impressions made with the soot from the glass. "Them are my prints now. I'm havin' a look at both sets before I pays out any dough. And if this aint on the up-and-up, it is goin' to be just too bad for certain parties."

Duke Ashby fought back the tumult that was raging about his heart. Death was very near. He was unarmed, for as he had anticipated, his abductors had searched him before he left his rooms. This man knew fingerprints. The excuse that time would be required for the treatment to take effect had been rendered useless when Ashby, confident his comrades were ready to come to his rescue, had declared results were almost immediate.

The special agent, assuming carelessness he did not feel, stood at the side of Toodles Hapont as the gang chief compared the two sets of prints.

"Them patterns look just the same to me." There was menace in every word. Toodles produced a pencil, and began an accurate if slow and fumbling ridge-count.

"Them prints aint changed a bit!"

It was a blunt statement of fact. Duke Ashby knew he was powerless to combat it.

"Think so?" he asked.

"I know so!" roared Toodles. He moved across the room, swift and pantherlike, and picked up a short, ugly-looking automatic.

Duke Ashby made a quick survey of the scene: Four to one. Not a chance. The automatic would block any attempted charge toward close quarters. The special agent shrugged his shoulders. This was the moment which all men in the service anticipate at some time or another. He made a quick decision. He would go under his true colors.

"Don't try that, Toodles!"

"Why not?" demanded the gang chief. A leer was on his face. He was playing with this man as a cat plays with a mouse.

"You will be shooting at the whole United States," Ashby said quietly. He saw Hapont waver for just an instant. "I am Special Agent James Ashby, Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice." His voice rang with authority: "You have one special agent and a policeman charged against you. There are more of us very near. They won't leave enough of you for a coroner to perform an autopsy on."

The gangster's face contracted with hate. His hand went up. Duke Ashby stiffened his muscles, ready to spring. The three huskies moved slowly to the sides of the room.

"This won't take—" began Toodles Hapont.

There was the crack of breaking wood. Carl Sherman, a sub-machine-gun in his hands, stood framed in the broken door. Toodles Hapont wheeled. The muzzle of his gun swung around and covered Carl Sherman. Then Duke Ashby threw himself upon the gangster.

GRAHAM CRAIG, standing behind the agents who had followed Sherman into the room, saw a drama he would remember as long as he lived:

Sherman and the two agents grappled with the three hoodlums. The struggle was a fierce one, and punctuated by the report of a revolver. Ashby and Hapont wrestled about the room. Their hands were extended above them. Grasped in those four hands—it was impossible to identify them—was the automatic. Each man tried to force that weapon down to train it upon the other.

Craig, ignoring orders to stay out of fire, ran forward.

"Get back!" barked Ashby.

An agent, who had finished with his opponent, rushed in to aid Ashby.

"Back!" came the harsh command.

Instinctively they sensed what was happening. This was to be a two-man fight to the finish. No quarter would be given, and no quarter asked. And the fight, Ashby was determined, would be a fair one.

The automatic moved downward, but away from the two men. Hapont drew back a trifle, and aimed a quick, savage kick at Ashby's stomach. The special agent threw himself aside. Hapont attempted to correct the direction of the kick. That threw him off balance. The gun came down, and pointed toward him. He slipped. His own hand pulled the trigger that sent a bullet crashing into his chest.

Duke Ashby stepped aside, and moved toward Carl Sherman. Their hands met in a solemn grip.

"**W**E owed that to Luther Thomas," said Duke Ashby.

"Yes," said Carl Sherman. "You're not hurt?"

The special agent shook his head.

"Thank God!" answered Sherman. "We were late. We lost the car. So we picked up Heels Codart." His face was grim. "He talked."

Ashby nodded.

"I was worried," he admitted. "But only for a moment. I knew Carl Sherman was out there."

He saw the reporter,

"Good evening, Mr. Craig. You were in at the finale. It wasn't pretty. These things seldom are."

He brushed his hand over his face, as if he would banish all memory of what had happened. In some indefinable way, that motion seemed to restore his correct identity. Dr. Prencio was gone. Special Agent Ashby had returned.

Special Agent Ashby turned to Carl Sherman.

"Today is the twentieth, Carl. Do you realize that boy of yours is one year old tomorrow? We will be back just in time. There must be a party."

He addressed the reporter.

"Can you imagine this unnatural father? He saddled the finest boy in the world with me as a godfather."

Graham Craig looked him full in the face.

"If I had a boy of my own," he said, "I would pray that he grew up to be as fine a man."

ARMS and MEN

By H. BEDFORD-JONES

The characteristic British long-bow had a big share in the survival and success of the English people. . . . This story partly explains why—and it's one of the most colorful and moving in the entire series.

MY old friend Martin Burnside had the queerest collection of arms and armor ever seen. He disdained ordinary specimens. A new acquisition must be unusual, or he would cast it into outer darkness. So, when I walked into his study in his absence, and saw a six-foot bow lying on his desk, I examined it with some attention.

Of yew wood and black with age, it had been cut half through and broken. The break had been wrapped loosely about with wire. While I was looking at it, Martin came in and greeted me cordially.

"There's something good!" he exclaimed. "Quite a story to it. By the way, do you know where the famous English archers sprang from?"

"Wales, of course," I replied. "They first brought the long-bow into history at the battle of Falkirk. Where'd this one come from? Is it old?"

Martin Burnside chuckled, got out his pipe, and filled it.

"You'd never guess where it came from. Old? That break, or cut, was made in the year 1400—believe it or not. The odd part of it all is, that I read the story, then asked Jim Bradway to go and find me the bow. He just returned from a trip abroad, you know. Well, he went right to the spot, got it, and here it is."

"Sounds fishy," I commented. "What's the story about?"

"Failure," he said slowly. "You know, failure can be a glorious thing. The old eternal sagas deal with men who tried and failed, men who refused to admit defeat and were downed. Like death and dreams, failure holds an intangible force which grips the imagination. The story about this particular bow is a bit unusual. You read French?"



"To some extent."

"This is old French." Martin Burnside fished among the papers on his desk and drew out a thin pamphlet. "The manuscript and a facsimile, printed about 1880 for a member of the Caumont family. The 'Caumont Book,' as the manuscript is called, is in the National Library; very handsome illumination, I understand."

"About this bow?" I demanded skeptically. Martin Burnside puffed at his pipe.

"No. About two men and a woman. About failure. You can read a lot into it. By the way, why have you never written a story about the Japanese archers? They beat the English long-bow all hollow, with their seven-foot bows and almost incredible feats."

"Never heard of them," I rejoined. He waved his pipe.

"Well, you'll hear of John Watkins, if you work on that reprinted story. And it may give you something. Something as fine and rare today as in the year 1400."

"Failure isn't rare," I commented.

"Honor is," said Martin Burnside.

I disagreed with him there. At first. Until I thought about the situation as it might have been today, with the wreckage of homes a common thing, with the

X—The Long Yew Bow

Illustrated by
Harvé Stein



Captain Lucca and his men rushed forward. Swifter than light, Watkins snatched an arrow, fired—and again.

evils of lust and money and selfish indulgence abroad in the world. Until, in short, I got my head into that old script, written and illuminated so many years ago, which told of how John Watkins the Englishman came to the Hill of Caumont, down in southern France.

THE hill jugged up directly from the plain. At its foot nestled the village, and above was the castle of the Caumonts. On a side shoulder of the hill, so that it was practically separate, rose a square tower that overlooked even the castle. The Saracen's Tower, it was called, built in the old days when Saracens dominated all these lands of Provence. Here, apart from all others, were the living-quarters of Sieur de Caumont and his bride.

He was a dour, grim man, much harshened in the wars, greatly honored for his chivalry and feared for his justice. He was bald, massive, and limped from a wound he had received in Spain. His wife, Agnes de Caumont, was twenty

years his junior. They had been married a year, and men said she had small love for the grim knight. She was a young proud woman, beautiful beyond all others, with a faint sadness in her blue eyes. So lithe and graceful was she that in walking she was said to float rather than to move like ordinary women; and her loveliness melted all the hearts of those around her, even those of the black-vised Genoese crossbows who garrisoned the hill.

So, on a day, came a slow wagon drawn by two of the black oxen of these parts, and in it a gaunt man. The peasants had found him in the road with his gear—a long bow, a sheaf of long arrows, and some little food. He was senseless and very ill.

The Sieur de Caumont and his lady came to the gates, and with them came Lucca the captain of the Genoese, and Dom Leroy the Benedictine friar. Dom Leroy it was who later wrote the Book of Caumont, being skilled in such things like all of his order. He was a short, fat

monk, and had a surprising amount of God's grace under his ample girdle. They looked down at the figure sprawled in the wagon's hay.

"He has the look of a soldier," said Captain Lucca, noting the lean flanks, the wide shoulders and the once-powerful hands.

"A troubadour, perhaps," said Lady Agnes, noting the curly yellow hair and the fine clean features.

"By God, he has the look of the plague to me," said Sieur de Caumont, "and I'll let no pest-ridden churl inside these gates."

"Then I'll go out of them," said Dom Leroy. "For to use your own oath, by God he has the look of a human creature in need, and by God His order that is my business."

Wherewith Dom Leroy plucked up his robe and scuttled down to the gates and had them opened. Sieur Roger swore great oaths in his throat, but there was nothing for it save bring in the man or let Dom Leroy leave the castle; so they brought him in. When Dom Leroy had poured a little wine down the man's throat, he opened gray eyes wide upon the Lady of Caumont, and smiled.

"So there are angels in France, or else I'm dead and in heaven!" said he weakly.

"Who are you?" demanded Sieur Roger.

"An Englishman, good knight, seeking service with the Free Companies or with whom I may. A master Bowman, by name John Watkins—" Then the voice failed in him and the head lolled back.

"HE hath only the fever of the Carmague that riots in all that country," said Dom Leroy. "Do you give him shelter or no?"

"An Englishman!" grunted Sieur Roger angrily, while the black eyes of Captain Lucca narrowed. "Since my father died at Poitiers, I've sworn to hang every rogue of that accursed nation—"

"Give him shelter," said Lady Agnes, and the matter was settled.

Dom Leroy had John Watkins taken up to his own room, at the top of the Saracen's Tower. There was no way of reaching this room and the platform above, except by stone stairs that mounted outside the tower. Admittedly an awkward arrangement, but it suited Dom Leroy. In the large rooms below him lived the lord and lady of Caumont. Below the tower, the hillside dropped abruptly on all sides, save where a covered passage communicated with the castle.

Days passed. John Watkins recovered slowly from the wasting fever; his gaunt frame filled out but gradually, despite the tender care of the good friar. Sometimes Lady Agnes came with her sewing, and sat in talk with him and Dom Leroy. Captain Lucca came once with her, and he argued craftily and at length with Watkins over crossbow versus long bow. The gray eyes of the Englishman missed nothing at all.

"At least," said he, smiling a little, "no Pope has ever interdicted the long bow as an invention of the devil! And this has happened to your weapon, Messer Lucca."

The Genoese did not like this saying, though Dom Leroy chortled over it.

ONE day Sieur Roger came striding into the room, sat him down, and stared at his unwanted guest for a space.

"Ha!" growled he. "I do not love Englishmen or vermin."

"Indeed?" said Watkins, smiling. "If you harbor lice, why worry over a flea?"

"What mean you by that?" demanded Sieur Roger.

"That is for you to find out," and the gray eyes were hard and straight. "I give you thanks for shelter, good sir, and hospitality. Because you grudged it, there is the more knightly spirit in you for the giving."

"You're no churl," said Sieur Roger, mollified. "Hard tongue makes hard hand, fair enough. Whence came you?"

"In the beginning, Ormsby in Sussex," Watkins replied, and his eyes softened. "A pleasant place, and St. Peter's church is the fairest of its size in all England. But homeless men ever find the past to be lovely."

Sieur Roger stayed talking for a long while, then went to the castle and spoke with Captain Lucca. The fellow had rare good sense, said he—but the Genoese shrugged.

"True enough. Too much sense, Sieur Roger. There are many Free Companions wandering through the countryside, and bands of masterless men. Perhaps one of them sent this long rascal among us as a spy."

"That is possible," said Sieur Roger.

After this he talked much with the Englishman, until he came to take pleasure in the talking. And, he swore, he was a judge of men; this fellow was an honorable and very knightly person. He had never thought to hold any Englishman in such regard.



"Madonna!" he said hoarsely. "For me you have existed from the beginning of time. . . . Can I be close to you—and not forget my oath to *him*?"

John Watkins was by this time able to crawl about a little, though he had not left the tower as yet. And if those gray eyes of his missed nothing, the sharp black eyes of Dom Leroy missed even less than nothing. . . .

One day when Lady Agnes had spent half the afternoon there, no sooner had she gone than Dom Leroy closed the door, hung up his ink-horn, and drew a stool over toward the chair where Watkins was sprawled out. He plumped himself down.

"Well?" The Englishman eyed him with a whimsical smile. "Friar, you look damned serious."

"I am, my son. Lady Agnes is a lovely woman."

"She is the loveliest in all the earth," said Watkins softly. "Yet there is sadness in her eyes, God wot!"

"God wots well there's less sadness now than afore," Dom Leroy said grimly. "Your long jaw and your bold eyes have done their work. If she never loved Sieur Roger, at least she had no eyes for any other man. And now you've come—"

"You lie in your throat!" snapped John Watkins, and sudden bleak anger rose in his face, and he came half out of his chair. "Priest or no priest, I'd choke the lie out of you! She's goodness itself. She may love him not, but she has eyes for none else, least of all for me."

"Do you deny that you've fallen in love with her?"

"I do not," said Watkins firmly. "There's no trace of dishonor in that. I love her with all my heart and soul, and it's no sin."

"Hm!" said Dom Leroy. "It's devilish awkward, just the same."

"Bah!" Watkins replied. "At least, I don't look after her like that sly dog of

a Genoese. You'd better pay less heed to the hound and more to the wolf, good friar."

From the castle came a trumpet, then the eager shouts of men, and away scuttled the fat Benedictine to see what was afoot. Presently he came back again, ducked his head into the room, and bawled the word. Orders had just come for Sieur Roger to ride instantly for Toulouse and join his lord, and the road might lead even to Paris. Then Dom Leroy was gone again, breathless, for he had much to do.

John Watkins came out of his chair, staggered, and sank back again. He looked at his long yew bow, in the corner, and sighed.

"Not yet, old friend, not yet!" said he, weakly. "I'm but half a man."

Then he tried again, walked across the room, and so came to the door and the stairs outside. He gained them, and sank down. He could go no farther, but stayed there in the warm afternoon sun, and it put heart and strength into him.

He was still sitting there when Dom Leroy and Sieur Roger came up the stairs, all startled by the sight of him.



Dom Leroy the Benedictine friar.

As he tried to rise Sieur Roger bade him remain seated.

"I'm riding," he announced bluntly. "You, Englishman, have become dear to me. I leave you here as my man, if you'll accept. Look after the Lady of Caumont. It is in my mind that you are faithful and honorable as any knight. Wilt enter into my service?"

"That will I," said John Watkins. He put his hands between those of Sieur Roger, and swore loyalty to him; and the Sieur of Caumont departed. Dom Leroy looked at the Englishman, cocking his head on one side.

"I had meant to ask you which was hound and which was wolf," said he, "for you seemed more wolf than hound to my eye. But now you wear a collar also."

Watkins grinned at him. "Well enough. I suppose the captain goes with Sieur Roger?"

"Nay. Captain Lucca stays here with a dozen of his men to hold the hill."

John Watkins growled under his breath at this. But when he heard that Dom Leroy was riding to Toulouse also, he was sorry.

An hour later, Sieur Roger was gone, with the friar and a score of bowmen, leaving Captain Lucca with twelve Genoese and a dozen villagers who were men-at-arms, besides the castle servants.

THE warm sun of Provence gladdened grapes and hearts alike. John Watkins came down into the garden at the foot of the tower, fresh-shaven and shorn, and at the day's end came into the hall of the castle, when meat was served. He would have sat with the bowmen, but Lady Agnes called him to the higher table near her, with Captain Lucca and the old seneschal of the castle. Now the

Genoese sent jests flying, asking if Watkins would keep his room in the tower while Lady Agnes and her little maid kept the rooms below. The Englishman looked at him, cool-eyed and calm.

"Why not?" asked he, feeling the malignity of those dark eyes. "Would you share the upper room with me, honest captain?"

Lucca bit his lip at this, perceiving that John Watkins had read the secret dishonesty of his heart. The Lady of Caumont, who had not caught the words, looked from one to the other and smiled.

"You two, messieurs, must be friends," she said. "You are both bound to serve me very loyally."

They said amen to this, but a look passed which said otherwise. . . .

Warmer waxed the sun of Provence, and the blue eyes of Lady Agnes grew joyous and lost their hint of sadness altogether. Watkins put flesh on his gaunt bones, and idled with the lady in the gardens or walked with her about the hill and the village below; or they rode forth with hawks, for in this season the flight of pigeons began. And to the bowman it was as though the world had begun anew, for in the blue eyes and the lovely proud features he found more than friendliness, and knew the heart-hurried beat of his pulse was echoed in her veins.

The truth leaped out sharp and stark between them one day. They were riding, and the hawks had made a kill, then another, so that the two pages rode off to retrieve the birds. Lady Agnes dismounted, and when, holding the hand of Watkins, she touched the earth, her fingers did not loosen their grasp, nor did his. Their eyes met, and into one cheek and the other lifted a rush of blood, and suddenly he was holding her close.

"Madonna!" he said hoarsely, looking down into her warm eyes. "It cannot be denied. For me you have existed from the beginning of time."

"And for me, you," she said quietly, happily. "No. It cannot be denied, Jean. I've seen it, realized it, this long while—I think, from the first day you came, when you called me an angel."

"You don't love him, then?"

"I've never loved him. How could he command love, Jean? I honor him, though."

The fingers of Watkins loosened.

"I must go away," he said.

"What, run? You must not." She

caught at him quickly. "And I need you, Jean. I need this thing that lies between us. I welcome it. Why, it's the only beautiful thing I've ever known in my life!"

A swift surge of agitation shook him.

"Do you think I'm inhuman, not made of flesh and blood?" he cried out at her. "Can I be close to you by day and night and—and not forget my oath to him? It's too much to ask. I'm not made of stone. Nor you."

"Nor I. True. What's an oath, compared to all of life?"

"Nothing much, mayhap. Yet I've always thought to look St. Peter square i' the eye at life's end."

"You would," said she, and her face kindled as she regarded him. "I've sworn oaths too, Jean. And from you I expect more than—than from myself."

IN her eyes he read the meaning of these words, and the blood leaped in his veins. She loved him; she would yield to him did he say the word. She would abandon faith and vows and husband for his sake. It must be that, for there was nothing sneaking or underhand in this woman. Italy lay close by, or the borders of Spain, or Aquitaine and English folk. There spread the future, all ruddy in the warm sunlight of Provence, a future of love and happiness and all life fulfilled.

John Watkins stooped, and pressed his lips to her fingers.

"Whatever comes of it, I'll stay," he said, and saw the pages returning. He handed her into the saddle and they rode home to noon meat. As they came in the gates, Captain Lucca smiled thinly upon them, with hot flame in his dark eyes.

And at meat, the Genoese questioned John Watkins about that bow of his lying in the upper room. There was talk and talk, and Lucca boasted of the cross-bow.

"What of Crécy field?" said John Watkins, laughing. The other flushed.

"I had an uncle there; he was a page in those days. Wet bowstrings shoot no bolts. A thundershower spoiled Genoa's finest work that day."

"And clothyard shafts spoiled Genoa for warfare."

"Think you so, Englishman? I'll stake this gold-inlaid dagger of mine against your ungainly weapon that with a cross-bow I can outshoot you, this very day."

"Done!" said John Watkins. "The



Sieur Roger de Caumont.

seneschal here will be the judge. But I must shoot a dozen shafts to get my hand in again."

So down through the village to the fields trooped all, Genoese and village men-at-arms, the old seneschal and Lady Agnes herself. From the armory, which was crammed with old stuff of bygone days, they fetched shields and corselets, and from the village fresh ox-hides and posts to hold the targets.

Watkins loosed a few shafts, while Captain Lucca wound and tested his crossbow, and his men selected the best bolts for his use. The work began, at a hundred paces; and for shooting at the mark there was little to choose between them, yet Watkins had a shade the better of this. And for speed he had no equal; he flew a dozen arrows while the Genoese shot twice, and the ox-hide was riddled.

Bolt and shaft alike pierced the corselet on the post; but when an old Crusader's shield was placed before it, this was a different matter. The bolt broke through the shield and stopped there. The clothyard shaft went through shield and corselet and into the post behind a good three inches—and another, and another. A flight of pigeons came overhead, and Watkins pointed to them and shot, and a bird dropped; but the cross-bow missed clean.

The upshot of this matter was that the poniard was handed over to John Watkins with good grace enough, and there was much wonder over the stout Italian yew of his bow, and the manner of his fetching the shaft to the ear; but Captain Lucca had little to say as they rode home to the hill again.

That same night while they sat at meat, came a sudden alarm from the courtyard. One of the guards ran in



with word that Dom Leroy was outside. Lady Agnes ordered the gates opened to him. He came into the hall, thinner than when he had gone, and rubbing himself ruefully as he cursed the saddle that had galled him.

He brought a letter from Sieur Roger, who had gone to the king in Paris and might be gone for many a week and month to come. When this news was heard, the Englishman saw Captain Lucca glance sideways at his bowmen, down the table. Those calm gray eyes missed nothing. . . .

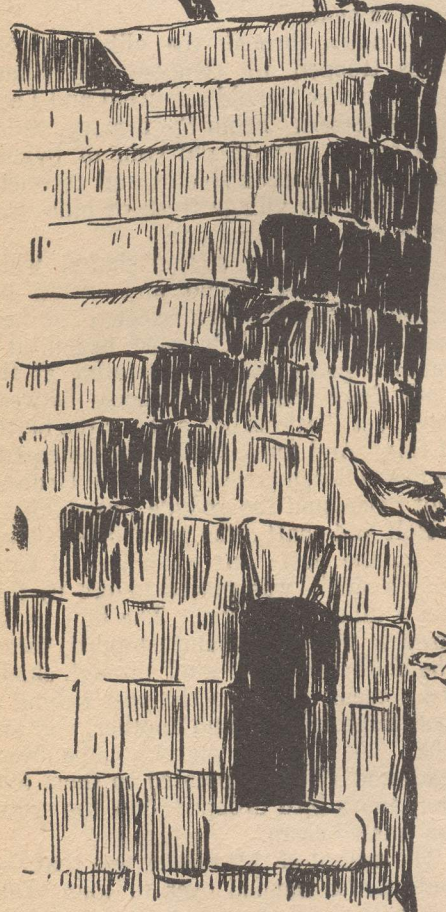
That night in the upper room of the Saracen's Tower, Watkins sat by a rushlight, fitting and oiling a new bowstring. Under his bundle of shafts, in the corner, was a pile of arrows he had fetched from the armory. His bowstring done, he began to splice and lengthen these shafts, one by one. Dom Leroy spoke up irritably.

"Art bound to work all night, Englishman?"

"That may be," said Watkins.

"Plague take you! And how lie matters here at the Hill of Caumont?"

Watkins squinted along the shaft.



The dagger stroke missed its aim—meant for Watkins' back, it found only air. He caught the Genoese by the leg. The man clutched at him vainly and pitched from the unguarded stone stairs, headlong into the air.



"When the priest's gone, the devil's at work."

Dom Leroy stirred, rose, came and stood before him, scowling down.

"I saw the looks you and she exchanged this night. Have you dared speak of love?"

"Why not?" Cool gray eyes struck up at stern dark ones. "Yes. It's no secret; how should we hide it from each other?"

"So that's your meaning!" cried Dom Leroy harshly. "You dare admit it. You dare tell me to my face that the devil of lust arose while I was gone and is ravening in your heart this moment. You speak of it with shameless calm."

"Well, that wasn't my meaning; there's more than one devil. But I fancy it's true enough." Watkins rubbed a smear of oil from his chin. "I'm human, priest. She loves me. What's to stop us from taking horse and away? Not you, assuredly, nor any other man."

Dom Leroy choked. "Why—why, you shameless, unregenerate scoundrel—"

"Shut up." The gray eyes of Watkins chilled into ice. "Can you see naught in love save adultery? Go to your bed and start to praying, for you'll have many a man to shrive ere long, after the news you brought tonight."

"Have you gone daft?" exclaimed the priest, staring at him.

"No; I've become sane." Watkins eyed his shaft anew. "I'm a stranger here, and see things others are blind to. You'd call me a fool if I spoke out. As to no man stopping me if I went the devil's way, that's true. No man hinders you, either, from wenching in the village below, or eating your fill of meat of a Friday—but you don't do it."

"Oh!" said Dom Leroy, and pursed his lips. "So that's the way of it, eh?"

"Exactly. Rub some of this olive oil on your saddle-galls, if you want to sleep."

FOR two days, Watkins went little abroad, and burned many a rushlight of nights. With Lady Agnes, he idled as usual, but his eyes flitted ever here and there, and no talk of love passed between them; though it may be that hands touched, and eyes spoke what tongue might not utter.

He was walking with her in the garden of a morning, when Captain Lucca came and bowed low to her.

"If it please you, lady, I have gathered many horses from the farms roundabout, and my men are now bringing them up to the hill. We need a few in the stables,

and Sieur Roger, when he ordered me to this work, said that you would arrange payment with the owners of the horses. Also, you might find one or two to take your fancy."

"Sieur Roger ordered this?" she said in surprise. "Very well. I'll come to the courtyard presently."

CAPTAIN LUCCA bowed again, but John Watkins went up to him, smiling, and caught him by the arm.

"Ha! I thought you looked overfat, good captain. What, wearing chain mail under your jerkin?"

"On defense duty, Englishman, I always go armed," said the Genoese coldly, and took his leave. Dom Leroy was coming toward them, and Lady Agnes spoke under her breath.

"Jean! I must see you alone, and soon. When?"

"Tonight," said Watkins; and she nodded, then hastened off, calling her page, to the covered way and the courtyard of the castle. The Englishman went up to Dom Leroy and tapped him on the shoulder.

"Listen to me. If I told you the truth, you'd call me a fool; therefore, we must chance much. Go with her. If any evil befalls, get her to the tower. Watch that accursed Genoese! I tell you, the devil's let loose. Horses, indeed! Horses to carry plunder and women to Italy—"

Dom Leroy crossed himself. "My son, you are indeed mad to prate of such things. Captain Lucca is a most honorable cavalier—"

"Get to your business, and I'll to mine," said Watkins curtly, and strode off toward the tower stairs.

He took his bow and his great bundle of shafts up to the platform on top, whence he could see the covered passage below, the castle itself, even into the courtyard. Dust was rising there, and many horses were assembled. Presently he saw one of the Genoese, a gay blade called Fierro, approaching the tower, and heard the man's feet ascending the old stone stairs.

"Ha, there you are!" Puffing, Fierro waved his hand. "Come, Messer Englishman, our lady desires your presence below. I think she's about to present you with a horse."

With a nod, Watkins laid aside his work and rose.

"A view you have here, of a truth!" exclaimed Fierro, and clapped him on the shoulder. "Look you, when shall we

make another trial of crossbow against your long bow, eh?"

"Soon enough," said Watkins, and preceded the other to the stairs. Fierro came after him. Watkins went down a step, saw from the corner of his eye what he had expected, and half turned. There was a flash of steel.

The dagger stroke missed its aim. Meant for his back, it found only air. He caught the Genoese by the leg. The man screamed out, clutched at him vainly, and pitched from the unguarded stone stairs, headlong into the air. His scream ended abruptly.

"So that was it!" A leap, and Watkins was on the platform again. He flung himself at his gear in the corner. The bow quivered in his hand as the yew bent and the loop of the gut slipped into place. Clutching a handful of shafts, he went to the parapet over against the castle and hill, and peered forth.

Through the dust of the courtyard, glinted steel. The gates had been closed. The cry of a man echoed up shrilly across the sunlight. On the walls opposite and a bit below the tower, three of the village men-at-arms were stationed. One of them flung out his arms and pitched forward. The other two whirled, only to be struck by missiles from twanging crossbows. These two men, also, lay sprawled in death.

G RIM-FACED, Watkins peered down at the covered way. They would believe him now, when too late! He saw a gay figure appear suddenly there, then another, fat and black-clad. They came toward the tower, running. Watkins rose suddenly to his full height, notched a shaft. The bow came up. Another running figure—one of the Genoese. The shaft came back to Watkins' ear; the bow suddenly sang with a deep, clear note.

The Genoese below plunged forward on his face.

"Not bad, not bad!" said John Watkins, notching another shaft. "It's well I did a bit of practise these nights. Ha!"

Three or four Genoese together, running after the two fugitives. Again the bowstring sang its rich note. One of those men fell; then Watkins leaped like a startled deer, as a crossbow quarrel whistled venomously beside his head.

He flung himself to the other corner of the parapet and looked down, waiting. They could not reach him here. Below were the stairs. The Lady of Caumont was on them, Dom Leroy behind her.

"One man sent to slay me—and paid. Two more paid. That leaves enough—"

Half a dozen of them together, rushing for the stairs, laughing and yelling at the fat Benedictine. Watkins uprose, laid shafts on the parapet, and waited. Then the bowstring hummed and thrummed, and ere it ceased another shaft was notched, and the gray feathers were dyed red. Three in all—swiftly, surely. Three men lay dead on the stairs below, and the others fled.

AT the head of the stairs that curved about the tower, John Watkins sat him down and waited. Presently the two fugitives came into sight. He waved his hand to them, and smiled at the blazing eyes of Lady Agnes.

"Lucca, eh?" he said. "I thought as much. Well, six of his men are gone; he has six left, and no doubt two or three of your men-at-arms aiding him. Hark!"

Panting, the others listened. Screams rose from the hill and the castle; men were being slain there. Dom Leroy, his red face mottled, crossed himself. But Lady Agnes came to John Watkins, and touched him on the arm.

"Then this is what you meant—by to-night?"

"Aye," said he. "Down—down!" A bolt sang past them. The noise in the castle had ceased now. Watkins pressed her down, and searched the walls with quick eyes. He caught a glint of mail here and there, and reached for his shafts.

"Now we have it," he said coolly. "Keep out of sight, you two! If I get alive out of this sorry business, I vow that this bow of mine shall be hung in the church at Ormsby. Hear the vow, St. Peter, and lend a hand this day! I have need of it. Dom Leroy! Any food and water in your room?"

"Aye," said the monk.

"Then fetch it. Lady, go to the corner yonder and keep an eye on the stairs. If any rush is attempted, call me."

As he spoke, the long bow thrummed, and a man shrieked from the wall opposite. Watkins grunted with satisfaction.

"Five of his rascals left—and a few over, no doubt, from your men. That's all."

All it was, for the moment. Lucca was too wise to try again to rush the stairs, and the higher tower had the advantage over those on the opposite walls. Dom Leroy went down to his room and came

up again with bread and dried pease and a flask of water. John Watkins looked at the load and laughed grimly.

"What! You wax so fat on such fare—ah! That's better."

The monk produced a rusty sword and a flagon of wine. All this while the Lady Agnes sat there white and stricken, wordless. Now she looked up suddenly.

"The village folk—they will bring help—even if no men are left there—"

"Too late," said John Watkins coolly. "Lucca wants you. His men want to get away with their plunder. No parley—you'll see. Action! The rat is smooth, shrewd, bold."

"But he can't reach us here!" she exclaimed, wide-eyed. "Not so long as you can command the stairs yonder—"

Watkins shook his head. "Wait. What would I do in his place? Take shields from the armory—those long shields of a past generation. I told you we had a tryst this night; but it's beyond the stars."

"You talk of such things at such a time?" snapped Dom Leroy. Watkins grinned at him.

"Aye. Why not? I love this lady with my whole heart. I honor my oath to Sieur Roger. That's all there is to it. We'll be dead this night, if that devil uses his brains, so why mince words?" He held up his fist to the sky. "Don't forget, St. Peter! Lend a hand or we're done for, all of us. You'll never get as good a bow as this of mine, if you let the chance slip!"

"Blasphemy!" muttered Dom Leroy, but John Watkins laughed long and loud at him, and presently the Benedictine laughed a little himself, and fell to sharpening the old sword along the edge of the parapet.

"Jean!" It was the voice of the Lady Agnes, soft and low. "Are you so sure?"

"Aye," said he.

"Then I want you to know one thing—"

He took her hand, and smiled into her eyes. "I know it already," said he quietly. "Say it not, my lady; for well I know it. You're not sorry it ends thus? That I'll still be able to look St. Peter i' the eye?"

"No, dear troubadour," said she gently. "I'm glad—for everything."

The voice of Dom Leroy reached them. "This is curious, Englishman! Come and see."

Watkins joined him at the parapet and looked down at the covered way. A queer object, shapeless, with wisps of



Captain Lucca the Genoese.

hay sticking out, was moving forward toward the tower.

"I said the rogue had brains," and John Watkins laughed. "Look! He and his five men, no doubt in mail. Two of those long Crusaders' shields above them, end to end; above the shields, trusses of straw, and two more shields bound on top. All six of them coming, and probably a couple of traitorous men left behind. When they're on the stairs, the foremost shields can be tipped forward to protect them."

"Will your shafts pierce?" questioned Dom Leroy, paling a little.

"That's to try," said Watkins, and notched a shaft, and leaned forward.

THE bow thrummed deeply. Down drove the arrow, piercing the topmost shield and even that underneath, but doing no scathe. Watkins shook his head.

"The straw breaks the blow, and they wear steel caps and mail. Six of them—the best I can do is meet them as they come, and make a good end. Get to work, St. Peter! Remember, this good yew bow to your church in Ormsby, if I emerge from this alive!"

Dom Leroy looked at him and the lady. "On your knees," said he, "for there's scant time to waste, and well I know there's no sin in your hearts."

So he blessed them, then began to sharpen the old rusty sword anew.

John Watkins went back to the corner of the platform farthest from the stair-head, ranging his shafts there close to hand. Lady Agnes stood beside him.

"They're on the stairs now, Jean."

"Aye," said he. "Can do nothing until they drop the shields to rush us. That's the one hope, and scant enough. By the way, I'm glad—that you're glad."

For an instant he met her eyes, and a flashing look and a smile passed between them. Then Dom Leroy, waiting near the stairs, cried out warning, and the scuffle of feet was heard. The Benedictine looked down the stairs, and drew back.

"It's as you said, Englishman. Impossible even to see their feet—"

He fell silent, and Watkins nodded.

"Hold the arrows for me," he said to Lady Agnes. "So I can grasp them from your hand, without a look—"

She took them up and stood ready.

INTO sight shuffled the unwieldy mantelets. The first reached the topmost step and was shoved forward, its edge against the stones so that even the feet of the three men bearing it were hidden. Then came the second, tipped forward—but not so carefully. John Watkins grinned, and his bow came up. The foot of the foremost man was visible; to the thrum and twang, echoed a shriek, as the shaft went through that foot.

The mantelet dropped sideways. The other was flung aside. Captain Lucca and four of his men rushed forward, Swift, now, swifter than light itself—

Watkins snatched and fired, and again. No mail stood against these shafts. One Genoese pitched down, another followed. A third, with the arrow buried, to the gray goose-quills, in his chest. Lucca and the fourth man were not a leap away when the bow twanged again. The fourth man fell at the very feet of Lady Agnes.

Lucca's sword flashed. It struck the hand and bow of Watkins; the hand spouted blood, the bow dropped. The other hand whipped out the poniard so recently won from the Genoese. The sword flashed again, and Watkins staggered and dropped under the blow, so that a fierce, sharp yelp burst from Captain Lucca. He had won!

The yelp ended in a gulp. The long arm of Watkins drove up the poniard; the long body straightened. Over the chain-mail, up to the throat and through, into the brain, drove the Milanese steel. The Genoese plucked at his skewered throat with both hands, and his knees gave way. He fell on his face and lay quiet.

Back near the stairs, fat Dom Leroy was rolling with that man whose foot had been transfixed by the first arrow. Then he rose, puffing and panting, and

the old rusty sword in his hand was running red as he wrenched it loose.

The Lady of Caumont noticed none of these things, however. She had stooped, and was uplifting in her arms the head of John Watkins. Blood ran down his face from the cut scalp. She wiped away the blood, then shuddered at sight of his bow-hand. Half that hand was shorn away by the sword-stroke, and the bow was broken.

Dom Leroy panted up, saw, and fell on his knees. But not to pray. When Watkins opened his eyes, the hand was bandaged, the blood was held in check by a tourniquet. He looked, however, and saw his own fingers lying on the stones by the bow.

"So that ends a good bowman!" he said, his gray eyes twinkling. "What! Not in heaven? Ha! St. Peter, you've won—"

His head lolled back. The scalp-wound was only a light one, however; and over him Lady Agnes met the quick, penetrating gaze of Dom Leroy.

"You heard?" said the Benedictine. "All's well—maybe. You'd not cheat St. Peter of his due, my lady?"

"Not I," she said, and smiled suddenly at him.

THERE ended the Book of Caumont, written in astonishingly bad Latin verse and in old French as well. I shook my head over it at Martin Burnside.

"Nothing particularly wonderful about it," I said. "No failure—well, perhaps that's so, after all. I'd hardly call it failure, though."

"Well, it makes you think a bit," said Martin Burnside.

"I don't know about that, either. And what's it got to do with this bow of yours?"

"You must have indigestion today," he grunted irritably. "This bow? I've already told you that Jim Bradway fetched it back from abroad. I told him to look up a Sussex village called Ormsby and see if he could find such a votive offering. He found the place and the church, and up in the Church loft found this bow and a lot of other junk that had lain there for centuries. Even since the Reformation, most likely. And now what d'you think of the story?"

"Not so bad," I observed. "If true."

Martin Burnside gave me one look more eloquent than many oaths.

There has been much argument about when and where cannon were first used in Europe. . . . The question is dramatically answered in the next story of this fine series.

The Jonah

*The distinguished author of
"Home Is the Sailor" and
"The Mate of the Kestrel"
gives us a not-soon-forgotten
story of Cape Horn.*

By **BILL
ADAMS**

*And now the Storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong;
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along. . . .*

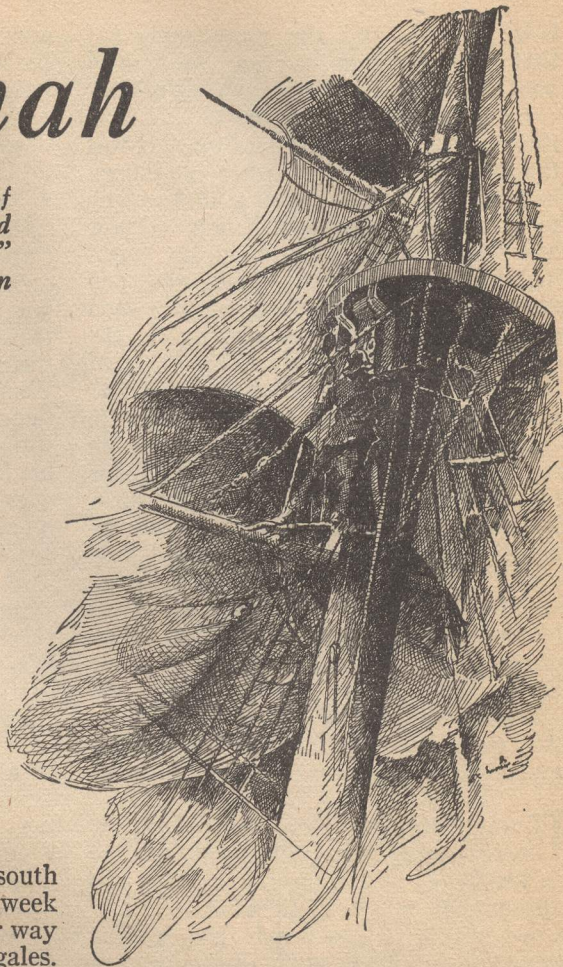
*At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name. . . .*

*In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-
smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine.*

THE ship was under full sail, south of Cape Horn. For over a week she had been trying to beat her way westward against the Cape Horn gales. The sea was calm now, not a ripple on the water. The wind had died suddenly, at a little after midday. It was winter, bitterly cold. It had snowed during the forenoon. The rigging was snow-covered. Snow lay deep on rails, hatches and deck-houses. On the deck was no snow: for as soon as it had ceased falling, the mate had shouted: "Get the brooms! Get the snow off her!" For an hour past the crew had swept and shoveled the snow from the decks; the two young apprentices skylarking a little, the able seamen dour and solemn. Day was drawing to a close. The crew had tightened the ropes up. There was nothing to do till wind came. In an hour it would be time for supper.

The big Finn stood alone by the bulwarks, staring over the sullen gray sea. He was the biggest man in the ship, the strongest by far. The rest of the crew said he was crazy. They had said so since the day the ship went to sea.

"Finn, aint you got no sense at all?" one of the crew had asked on the first day at sea. And the big Finn replied



Illustrated by Paul De Leslie

with a vacant smile. All down the Bay of Biscay, through the northeast tradewinds, over the Line, through the southeast tradewind, and through the Roaring Forties, the whole crew had made fun of the giant Finn. He was stronger than any two of them together, and yet, while they had taken advantage of him all down the Atlantic, he had never once made the least complaint. Anyone could fool the Finn. The two little fifteen-year-old apprentices continually fooled him. Was it not their job to go climbing up to the towering main skysail whenever the sail had to be furled? To furl the skysail, a good hundred and seventy feet above the sea, was partly what they were there for—that, and to do all the little simple jobs about the deck: jobs beneath the dignity of the hard-case able seamen. And whenever the skysail had to be furled, did not the little apprentices say: "There you are, Finn! Up you go!" And up he went, while the

lads grinned, and the mate said: "If that big simpleton had any sense he'd boot you boys in the seat of your pants."

Even the skipper smiled at the way they took advantage of the Finn. It was the same each Saturday when the pigpen had to be cleaned. That's another job for little apprentice lads. You may know how they hate it. Every Saturday morning the mate would say: "Into that pen now, one of you boys, and give it a good clean-up!" And then, as soon as the mate had turned away, one or other of the lads would say: "You there, Finn! Didn't you hear the mate tell you to clean the pigpen?" And into the pen, on all fours, would crawl the Finn, his broad back rubbing against the top of it. Imitating the grunt of the pig, the apprentices would say, "*Oink, oink—oink, oink,*" and the able seamen would grin; and the mate would turn, see what was happening, and mutter: "That Finn ought to whale the stuffings out of those lads. He's got no sense." Losh, the giant Finn was a fine joke with all hands. And never since the ship went to sea, had a shadow of annoyance crossed his face.

IT was close to supper-time. The crew were pacing the deck, walking fast to keep the circulation going. The two apprentices paused in their walking and stood by the rail, to watch the sea-birds seated in hundreds upon the motionless water. Now and then a cape hen, or a shearwater, a mollymauk or a sea-pigeon, or a gull, would rise, fly a little way, and settle again with a great splashing. To fly in windless weather is a hard matter for the sea birds. The bigger the bird, the more difficult. And when the one lone snowy albatross tried to fly, it was a thing to see. Just that one snow-white albatross there was, amongst all the other birds. He'd spread his huge wings and flap them slowly, up and down, up and down, at the same time kicking with his big web feet upon the still water, heaving himself along the surface in a clumsy manner that was neither flight nor run, until he'd gathered momentum enough to lift him. Then he'd fly but a short way, and settle again, in a cloud of spray, on the still sea.

The two lads turned from watching the birds, and looked at the Finn, who all by himself sat on the rail at the other side of the deck. Had he been seal, walrus or polar bear, he could not have seemed more indifferent to the bitter weather. His oilskins were threadbare

and ragged. Instead of a sou'wester, he had an old tattered cloth cap on his head. Instead of sea-boots, all he had on his big feet was a pair of old broken-down bluchers from which the soles were nearly gone.

Said one apprentice to the other: "They say Finns bring bad luck to a ship."

Said the other: "Lucky or not, he's a fine big fool." And at that moment there settled on the sea, directly beneath them, with a great splash, the albatross. Wing-tip to wing-tip, he measured more than the span of a six-foot man's outspread arms. The upper mandible of his big bill was hooked downward. His eyes were solemn beads. By his size and plumage, it was plain that he was a patriarch of the cold Antarctic seas. The crew came to look at him. Tough seamen, they were. Each had rounded the Horn many a time. They were men who could thrive on the coarse fare of deep-water ships, asking nothing better than their scanty allowance of salt pork, pea soup and hardtack, with a pannikin of bitter strong coffee at breakfast, and at evening a pannikin of thin tasteless tea.

One of the apprentices turned to an able seaman and asked: "Is an albatross good to eat?"

"Better'n farmyard chicken, sonny," replied the hard-case sailor, and grinned up his sleeve. Anyone knows that an aged albatross would be tough and sorry meat, tasting and smelling so strong of fish that to swallow it would be nigh impossible. But into the apprentices' quarters ran one of the lads, and was back in a jiffy with a line and hook, and a piece of pork fat for bait. Over the ship's side he dropped the baited hook. Instantly the hook was fast in the curved bill of the albatross. The lad hauled the bird aboard, its wide wings beating, its webbed feet kicking uselessly.

"Hold him tight till I get a belaying-pin," said the other apprentice, and the sailors gathered round, quite indifferent to the bird's fate.

UP went the right hand of the apprentice. But before he could bring the belaying-pin down on the bird's head, a great paw clamped on his wrist. And there stood the Finn, looking down at him and slowly shaking his head. And then the Finn reached out his other hand, took hold of the bird, very gently, and lifted it in the air. For a moment ere



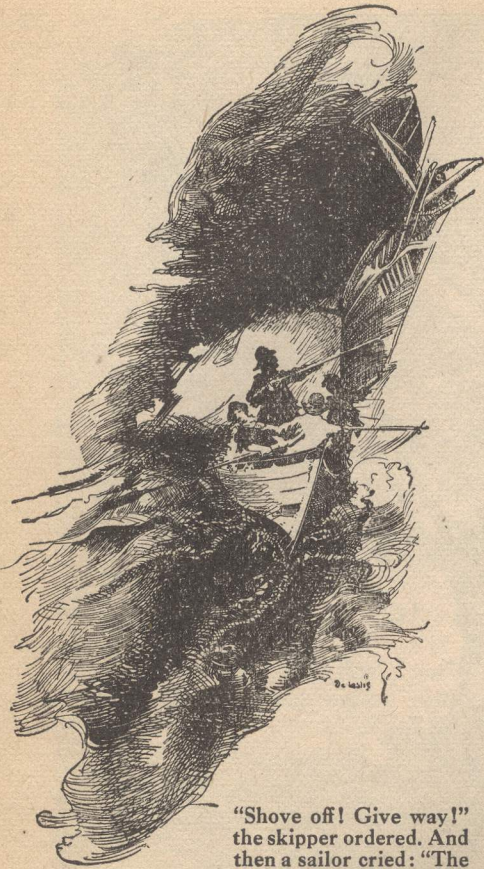
When presently the Finn saw the albatross, he called to it; it came at once.

he released it, the Finn swung it round in a wide circle. It flapped laboriously away, and settled on the still sea astern of the ship.

With a friendly smile upon his face, the Finn looked down at the two furious apprentices. And "Ho-ho-ho!" and "Ha-ha-ha!" laughed the seamen. "The kids've got 'em a nurse girl! How d'ye like Nursie, my laddie bucks?" asked an old hard-case, with a face brown and tough as leather from a walrus' neck.

The bells clanged out. Time for supper.

Seated in the apprentices' quarters, with a pannikin of thin liquid that was supposed to be but bore no resemblance to tea, and with nothing to eat but hard-tack on which was a smear of margarine, the two lads swore about the Finn. "We'll get even with the big louse," said one. And the other said: "Aye. Just wait!" When their meal was done, they went out to the deck, to walk up



"Shove off! Give way!"
the skipper ordered. And
then a sailor cried: "The
Finn! The Finn!"

and down. A young moon illumined the sea, and gazing at the shimmering water, the lads saw seabirds everywhere about.

IN the forecandle where the able seamen sat at supper there was the sound of leathery lips supping hot skilly, the sound of teeth like the teeth of dogs munching flinty hardtack. It was the end of one more day, and no one could say for how many more days the ship must be off the Horn. They were weary in all their limbs, from battling the savage gales from the westerly. But it was an old tale with all of them, and since there was nothing to be said about it, not one of them had anything to say. They just sat sipping their skilly and munching their hardtack. Their suppers finished, they brought out their pipes. A dense cloud of smoke filled the forecandle. Losh, the smell of it would have sent any landsman choking out to the crisp air. But they drew long breaths of it, exhaling and inhaling with quiet content upon their leathery faces. Presently one said to his fellows: "Listen to the Finn, will ye?"

They all looked at the Finn. Quite unaware of them, he continued to munch hardtack. On and on he munched, long after the rest were done, lifting one after another flinty sea-biscuit from the bread-barge, to crunch it between his great jaws. On and on he ate, till he had eaten an even dozen sea-biscuits. Losh, three of them would have been as many as any good plain able seaman would have been able to put beneath his belt. Sustaining affairs they were, being made of pea meal and, so it was said always by seafaring men, horse-meat, with enough flour added to hold the mess together.

At last the Finn ceased munching, and sat back, a look of complete satisfaction on his face. An able seaman asked then: "Finn, wot'd ye do if ye was adrift in an open boat wi' short commons?"

"I'd not want to be wrecked and adrift in no boat wi' the likes o' him, the strong divil! There'd be no bite for any but himself," said another.

The Finn regarded them with uncomprehending eyes.

"He understands nothin'," said another. "'Twould be hell sure enough to be left adrift wid him in any boat wi' grub short."

"We aint in an open boat. Pass me a fill o' 'baccy," said another, and everyone laughed.

The Finn rose and went out of the forecandle. Light clouds hid the moon, making the deck shadowy. Noiseless as a cat, he peered into the deep gloom. Of a sudden he strode forward, two long strides. One of his hands clamped on the neck of each apprentice. He lifted them bodily, and with a long swaying motion, threw them aside, so that they fell sprawling, but unharmed because of the gentleness of his motions. He stooped and lifted the albatross that they had just caught again. It snapped its curved bill at him, viciously. But he stroked its velvety head, and talked to it in mumbling tones, and soon it lay quiet in his arms. Ignoring the two lads, who had leaped to their feet and were cursing him, he carried it beneath the forecandle head and into the locker-room in which was kept the slush barrel—the big barrel into which each day the cook threw the grease saved from boiling the salt pork. He lit a lantern, and holding the bird in one arm, dipped his fingers into the slush. At first the bird refused to eat. But soon it was eagerly taking slush from his hand. He fed it till it could eat no

more; then, talking to it in a soft voice, he bore it back to the deck. The apprentices were gone to their quarters. He carried the bird up into the ship's bow. With a hand beneath its breast, another on its back, he lifted it high, swung it slowly round, and threw it into the air. It settled on the still water beneath the ship's figurehead. He returned to the fore-castle, turned into his bunk, and slept.

MORNING came, and passed. Midday came. Still the sea lay motionless beneath a leaden sky, and countless birds sat on the leaden water. Awaiting the noon meal, the apprentices and sailors leaned on the railing, watching the birds.

Unobserved by anyone, the Finn went to the slush-barrel. Having filled an old can with slush, he ascended to the fore-castle head. He made a loop in a rope, lowered the rope over the bow, slid down it, and seated himself in the loop. Talking in a low voice to the albatross, he held the can of slush toward it. It swam to him at once, and began feeding. He was still feeding it when the bell struck, and the crew started below for dinner. "Where's the Finn?" asked one, and at that moment the Finn climbed back up the rope to the fore-castle head.

"Where ye been, Finn?" asked a sailor. He replied with a vacant grin. "He's been feedin' yon blasted bird," muttered another of the sailors. "He's crazy; an' me, I don't like the looks o' things." They went below to their meal, all of them silent and moody: with the sky leaden, and the sea leaden, and a seeming of threat in the air.

Men and apprentices had not yet finished their meal when the mate's whistle shrilled, calling them to the deck. A bank of inky cloud was coming over the sky. They began to take in sail. Snow blew by, on an ever-increasing wind, so thick that to see across the width of the deck was impossible. Amongst the whirling flakes flew countless sea-birds. By the time the crew had most of the sails rolled up, the shadows of the Cape Horn night were falling. The crew went below to their suppers. But the Finn remained on the deck alone.

Beside the fore-rigging, opposite the fore-castle door, the Finn stood watching the sea-birds. Presently he went to the slush-barrel. Returning, he brought on the palm of his hand a great lump of frozen slush. Standing by the rigging again, he watched for the white albatross to ap-

pear. When presently he saw it amongst the whirling snow, he raised his hand and called to it. It came to him at once. Hovering above him, it took the slush from his hand.

"Where ye been, Finn?" asked a sailor when the Finn entered the fore-castle. He replied with a vacant grin. "He's loony," said another of the sailors. "There'll be no luck with him in the ship. He's a blasted Jonah."

The mate appeared at the fore-castle door. "Keep handy, everyone," he ordered. "Keep your clothes on."

"Cape Horn weather. No sleep to-night," said a sailor.

In the half-deck the two apprentices grumbled at the gale and the cold, cursing themselves for ever having gone to sea.

Hour after hour the wind raged. Now and then the mate came forward, shouting an order, at which the crew went out to the pitch dark, to tighten ropes, or to ascend to one or other of the sails to see that all was well with it.

At a little before midnight the snow ceased and the moon shone clear. Tumultuous seas roared-by, beneath a tumultuous sky. Only the cape hens, the mollymauks and the great white albatross were left now of the birds. The smaller birds, sea-pigeons, shearwaters, ice-birds, gulls, were flown shoreward to shelter from the storm.

Alone on deck, sheltering under the lee of the deck-house, stood the Finn, gazing into the moonlit fury, his eyes upon the great white albatross.

"I aint seed the Finn in an hour," said a sailor. They went out to the deck, all together. Maybe the Finn was gone overboard, and they must tell the mate. They saw him at once, erect by the bulwarks; and above his head they saw the albatross, wind-hovered, poised on the storm. His lips were moving, and they knew that he was talking to it. They gazed into one another's faces grimly. "The blasted Jonah! It's him as brings us all the bad luck," they said.

ONE bell struck: it was quarter to midnight.

At midnight the Finn was to take the wheel. He entered the fore-castle, and there ripped a piece of old sail to strips and bound the strips round his feet and legs, making what sailors call Prince Alberts—to keep his feet and legs from freezing while he stood two hours at the wheel. Just as he went to the

wheel at eight bells, the mate's whistle blew, and the order came to take a top-sail off the ship. While the crew were furling the sail, the wind yelled louder and louder. With spray driving over her in a continual sheet, with the sea filling her deck from bulwark to bulwark, the ship looked like a ghost-ship, her shape just discernible in the midnight's fury.

And now all the birds save one were flown shoreward to seek shelter from the storm. Its pinions outstretched and motionless, the white albatross hovered directly above the Finn at the wheel. On their way down the mast, the sailors and apprentices saw it. Returning to their quarters, they cursed the Finn for a Jonah.

The skipper came from his chart-room and saw the bird. He went scowling to his cabin, and returned with a pistol. He aimed at the bird. A puff of smoke blew from the pistol-barrel, and another, and another, till six shots were fired. His face black as thunder, he hurled the pistol at the bird. All the time the Finn never looked up from his compass, and the unharmed bird hovered nonchalantly above him. . . .

Eight bells struck. Two of the morning; time for the Finn to be relieved at the wheel. A thick blanket of snow blew on the yelling wind. The air was full of salt, of spray. The mate blew his whistle, shouting, "A man to the wheel!" But the hurricane drove the words down his throat. He started down from the bridge, to go forward and fetch a man to relieve the Finn. But the sea on the deck was thigh-deep, so he gave it up and went back to the bridge. The man whose turn it was to go to the wheel, and all the other men, sat cowering in the fore-castle. And no one thought of the Finn at all. The Finn stood alone, in the screaming wind and driving snow. The albatross was flown away shoreward, to shelter from the storm.

At about an hour ere the dawn, the snow ceased, giving way to a torrent of rain. And as the rain began, the wind fell suddenly, just as wind often falls when rain starts. Aware that the storm had blown itself out, the sailors dozed away, lolling against the bulk-head in their fore-castle.

DAWN came. The ship was lying far over to one side, two of her top-masts snapped short off, floating in the sea beside her, with a tangle of wreckage

trailing from them far astern. They had crashed down hours ago, and no one had known it. In the deck amidships was a jagged hole where, before one of the broken masts had slid overboard, it had smashed through the planking. There were no tarpaulins left upon the hatches. When the hurricane had torn them away, there was no telling. One thing was plain for any man: The ship was so low in the sea that evidently there was much water in her.

THE skipper looked at the mate, and the mate at the skipper. And each, aware that there was nothing that any man could do to save the ship, shook his head. One of the boats was gone utterly, not so much as a plank left. The sea had snatched it away at some time in the night. The other boat lay undamaged in its chocks.

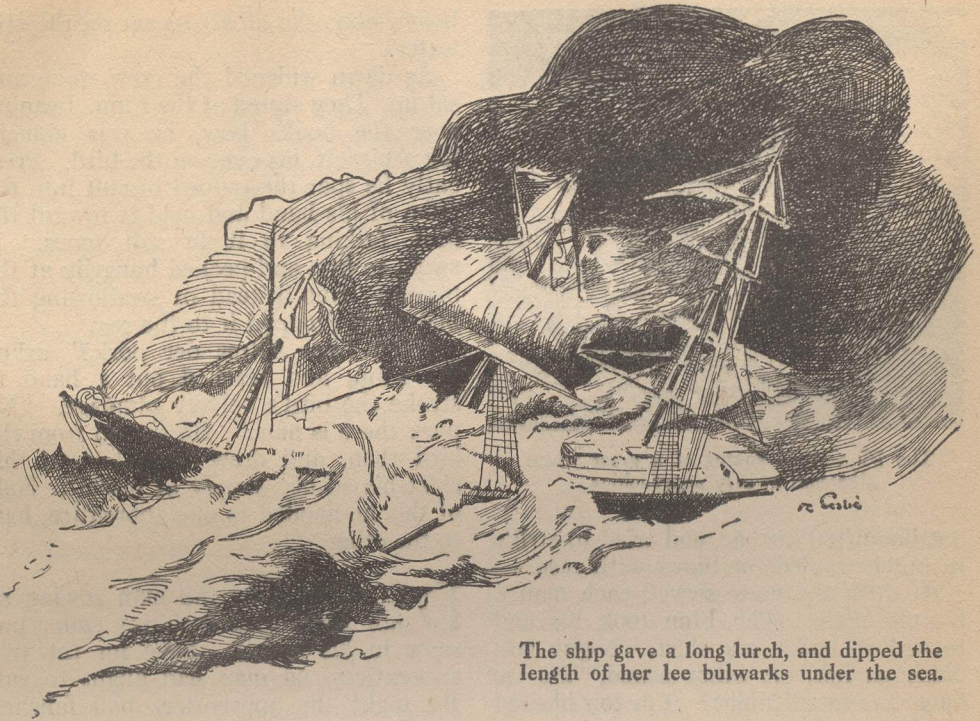
"Clear away the boat!" ordered the skipper. And weary beyond words, the sailors and apprentices made for the boat to hoist and swing her free. So utterly weary they were that they could not lift her so much as an inch from her chocks. And then of a sudden the mate remembered the Finn. "Where's the Finn?" he shouted. Everyone looked to the wheel. And there stood the Finn, erect, and rigid as a statue, without the least suspicion of weariness in his face or bearing.

"You there, lend a hand with the boat!" shouted the mate. As the Finn approached, walking light-footed as a cat, his arms swinging easily, his eyes bright as stars, all hands stared at him, with hate and with fear in their faces. Plain it was for anyone to see that he was the Jonah who had brought bad luck to the ship.

While, helped by the Finn, they hoisted and swung out the boat, the steward ran to fetch provisions from his store-room. He was but just gone when the ship gave a long lurch, and dipped the full length of her lee bulwarks under the sea.

"Lively! Lower away lively!" shouted the skipper. As, with a rush and a rattle of tackle-blocks, they lowered the boat to the water, the steward came running, his arms empty.

Over the side went sailors and apprentices, cook, steward, and carpenter. After them went the mate, and last of all, the skipper. "Shove off! Give way!" ordered the skipper, and the sailors grasped the long oars to push the boat clear of



The ship gave a long lurch, and dipped the length of her lee bulwarks under the sea.

the sinking ship. And then a sailor cried: "The Finn! The Finn!" He had gone to the forecastle as soon as the boat was ready for lowering. He was coming now, with the bread-barge in his hands. Though the water on the deck was almost to his thighs, he was coming unhurriedly: as though there were no danger at all.

And now a cry went up from all hands. For, flying from the direction of the land, there was coming a great white albatross. It flew direct to the ship, and hovered above the Finn as he made for the boat.

"Lively there!" shouted the skipper to the Finn. Paying no heed to him, the Finn paused, looked up at the bird, and spoke soft words to it. Sailors, apprentices, cook, steward, carpenter, mate and skipper, stared at him horrified, while, with the Prince Alberts round his feet and legs, with his rags flapping about him, he talked nonchalantly to the bird.

The wind was almost gone. Save for long swells that rolled in slow succession under the boat, the sea was calm. And now it began to snow again: huge flakes drifting on utterly motionless air, so thick that those in the bow could scarce see those in the stern. The heads and shoulders of those in her covered with snow, she tossed up and down on the swells, a ghost-like boat, above which a great white bird constantly hovered.

The skipper ordered the bread-barge passed to the boat's stern, where he and the mate were. He counted the scant store of sea-biscuit. In three days, allowing each man just enough to keep body and soul together, the store would be gone.

"We must make for the land. Maybe we can make land before the biscuits are gone," said the skipper.

Six sailors, the Finn among them, lay back on the long oars. Save for the Finn, they rowed wearily. After two hours, five of them were relieved by others. But the Finn rowed steadily on, refusing relief. At the end of four hours the skipper said to the mate: "The current's against us. We haven't made two miles yet."

"Wot good's rowin'?" asked a sailor. "Maybe a ship'll pick us up."

The skipper said to the mate: "Serve a biscuit apiece to everyone."

When the mate handed a biscuit toward the Finn, the man shook his head. "Take it, you fool," said the mate. The Finn took it obediently and tucked it under his shirt.

ALL day the snow fell. All day the men took turns at the oars. All day the Finn never ceased rowing. The apprentices, too small for the long oars, did no rowing. All day the white albatross hovered above the boat. Now and then



The Finn stood gazing at a great white albatross swiftly approaching.

a sailor lifted his oar, and tried to strike it, but it evaded the blows with ease.

At dusk the mate served each man a biscuit again. The Finn took his and tucked it under his shirt. Night fell, black as ink. A sailor asked, "Do we have to row all night? I'm too blasted tired to row."

The skipper said: "It's row to the land or die, unless a ship chances to see us."

LATE in the night the skipper asked: "What's that? What's going on there?" There was a sound of scuffling in the boat. The mate lit a blue flare, and by its light saw two sailors struggling for possession of the bread-barge.

"You fools, pass that bread-barge here!" ordered the skipper. And to the mate he said: "Serve out all the biscuit. Give each man his share now. It's the best way. Each can do as he likes with his share—eat it or make it spin out as long as he can." The skipper held a flare while the mate shared out the biscuit. The Finn took his share and put it under his shirt.

The flare went out. Silence fell, broken only by the sound of munching. When that sound ceased, the skipper said: "Row, row for the land." No one answered. No man lifted an oar, save the Finn only. The skipper repeated the order. Still no answer. The skipper murmured to the mate: "If a ship doesn't come very soon, we're done for. They've eaten all the food, and even so there's no heart in them."

Dawn came. The sailors huddled close together in the boat's bottom, for warmth. The mate and skipper sat in the stern. Alone in the bow sat the Finn. Near him, a few feet from the

boat's bow, the albatross sat on the still water.

As dawn widened the crew woke and sat up. They stared at the Finn. Leaning over the boat's bow, he was munching a biscuit, his eyes on the bird. Presently he spat the pulped biscuit into the palm of his hand and held it toward the bird, talking to it in soft tones. It swam to him and pecked hungrily at the biscuit. But instead of swallowing the biscuit, it dropped it to the sea.

"You likes better der pork?" asked the Finn, and reached out a hand to stroke the bird's velvety plumage. "No pork there is now." He turned from the bird then, and drew from beneath his shirt his scanty supply of biscuit. Half of this he handed to one apprentice, half to the other.

DAY dragged by, no man rowing at all. Sometimes a thirsty sailor put snow in his mouth. Save for the two apprentices, no man had aught to eat. By night the apprentices had finished the Finn's biscuit. Continually throughout the day the Finn leaned over the boat's bow and talked to the bird.

Night came in, black as ink. Huddled close together for warmth the sailors sat in the boat's bottom. The skipper and mate sat side by side in the stern, leaning against each other. In the bow sat the great Finn, with an arm tight round each of the little apprentice lads. They slept, with their heads upon his broad breast.

Morning came. The skipper looked round the wide circle of the horizon. In the far southwest, the sky above the horizon was black. Beneath that black, the sea was white.

"A squall in the southwest," said the skipper to the mate. "There's a gale blowing up. When it reaches us, we shall soon be done." The mate nodded.

The apprentices wakened. The Finn released them, and stretched himself. All through the cold dark night he had never stirred. He leaned over the boat's bow and talked to the albatross. It swam to him. He stroked its velvet plumage. The sailors cursed him. One lifted an oar, to kill the bird. He shoved the oar aside and grinned into the sailors' scowling faces. Men and apprentices, cook, steward, carpenter, mate and skipper, looked at the slowly approaching squall; and from it, with horror, to the Jonah who had brought them to their doom upon the grim Horn sea.

The Finn ceased fondling the bird, rose, and standing on a thwart, gazed to the dark southwest. A wide grin came to his face. Seeing it, those in the boat shuddered. For a moment longer he stood there, gazing from high above their heads into the dark southwest, as though to make sure of something. Then his grin widened. He sat down, and began, hastily, to unbind the Prince Albert from one of his legs. Having unbound it, he leaned over the boat's bow, reached out a hand, and roughly seized the bird by its neck. Alarmed by his unaccustomed roughness, it snapped at him viciously.

The Finn tore a strip of canvas from his Prince Albert, handed it to the skipper, and said urgently:

"You writes now, Captain! You writes now!"

With puckered brows, the skipper stared up at the Finn. He, the Jonah who had doomed them, was crazy.

Grinning down at the skipper, the Finn pointed to the southwest, and said: "Dere iss, beyond der horizon, a ship. You writes now. I ties to der bird der message. He takes der message to der ship."

An old hard-case sailor jumped to his feet and gazed southwestward. "Aye, aye, Captain! A ship! A ship!" he cried.

The skipper rose, and saw the upper sails of a ship just visible above the horizon. He sat down, and wrote on the canvas: "*Open boat due northeast of you. Help quick.*" He handed the canvas to the Finn. The Finn tied it to the bird's neck.

Standing on a thwart, the Finn ruffled the bird's plumage, angering it so that it snapped at him again and again, savagely. Having enraged it, he held it high.

"Look to der southwest," he said to it. Struggling for freedom, the bird turned its head this way and that.

"Look to der southwest," said the Finn. "Dere iss a ship. They catches you mitt der pork. They reads der message. Always der albatross yill take pork bait."

SUDDENLY the bird ceased its struggles, and remaining quite still in the Finn's hands, peered to the southwestward.

"Go now!" shouted the Finn, and hurled the bird into the air. Instantly it sped away, toward the southwestward;

and in a few moments was lost to view in the rain-curtain of the advancing squall.

While the wind rose, while the sprays fell, while the rain lashed down unremittingly, those in the boat peered into the dark southwest.

"Even if they catch the bird, they'll never find us in this weather," said the skipper to the mate. The mate nodded.

Their heads bowed to the ever-rising storm, huddling hopelessly together, hope gone from every man, the sailors cursed the Jonah who had brought them to their doom.

Presently the Finn rose to his feet. While none other looked up, he stood erect, gazing tensely at a great white albatross swiftly approaching from the southwestward. As it flew by, winging its way shoreward to shelter from the storm, a wide grin came to his face. The canvas was gone from its neck.

THE Finn stooped, and picked up an apprentice in each arm. "Der ship come," said he in matter-of-fact tones. And as he spoke, there appeared, dim in rain-torrents to the southwest, the arching headsails of a ship. Instantly every man was on his feet. A shout rose from every man. An answering shout came from the ship.

The ship swept up, alongside the tossing boat. The Finn lifted first one and then the other apprentice. With a long, easy swaying motion, he tossed the little apprentice lads over her low-dipped railing, to her deck.

"Look alive, everyone! Look alive!" shouted the skipper. Those on the ship were shouting, and throwing ropes. Sailor after sailor, cook, steward, and carpenter, grasped ropes and hove themselves to the deck of the ship. The mate followed.

The skipper turned to the Finn, who sat in the boat's bow, placidly munching a biscuit that he had found in his shirt. "Look alive, you!" ordered the skipper.

"You goes first, Captain," said the Finn, with a wide grin on his simple face.

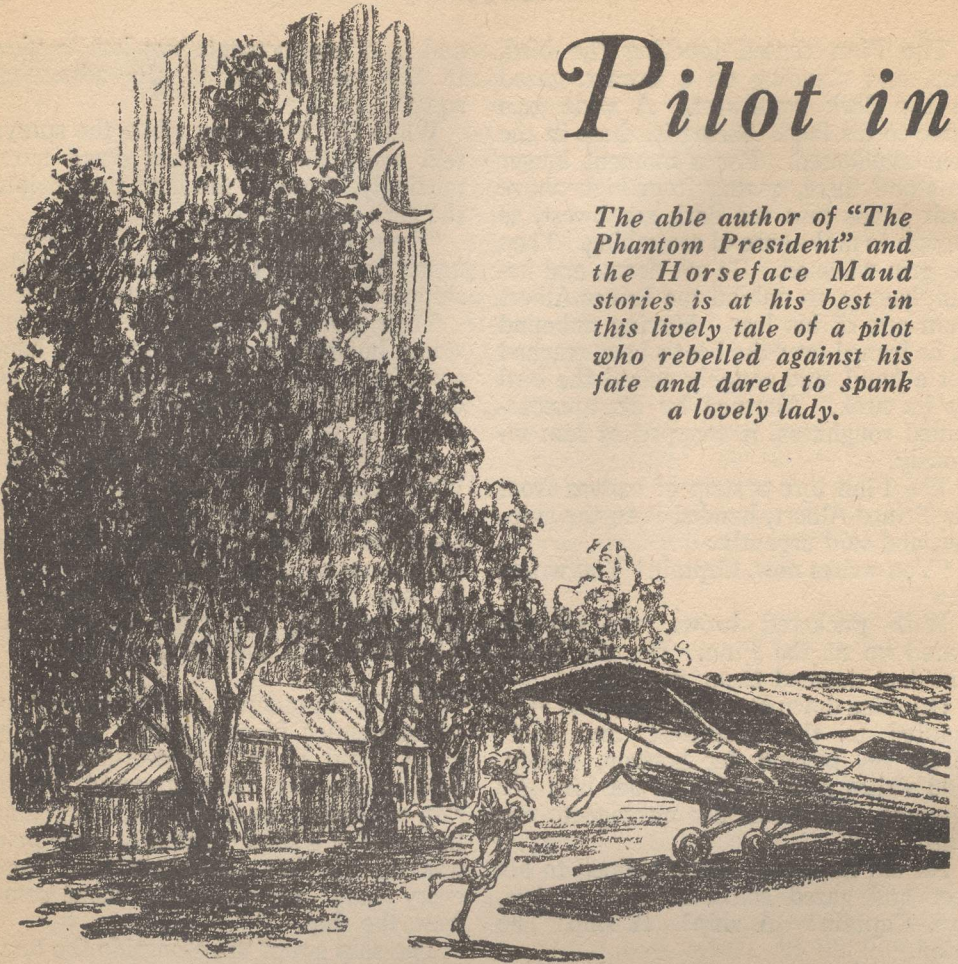
The skipper hove himself over the ship's rail. The Finn crammed the last of the biscuit into his mouth, grasped a rope, and followed.

Surrounding the giant Finn, the crews of both ships raised cheer after cheer.

"Vott iss der matter? Iss you all crazy?" asked the Finn, with a puzzled grin upon his simple face.

Pilot in

The able author of "The Phantom President" and the Horseface Maud stories is at his best in this lively tale of a pilot who rebelled against his fate and dared to spank a lovely lady.



AN insult a day will keep boredom away. A good rousing personal aspersion now and then is also recommended for faulty blood-pressure—which, it is said, afflicts many flyers.

Joan Arlen did her best to correct Larry Culver's blood-pressure. She did nothing whatever about his nightmares. Yet she could hardly be blamed for his nightmares.

All racing flyers suffer from nightmares. They dream in terms of catastrophe and personal cataclysm. They fly the very beds they sleep in, they even go into spins in the very chairs they doze off in. All the mishaps they avoid while flying happen to them when they fall asleep.

It is the price of speed cups and newspaper headlines.

Larry Culver for brief periods held the world's altitude record, the inverted loop record, the East-West transcontinental record, and he accumulated prize money for the neatness with which he could cut a pylon. He ranked for awhile

with Frank Hawks and Roscoe Turner—he was that type—but he lacked color. He faded too quickly from the imagination. He wasn't a master of ballyhoo. He was too shy.

That pretty well sums Larry up. You can visualize him as a clear-eyed, brown-skinned person with wrinkles about the eyes at twenty-seven—well-set-up, good-looking, but disillusioned, and plenty bitter about it all.

Because he failed to cash in properly on speed flying, Larry went to work for Joan Arlen, and was paid by the week, as are streetcar motormen and bus-drivers. He flew Joan Arlen's private ship, a snooty little three-place cabin job with retractable landing gear, two-way radio, blind flying equipment, wing-flaps and a top speed of two hundred ten.

Summing up Joan Arlen isn't quite so easy. She was elected the prettiest girl of Wawmushka, Wisconsin, in the summer of 1932. Cheered on by admirers and well-wishers, Miss Wawmushka entered the State contest and presently

Livery

By GEORGE
F. WORTS

Illustrated by
Monte Crews



Quietly Joan opened the door and slipped out. She hurried through the moonlight to the plane and stripped off the tarpaulin.

became Miss Wisconsin. As Miss Wisconsin, she went to Atlantic City, where beauties from all over the world were on display. The competition was terrific, but somebody always wins. When it was over, Joan had changed her name again. She was now Miss Universe. That should, and probably does, make her the most beautiful girl in the world by a process as ruthless and reasonable as a judgment of Solomon.

She is a pleasure to describe. She had the largest and most beautiful eyes and the longest lashes in existence. She had the softest, silkiest, loveliest hair in the world. Her smile was bewitching. Her mouth was delicious. Her complexion was enchanting. She was slim and small and cute—adorable, positively luscious.

Is it a picture?

Quite logically, Joan fell title to an airplane ride to Hollywood, where her measure was swiftly taken and she was tucked under the wing of a blowsy fat man named Podman whose specialty was newcomers with low sales-resistance.

Miss Universe sidestepped dazzling opportunities for long- and short-term marriages without benefit of clergy—and while she lost none of her dewy loveliness, she developed sales-resistance that would have done credit to the purchasing agent of a second-hand jewelry store.

A few small parts were tossed to her, but she did not get the breaks, did not lift picture audiences from their seats. It was the same old story—beauty without box-office glamour—sweetness and youth without a ten-thousand-volt personality. In less than a year from start to finish, we find a nice wholesome little country girl gone cynical and bitter before her time. Miss Universe developed an inferiority complex—and a craving for excitement.

Her trip west in a big passenger plane—her first air ride—had thrilled her. She fancied herself, a martyr to destiny, soaring about in the empyrean blue. When the low-wing Bork-Parroquet, practically new, was auctioned off to help pay a bankrupt polo-player's debts, she bid low—and bought herself an airplane.

The field manager told her she might scour the country and not find a safer, more dependable pilot than Larry Culver. So she contacted Mr. Culver.

The one-time speed king of the air took the job because he was a day late for that morning's breakfast, and because he happened to be in love with Joan. It chanced that he, also, hailed from Wawmushka, that he had known Joan from childhood, and had the utterly ridiculous notion that certain constellations in the heavens had been in favorable conjunction on the night when he first looked into her large starry eyes at a high-school dance at which he was a graduating senior and she a fledgling freshman.

He had gone out into the world and flown himself into fame, glory and subsequent economic misery.

NEITHER one, when they met years later at the Los Angeles airport, acknowledged a kiss in the moonlit garden of the Wawmushka Country Club. All that was a closed book. He was merely an aerial chauffeur with an impressive amount of flying time, and she was a Hollywood princess who wanted a dependable pilot. . . .

She didn't want to learn to fly. She merely wanted to be flown. She was so crazy about flying, as some people are,

that she was willing to live like a mouse and spend her income on gasoline, oil and her pilot's wages.

Larry looked upon the job as the lowest step he had so far reached on the ladder of degradation. Joan looked upon him as just another human vulture. All men to Joan were human vultures. His friendliness at their first meeting was, to her, only the experimental overture of another girl-chaser.

When he called her Joan, she reminded him that her name was Miss Arlen. He reminded her that her name, back in Wawmushka high-school days, was Joan Schwarzbaugh. And he took her for a trial fly in such a state of temper that he almost forgot to let down the wheels when he came in for a landing.

NEXT morning she flew again. "I should think," she said crisply when she met him, "you could do something better than this."

"Such as what?"

"Well, this morning's paper said the world's upside-down record has been smashed again. Somebody flew all the way from St. Louis to Chicago upside-down."

"I'm planning it," Larry said.

"Planning what?"

"To outdo them all."

"How?"

"By flying the Pacific upside-down and backward with my hands and feet tied."

Her glorious eyes did not register pleasure. "I think," she said, "I'd prefer to have you wear a uniform."

"An orchid one," Larry said.

"No-o-o-o," she said musingly, "a blue one. With a cap."

Larry flushed under the mahogany. His eyes sprayed profanity. But in the end he wore the blue cap and uniform. It was her whim. He was on her payroll. And he wanted his stomach to stop having the illusion that he was suffering from a severed esophagus. . . .

Each day they flew, it seemed, she thought up some new way to heighten his low blood-pressure. Merely looking at her might have done it. Merely taking her elbow and helping her out of the ship might have done it. But she gave gratuitous aids.

She criticized his haircut. She jeered at his selection of haberdashery. She inaugurated the rule that he was to salute her when he approached her on the field. As time went on, she criticized his airwork and even his landings—Larry

Culver, who could have landed a freight car on a pocket handkerchief!

His boredom vanished. His blood-pressure was definitely on the mend. He suffered as only a proud and sensitive flyer can suffer under jeers, taunts and insults.

And he got little sympathy from his brethren. His plight, to all the flyers he knew, was a panic, a riot, a scream.

The answer was inevitably, "If you can't take it, quit. You aint in the army."

He didn't quit. He needed the income. And one week-end, when Joan didn't require his services, he betrayed a new interest in life—a very mysterious interest. He acquired it from an old be-whiskered, bleary-eyed drunk in a downtown speak-easy. He had a long talk with this tragic specimen. That was on a Friday night. Next morning he borrowed a friend's ship and flew eastward. He returned on Monday night, freshly sunburned and exhausted.

When Joan asked him where he had been, he simply said: "I've got a blonde. Why?"

"Blondes are so democratic," Joan said, and that was all.

But it wasn't all. From then on, every time he could get away, he borrowed somebody's ship and vanished into a limbo of mystery. He would return sunburned and exhausted—and without explanations.

This went on for months. It went on until everyone lost interest and stopped asking questions. It went on until the week when Joan's contract expired.

LARRY had seen Mr. Podman. Frequently, Mr. Podman drove Joan to and from the airport in his long lean maroon-color seventeen-thousand-dollar touring car.

Larry knew that Mr. Podman was responsible for Joan's nice soft contract. And he hated Mr. Podman for his intentions. Knowing his Hollywood, Larry reasoned that Mr. Podman was playing a smart game.

Larry knew all this, and more. He knew that Joan was weakening. He knew that, to Joan, her success in pictures meant almost as much as life itself. He knew that Joan was tempted as few girls are tempted.

Further to confuse the issue, he knew what the Hollywood grapevine had long ago reported on Joan as a potential actress. She didn't have a chance! Intelli-



"There's a flower," Larry said, "you could take lessons from. It's called the *shameface*."

gent, yes. Beautiful, yes. Small and adorable, yes, indeed. But she lacked that particular, strange quality without which the most sensational beauty is hopeless as camera fodder.

And still further to confuse the issue, in spite of Joan's coldness to him, in spite of her cruel insults, in spite of the flinty exterior she had acquired, he was still as much in love with her as ever. Poor fish, he believed that if he could only get her away from all this, he could make a splendid woman of her—could hammer her and fashion her into the dear, lost shape of his ideal.

All of this—and more—was in the air on the morning when she phoned him at the airport to tell him that she was flying to Salt Lake City to spend the week-end with her Aunt Hattie.

He knew she was lying. He knew she had no Aunt Hattie in Salt Lake City. He knew she was keeping a rendezvous with defeat—defeat in the slick, fat person of Mr. Podman: it was in the huskiness, the breathlessness of her voice.

She was flying to Salt Lake City to keep a date with that cradle-robber, because her contract was up and a picture career meant more to her than anything in the world. She was a damned little fool. She deserved a sound spanking. But she would do it. She had probably stayed awake nights, deciding to do it. And no one in the world would stop her. No one in the world but Larry Culver, the flying, blue-uniformed chauffeur—whom she was using as a camouflage.

Larry had flown her on overnight trips, and no one had made anything of it. Certainly, no one had, who knew Larry Culver, and Joan Schwarzbaugh—pardon me, Joan Arlen. In these free-and-easy days, it's easy to tell when two suspects are on the up-and-up. Even the darkest minds thought nothing but innocent thoughts over Larry's and Joan's occasional overnight flights.

So, reasoned Larry, he could fly her to Salt Lake City—like a sucker—and be camouflage for her sneaky date with Mr. Podman.

Mr. Podman did not, of course, drive her to the field that morning. They were going to be very, very discreet. In his own ship, piloted by his own pilot—Jack Dennings, the famous picture pilot—Mr. Podman would fly to Salt Lake.

IN his smart blue uniform, Larry met Joan's taxi. He saluted her. With the deference of a doorman, he lifted out her suitcases, carried them to the ship and stowed them away in the luggage compartment.

She did not insult him this morning. A pale girl under the suntan makeup, with glittery eyes, with circles under those eyes, with a grimly set mouth, she accompanied him to the ship. She looked scared. She looked as if she hadn't slept. But there was this determination about her that let him know she had made her decision and would stand for no monkey business from anybody.

He helped her aboard. He climbed in



"You may be incurable," he said grimly, "but nobody will ever say I didn't try."

and slammed the door. Buckling her safety-belt, she asked in a husky voice if he had plenty of gas and oil.

"Yes, Miss Arlen."

When Larry had enough altitude, he made sure that Mr. Podman's ship was not in the air, then climbed the mountains. An hour later, his employer asked why he wasn't flying the beacons.

"Taking a short cut," he said.

"Aren't you stopping at Las Vegas?"

"This is quicker."

FOR a little over two hours they flew over the uncharted desert. Then Larry cut the gun. In the whistling silence, Joan shrieked, "What is it?"

"Engine."

"Can you land?"

"Yes, Miss Arlen—on the dry lake."

Just ahead, within comfortable gliding distance, was the dry lake—a shimmering ivory oval. At one end of it was a clump of green—a cottonwood grove marking a spring. All about the old lake bed was the wildest kind of country—cañons and washes, mesas and buttes—and not a village in any direction as far as you could see. No ranches. And only one pair of wheel-tracks trickling off to nowhere over the broad desolation.

Larry landed on the dry lake and taxied to the cottonwood grove. He cut the ignition. Silence and warmth flowed in upon them.

"What's wrong?" Joan asked uneasily.

"I'll have to find out, Miss Arlen."

But Larry was evidently in no hurry. He climbed out and said, "There ought to be a nice cold spring back there. Thirsty?"

"No."

"Let's look around, Miss Arlen."

"I'll wait here."

"Stretch your legs, Miss Arlen."

"How long will it take to fix that engine?"

"Not long. We'll wait till it cools a little."

She decided to accompany him. Once on the ground, she uttered a great, tumultuous sigh—almost as if she were relieved at this delay. It was such a peaceful spot. If you overlooked the new rough board shack, it was really like a corner of paradise. An oasis in the desert is always charming, and this spot was particularly charming. The silver-green leaves of the cottonwoods shivered in a breeze and cast great dark cool shadows. There was velvety green grass under them. And if you listened closely, you could hear the gurgle of the cool, clear water from the spring as it flowed over stones.

Joan went with Larry to the back of the shack, which was a more pretentious affair than it had appeared at first glance. Unlike most desert shacks, it had several windows, and it seemed to be nicely furnished. Its owner was evidently not at home, although Joan could see, in a lean-to at the rear, an old Model-T truck in excellent condition.

They walked to the mossy pool out of which clear water welled. There was a new tin cup on a rock. Larry dipped the cup full and Joan sipped the sweet icy water.

"A man," Larry said, "could enjoy life here."

"Some men could," Joan said coolly.

"Look at those flowers!" he cried.

Joan glanced quickly about her. "What flowers?"

"Don't you see them, Miss Arlen? They're beautiful."

She gave a nervous little laugh. "Are you crazy, Mr. Culver? Where are there any flowers?"

"At your feet."

She looked. They were sprinkled about at her feet—tiny blossoms growing snug against the ground, half the size of her little fingernail—tiny flowers the color of a blush.

"There's a flower," Larry said lazily, "you could take a lot of lessons from. It's called the *shameface*."

Miss Universe uttered a sharp gasp. Her face was suddenly crimson with an angry blush. It was really the first time since she had employed him that Larry Culver had insulted her. In spite of the provocation, he had always restrained himself.

And having insulted her, he was now regarding her with impertinent eyes and a scornful grin.

SHE turned and walked away. She walked rapidly to the ship. Larry leisurely followed her. She climbed in and sat down. She was pale now and her eyes were stormy.

"Kindly fix this engine at once," she said crisply.

"No, Miss Arlen." He was still grinning at her—impudently.

"What do you mean?" she snapped.

"We aren't going any farther. This is the last stop. Welcome to the old homestead!"

Her lovely eyes grew larger and larger. Her mouth remained open.

"This isn't your place!" she gasped.

And when, saying nothing, he continued to grin at her in that impudent way, she uttered a little shriek of rage.

"You fix that engine!" she cried. "You get us out of here instantly! Do you hear? Instantly!"

"Save your strength," he said ominously. "You're going to need it."

He went to the luggage compartment and opened it. He took out her suitcases and a large bundle of what appeared to be tarpaulin. It was tarpaulin. One side was stained ivory—to match the dry lake. The upper side of the wings, you see, was orange—a good color to see from the air if you were looking for a ship that had been forced down in bad country.

He shook out the cream-colored tarp and began to fit it over the wings.

Miss Universe climbed out of the ship. Her fists were clenched. Her lovely bosom was heaving. She was making whimpering sounds of rage.

"Take that cover off!" she panted. "Instantly!"

Larry went on methodically with his work. She lost her temper completely. She screamed at him. And when he ignored her screams, she ran to the yard, snatched up a long thick stick that would serve as a club and came running back, half-sobbing.

She attacked him with the club. She struck him in the shoulder with it be-

fore he captured it and threw it away. He seized her hands. She tried to kick him. She tried to bite his hands. These measures failing, she called him names. And when she stopped cursing, he said, "Aunt Hattie is going to be awfully disappointed."

"I hope you know what this means!" she shrieked. "It's kidnaping! I hope you know what happens to kidnapers!"

"By the time I'm through with you, you won't care."

"Oh, you fool! You insane idiot!"

She gave a convulsive wriggle and broke away from him. She started to run. She started to run toward the other end of the dry lake. It was almost as hard as concrete, but there were cracks in it.

Miss Universe caught a heel in one of these old rain-cracks. She would have fallen, she might have hurt herself, if Larry had not been just a step behind her—and swooped and caught her as she started the plunge.

He gathered her into his arms and carried her to the house. She screamed, kicked and clawed. She struck him ferociously with her fists. But he held her until she exhausted herself. Then he went to the door, kicked it open and carried her inside.

"A fine old custom," he said,—"carrying the bride over the sill on her first visit."

She lay limply in his arms, panting. He sat her in a chair. He seated himself in another, facing her. He was bleeding from fingernail scratches. One of his shins felt shattered. But he was still grinning. Across from him, the most beautiful girl in the universe—her hair rumpled, her face white, her eyes dark with fury, her knuckles bleeding—sat and glared at him.

"YOU'LL learn to like it," he said. "You'll be as crazy about it as I am, Joan. I had you in mind every minute I was building it. Every nail in this shanty has your name on it, Joan. Would you like to hear about it?"

"No!"

"All right. I'll tell you. Months ago, I realized that you and I were haywire. The pictures are finished with you, and flying is finished with me. We're a couple of flops. And it's a tough world just now for flops. I heard about this place from a crazy old prospector. But he wasn't so crazy. I homesteaded it. Then I clapped a water claim on it.

Then I clapped a placer claim on top of that."

He paused. The object of his solicitude was glaring at him with cold hate.

"That big gravel hill behind the spring is lousy with gold, Joan. It's low grade but there's plenty of it. This spring will flow a two-inch stream, if it's developed. Anyhow, plenty for a sluice. Do you get the gag, Joan? I can work easy hours and still take a hundred and fifty a month out of that gravel hill—for years to come! Now I ask you—is it a pretty set-up or is it a pretty set-up?"

JOAN continued to contemplate him with cold hatred.

"In these days," he answered his question, "what could be a prettier set-up? With you doing the housework and me doing the gold-mining—what a wonderful team we're going to make! Not bad for a couple of flops! You won't stay mad long. You used to love me. You said you did. And I've always loved you. Ever since I left Wawmushka, I've never thought of any other girl. You spoiled them all for me, Joan. You'll get over what's ailing you now. You're sore and cynical because you didn't click with Hollywood. To hell with Hollywood! You'll forget it. We love each other. We can both make good at this job. And this is the sort of place where we both belong. Joan, I'm crazy about you."

Her gaze, unmoving, had become one of loathing.

"You contemptible—bum!" she panted.

"Don't say that, Joan. I don't like it. I'm not a bum."

"You are a bum!"

"Now, look here, Joan. I said don't say that any more. It happens to be a word I don't like."

"You bum!" she shouted.

Larry leaped up. Before she could defend herself, he had seized her by the elbows. He backed to his chair and sat down. He laid her across his lap, face down, and spanked her with the palm of his hand. He spanked her until his palm stung and burned.

But when he released her, when he helped her to her feet, her spirit was by no means broken, though she did not call him that name again. She stood rigidly with her fists clenched at her sides, her breast and chin up, her mouth, her lovely luscious mouth strangely twisted, and she fought back tears.

"I hope," she said steadily, "you realize what happens to kidnapers who in-

flict injury on the people they kidnap. I hope you know about that new law!"

Larry shook his head sadly. "It's going to be a long, tough job. You still think you're a movie actress. You can't get it through your dumb little head that you aren't and never were anything but a farmer's daughter. What you need is good hard work. You're going to get it. I'm going to make a shameface out of you if it kills us both. Get busy and scrub this floor!"

The spanked girl had recovered a little of her composure. She even managed a smile.

"Oh, I know this plot," she said airily. "You've kidnaped me away from the soft, futile life I was leading, to make a real woman of me."

He said: "Then you know what to do. Fill the bucket at the spring and heat it on the stove. It's a brand-new kerosene stove. Don't spill any water on it."

She hesitated for a moment. Then her mouth hardened, and a look came into her eyes. She picked up the empty bucket and walked out the back door. Her submission should have made him suspicious. When she came in with the full bucket, he said, "You'll find overalls that'll fit you in your bedroom."

"Oh, I'd intended to burn this dress, anyway."

She lit a burner and put the bucket on. Having shot his bolt, Larry now felt a little uncomfortable. Things hadn't worked out at all according to his scenario. It was quite likely that Joan would hate him forever.

WHILE the water heated, he went outside. He wanted to finish stretching the tarp over the wings, to have that job done in ample time before the search started.

He was just finishing when behind him, suddenly, he heard a faint crackling. He turned about to see black smoke rising in a column from the shack. He snatched the fire-extinguisher from its bracket and ran into the shack. Just inside the doorway, Joan stood watching the blaze she had made. She had poured kerosene on the floor and dropped lighted matches into it. The fire was blazing. Tongues of flame were lapping up the wall behind the stove. And Joan was shrieking with laughter.

It took the last drop in the extinguisher to put the fire out. And when the last flame had expired, he said, with cold fury: "For that—another spanking!"



Inside the doorway, Joan stood watching the blaze—and shrieking with laughter.

She shrieked and ran. He caught her and brought her back. This time, she screamed and kicked and clawed when he laid her across his knees.

"You may be incurable," he said grimly, "but nobody will ever say I didn't try."

And he spanked her until his hand was numb. When he let her up, she was sobbing. She staggered to the cot against the wall, fell upon it and sobbed. But her spirit wasn't broken. When he came near her, she shrieked at him.

"If you touch me, I'll claw your eyes out!"

"Get busy, you wildcat, and clean up this mess," Larry said.

She obeyed. She scrubbed the floor and cleaned the stove. But he stood guard over her every moment. She ruined her dress, her stockings, her slippers. Grimly, indeed, she cleaned. . . .

Larry was beginning to despair. Her new attitude was sullen non-resistance. She would probably not claw him again, but would sullenly obey his commands. She could wait. And they couldn't stay lost forever. Mr. Podman would see to that. Mr. Podman would rake the skies and claw the earth. And Mr. Podman would see to it that Larry Culver was properly prosecuted. With his political influence, Mr. Podman would probably spring the trap at Larry's hanging.

It was a decidedly gloomy outlook.

Joan—sullen, bedraggled, silent—was now preparing their supper. Oh, how different it was from the dreams he had had! Oh, what a sap he had been!

They ate ham and eggs and beans and drank coffee in utter silence. Neither spoke a word.

At the conclusion of the meal, Joan washed and dried the dishes and put them away. Then she went to the door of her room.

"You'd better write out a schedule for me," she said huskily. "What day I do the washing, what day I do the scrubbing, what day I do the mending and darning. Good night."

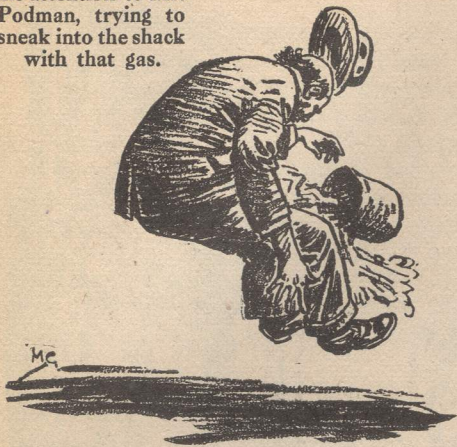
"There's a bolt on your side of that door," Larry answered.

She shut the door and shot the bolt. Larry went out. The sky was clear, sparkling with stars. Tomorrow—or next day—or next day—a plane would drop out of that sky. It would be full of sheriffs.

He returned to the shack and lay down on the cot without undressing. And because of his emotional exhaustion, he went to sleep promptly.

SHE listened to him moving about. When she heard the cot springs groan, she undressed, put on a nightgown and got into bed, but she could not sleep. Helpless fury still ran through her in waves.

Then Larry gave his attention to Mr. Podman, trying to sneak into the shack with that gas.



A moon came up and a cool white beam slanted in at her window. She got up and looked out the window. She saw the big gravel hill and the spring. Then she heard Larry snore.

She waited until his snoring became loud and regular, then she slipped into a dressing-gown and mules, slid back the bolt and tiptoed out. She passed the sleeping man and opened the front door. Quietly as a mouse she slipped out. She hurried through the moonlight to the plane and stripped off the tarpaulin. She wadded it up and carried it to a clump of bushes, where she hid it.

She tiptoed back to the shanty and slipped in. She listened for Larry's breathing. She heard a packrat gnawing somewhere. She heard a coyote howling. Then, out of the darkness, Larry yelled, "Keep your nose down!"

Joan jumped. She could vaguely see that Larry was sitting on the edge of the cot, a formidable bulk in the dark.

"Give her the gun!" Larry roared. "She won't make it! She isn't taking it!"

He was banging on his knees with his fists and swaying from side to side.

"Larry," Joan said.

"Try it again!" he shouted.

"Larry!"

He didn't hear her. Joan had never heard about the nightmares racing flyers have. She didn't know how hard it is to wake up a man from one of them.

"Larry!" she cried.

"Dive her, damn you!" he yelled. "Then give it to her!"

Some one else was flying this dream ship. Larry was helpless.

Joan lighted the lamp. His face was pale and waxy and covered with beads of

sweat. His eyes were wild. His mouth was making grimaces.

"Now!" he yelled. "Now! Give her the works!"

She took him by the shoulders and shook him. "Larry!" she shrieked.

"Watch out for that down draft!" he shouted.

She slapped his cheeks. "Wake up! Larry!"

"Oh, my God," he panted. "She won't take it!"

Joan ran to the water-bucket, snatching up a drinking-glass *en route*. She filled it and ran back.

"Get her nose down!" Larry yelled. "We're stalling! Oh, my God, we're falling!"

Joan threw the water into his face.

That did it. He woke up. He came out of the nightmare, sputtering and blinking. He saw Joan standing before him, a divinity in a pale-blue dressing gown. He had never seen her so lovely.

"Darling!" he groaned. "Darling!"

But when he sprang up, she backed away from him, and her eyes were hard and her face was forbidding.

He lifted his hands and shook water out of his hair. He was flushed and miserable-looking.

"I guess I was dreaming," he muttered.

"I guess you were," she said from her doorway.

He stared at her forlornly, but there was no compassion in that lovely face.

"I guess you win, baby—and what a sap that makes me! I thought I had an idea. I should have known better."

"So what?" Joan said quietly.

"I'll fly you on to Salt Lake in the morning."

"It's too late."

She went into her room and shot the bolt. She heard his groans, and she heard the cot springs groan as he stretched out again. She got into her bed and presently, she slept.

A HAMMERING on the door woke her up. Sunlight streamed in her window. Larry was shouting:

"Come and see me set to slow music. They've found us."

"Who?" she cried.

"The boy friend. He's going to land."

Joan dressed hurriedly. She stripped off her nightgown. Her hands fluttered and got in each other's way. Frantically, she got into underwear, stockings, slip, slippers, dress. She heard the whistling of wires as the ship came in.

She was unbolting the door when Mr. Podman's voice said, "Let him have it, Jack."

There was a crack like a rifle-shot. Joan ran out of her room and out of the shack. Larry was stretched out on the ground face up, with his eyes closed, as if he were asleep. Jack Dennings and Mr. Podman stood over him.

MR. PODMAN looked at Joan speculatively for a moment. Then he said, "He brought you here and held you against your wishes, didn't he?"

"He certainly did," Joan said.

"Is this his hide-out?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. Are you all right?"

"Yes, I'm quite all right."

"Get busy, Jack," said Mr. Podman.

Jack Dennings ran to Joan's ship and started the engine.

Joan cried: "What's he going to do?"

"I'll explain it all later."

The engine was roaring.

"Get your bags," Mr. Podman said, "and stow them in my ship."

Joan ran into the shack. When she came out with her suitcases, her ship was taking off. The engine was cold. It kept missing. It was hardly maintaining flying speed. The ship climbed and began a slow circle against the sun. It came slanting back toward its starting-point.

Breathlessly, Joan watched. The left wing dipped down. She knew now that Jack Dennings was going to crack it up. The left wing was almost dragging. It kicked up a clot of pearly dust.

The nose went down. There was an explosion of the pearly dust. The steel blades chewed into the lake bed. The tail flipped up and over, and the ship landed with a dreadful crash on its back.

Running toward the wreck, Joan heard a thumping. Then one of the doors popped open and Jack Dennings climbed out. He wasn't hurt. He was really clever at this sort of thing.

Mr. Podman was draining gasoline from his ship into a large tin can. With the can nearly full he started at a trot toward the shack.

Larry came to his feet as Mr. Podman approached.

"Wait a minute," Larry said thickly. "What's going on here?"

"We're going to set fire to this shack," Mr. Podman puffed. "And you can thank your lucky stars I've thought of a way out of this mess."

"Why did you crack up that ship?"



"Listen, you dumbbell," Mr. Podman said patiently. "Every newspaper in America has the story this morning that this girl and you disappeared. Every ship on the Pacific coast is out looking for you. You had a crack-up—do you get it? You had a crack-up on this lake—in this wilderness—and when you came to your senses, you set fire to the shack to attract attention. We saw the fire from the air—do you get it? I'm saving this girl's reputation—and I'm saving you from hanging."

"No," Larry said. "Take her back to Hollywood. But you won't set fire to this house. This is my house. I built it with my own hands. Every board in it, every nail I trucked eighty miles over this desert. I'll hang before I see this house burn up!"

"You're nuts," Mr. Podman said. "Get out of my way!"

Larry blocked the doorway. He looked very grim. "Clear out of here, all of you," he said. "Tell the newspapers whatever you want. I'm staying."

"Jack," Mr. Podman said to the crack-up artist, "let him have it."

Larry left the doorway as Jack Dennings started for him. He was all over Jack Dennings like a swarm of hornets. He larruped him in the nose. He slugged him in the jaw. He walloped him about the head. The crack-up specialist folded and sat down. Then Larry gave his attention to Mr. Podman, who was trying to slip past—trying to sneak into the shack with that can of gas.

He kicked the can out of his hand. He gave Mr. Podman a complete facial massage in three seconds. And when Mr. Podman was lying beside his pilot, Larry addressed Joan.

"You sneaked out here last night and took off that tarp so they could spot your ship from the air. Smart girl!"

"Sock me too!" she panted.

He shook his head. "It wouldn't do any good. Teacher is all through. Class is dismissed. No gardenia can be taught to be a shameface."

Mr. Podman and his pilot were helping each other up.

"Come on, Joan," Mr. Podman said wearily. "I guess we can cook up something for the papers without him."

Joan hesitated. "Larry," she said, "I'll see that you're not prosecuted."

It was the first kind thing she had said to him since that night in the garden of the Wawmushka Country Club. He was too stunned to answer.

He watched the three of them start for Mr. Podman's ship. He went into the shack and sat down on the edge of the cot. He still felt pretty shaky from the fight.

He heard the snort of the engine, then the drumming roar of the take-off. With his face in his hands, he contemplated a knot in the floor. He felt pretty sick about everything. He felt as a man feels when he has made an utter ass of himself.

The roar dwindled to a drone. Then a sound in the doorway made him turn his head. Joan was standing there, large-eyed, pale, a suitcase in each hand.

"Why, Joan!" he gasped.

"I'm staying," Joan said huskily. "I thought there might be a few more things I could learn about being a shameface."

He got up from the cot with a ridiculous grin and made a clumsy gesture with his hands. Joan dropped the suitcases. She flew into his arms. She kissed him. She whimpered. She clung to him. She kissed him again. She began to sob.

"You damned fool," she sobbed. "Oh, you utter damned fool!"

"Yes," he said. "Yes, I guess so."

"But I'm so horribly scared, darling. You don't know how scared I am. Can we make a go of it? Can we live here and really make a go of it—a couple of flops like us?"

"We can give it a whirl."

"I told Podman to tell them we'd eloped," Joan said hysterically. "I just couldn't go. Oh, I couldn't go and leave you here."

"Why did you change your mind?"

"I don't know. Maybe I never meant to leave. Oh, darling—and anyway I couldn't leave you here with those awful nightmares."



One of the most unexpected disguises ever employed by a criminal here gives that strange gypsy detective Isaac Heron a case curious indeed.

The Painted

By WILLIAM
J. MAKIN

IT was Saturday night in the Kentish village of Shorne, and the taproom was full of the small farmers and laborers of the district. Saturday night was pay night, and much of the pay was being gulped down and sent up in smoke to the old rafters of the Crooked Billet.

Old George Peak took a deep draft at his mug, and with frothy mouth addressed the assembled company.

"Now I ask you, gen'lemen," he continued, "why should we breed pigs? 'Cause the Government asks us?" His weather-lined face expressed deep scorn. "Why, when those Danish breeders get bacon on our market at—"

His voice dribbled away while his rheumy eyes opened wide with astonishment. His face, as if paralyzed, stared

Grin

Illustrated by
John Richard
Flanagan



at the door. Such was the effect upon the company of that look, that as one man they all swiveled their heads. So did Joe Gale, from his background of shining bottles and beer-spilled counter. They all stared aghast at the figure that had pushed open the door and revealed the darkness of night behind him.

A chalk-white face with a wide red-painted grin stared back at them. So deathly white was the face in the yellow light of the swinging oil lamps that some of those farm laborers had the immediate impression that the little graveyard next the church was yawning and spewing forth its dead.

But this ghost walked. It stepped inside the taproom with a shuffle of old boots. A ragged overcoat was tied with

Roughly, Joe Gale shook the clown. "We're closing down—it's time ye were on yer way!" Then in horror, he slowly withdrew his hand.

a piece of rope about its middle. Queer eyes blinked out of the white face at the smoky company. And the red-painted grin seemed to stretch even wider.

"Strewth!" exclaimed one of the laborers. "It's a blarsted clown! Well, what d'ye think of that? A clown!"

He flung back his head and guffawed. The others caught the explanation with relief. They roared with laughter. Even Joe Gale's paunch shook with chuckles. That painted grin set them all roaring.

But the man who carried the painted grin on his face snarled at them:



Clowns seemed to be tumbling about the ring in every direction. . . . It was certainly impossible to tell the real men behind those painted grins.

"Yes, I'm a clown. A lost clown!"

A lost clown! Even old George Peak exploded at that, knocking over his neighbor's drink in his flung-back merriment.

"Funny, eh?" snarled back the figure in the ragged overcoat. "You cursed Gorgios! Aint yer never seen a clown?"

"Well, stranger," chuckled Joe Gale, "we never seen a lost clown. Maybe you're wanting the circus that's pitched its tent at Rochester tonight?"

"And maybe I'm not," growled the man with the painted grin, slamming the door and shuffling farther into the taproom. "But there's one thing I aint lost; that's me thirst. Gimme a double whisky, neat!"

And before the astonished gaze of craning red necks, he slammed a pound note upon the counter.

This was business. Joe Gale seized a glass and turned the tap of a porcelain barrel. The lost clown stretched out a dirty brown hand and took the drink at a gulp.

"Same again, quick!" he commanded.

This was good business. It impressed the company as well as the landlord of the Crooked Billet. Three drinks in rapid succession were swallowed by the man in the ragged overcoat, and yet not a touch of color tinged that chalky whiteness of the face nor altered the curved red grin.

"There won't be any change," he said, shaking his head as Joe Gale went to his cash-drawer behind the bar. "Keep my glass filled until I've drunk the worth of that cursed piece of paper." He shuffled toward a high-backed chair in one corner of the taproom. "I'm a—a lost clown," he muttered, sinking into it.

In strained silence the taproom characters gazed at this strange interloper of the evening. The ragged overcoat, held together by the piece of rope, and the bursting well-worn shoes told them nothing. But they speculated.

"Happen he must be from the circus at Rochester," whispered one.

"I seed a bill which said there be ten clowns in the ring," muttered another. "That be a rare number of clowns."

"Aye, and he be one of 'em," decided a third with a dogmatic stroke of his mustaches.

"If you ask me," burst out Joe Gale in a stage-whispered inspiration, "he's a clown that was fired tonight. Told to take his hook, and give his pay!"

"That be it," growled old George Peak, grudgingly envious of this quick deduction. "He be sousing hisself with his pay after getting the chuck. I could never see anything funny in clowns, not anyways."

"Landlord!" came that snarling voice from the corner. "Have you run dry of whisky? Fill my glass, damn you!"

"Sorry," replied Joe Gale. He lifted a bottle from his shelves, opened it and placed it on a table beside the slumped figure. "Maybe you'd like to help yourself."

"Maybe I would," sighed the man with the painted grin. "And now git out of my sight."

With a shrug of his shoulders Joe Gale turned his back upon the stranger. And so, automatically, did the others in the taproom. The chalk-faced apparition was no longer the subject for speculation. He was merely an out-of-work clown "sousing hisself." Pipes that had gone cold were relit. The thump of a pewter mug told of one who had discovered himself lacking. And once again old George Peak resumed command of the scene.

"Talking of pigs,"—he glared challengingly,—"I want to tell ye, gentlemen, that these Danish breeders—"

AND so the talk went on. The lost clown was ignored, forgotten. The solitary figure showed no desire to enter into the conversation. And although the disputation ranged from pigs to high politics, the lost clown continued drinking steadily until the eyes were lost in that dead white of the paint.

Came the moment when Joe Gale brought the proceedings to an end. His gaze went to the clock.

"Time, gentlemen, please!"

One by one they rose and shuffled to the door. The cool wind of the night flipped in, wafting the tobacco-smoke into strange fantastic forms. George Peak was still mumbling about pigs.

"Time, gentlemen, please!" repeated Joe Gale more commandingly.

Slowly George Peak rose.

"It's me rheumatics," he grumbled. "Gettin' worse, they are. Ah, well! Good night, Joe."

"Good night, George."

THE door closed on the last of the departing men. Joe Gale was about to shoot the bolt, when to his astonishment he saw that the man with the painted grin was still there, slumped in the high-backed chair. The landlord gave a grunt of annoyance and walked over to him.

"Hey, you! Time! We're closing down."

The figure in the shabby overcoat made no response. The red grin seemed to be laughing in the direction of the sawdust-covered floor.

Roughly, Joe Gale shook the lost clown by the shoulder.

"D'ye hear? It's time ye were on yer way."

Then, with a sense of horror dawning in his eyes, he slowly withdrew his hand. The lost clown was cold, and that heap tied up in the overcoat showed no more life than a sack of potatoes.

"Aggie! Hey, Aggie! Come ye down at once!" yelled Joe Gale.

A grumbling and a muttering from above. Slipped feet shuffling down the stairs. Then the night-dressed figure of Mrs. Gale, her shoulders smothered in a shawl and her hand grasping a lighted candlestick, materialized.

"What is it, Joe? Draggin' me out of bed at this hour—"

"Look!"

He pointed to the slumped figure in the chair.

"Good Lawd, what's that?"

"He's a clown, a lost clown."

Aggie Gale sniffed.

"Looks like a drunken clown, to me. Can't ye throw him out?"

"He—he's dead!" whispered Joe.

"Dead!"

The woman became practical at once. She put the candlestick on the bar counter and shuffled forward. She stared at that white face with its red grin for a moment, then slipped her hand between

the overcoat and the heart. When she looked at her husband again, her face reflected his own scared expression.

"He's dead, all right."

"What we're goin' to do?" whined Joe Gale, panic-stricken.

They stared down in silence for a moment. The ticking of the clock sounded horribly loud. Then into that silence came a sharp *rat-tat* on the door. The woman jumped and half stifled a scream. Joe Gale was trembling.

"Don't be a fool, Aggie," he snapped at his wife. "That be Tom Rogers, the village constable. He allus calls at this time for a nightcap."

Quickly he hurried to the door and unbolted it. Tom Rogers, fingers at his belt, stood there smiling jovially.

"Evenin', Joe. Everything cosh?"

"Come in, Tom. Come in. Reckon we're wantin' you."

The constable swaggered in.

"We've got a dead man here," added the landlord.

"Eh!" The constable staggered.

"There he be," nodded Joe in the direction of the slumped figure. "Come in two hours ago, planked a pound note on the table and sat sousing hisself with whisky. Said he was a clown, a lost clown. Reckon he belonged to some circus. I paid no more attention to him until closing time, then found him sittin' there—dead."

Gingerly the constable fumbled at that shabby overcoat. The piece of rope fell apart, disclosing a dirty shirt and a bare brown chest. The constable nodded.

"He's dead, all right," he agreed. "Gimme a strong whisky, Joe."

Hastily the landlord complied. The constable took it at one gulp.

"Better find out who he is," he muttered, and slid his hands into the pockets of the overcoat. A moment later the hands emerged, each grasping a pile of green Treasury notes.

"Lumme!" exclaimed the constable. "He wasn't wantin' for ready cash. There must be over a hunnerd pounds here."

Meticulously he began to count the notes. As he did so, a piece of pasteboard fluttered to the floor. Breathing heavily, he stooped to pick it up. Joe Gale read it from over his shoulder.

"A queer sort of clown, this," muttered the constable. He turned round on the landlord. "Better go and call up Doctor Lamb at once, Joe. Bring him along with you."

"Right you are, Tom," gasped the landlord, thankful to be active.

"Oh, and Aggie," said the constable, "gimme another double. This be serious."

Nodding to his wife, Joe Gale strode to the door. Unlatching it, he swung it open. Then, with a gasp, he staggered back. An old crone whose brown face stared at him from out of a bright yellow shawl, stood there.

"What—what ye want?" asked Joe.

The old woman spoke with difficulty.

"Is—is there a clown in here?"

Joe nodded, mutely. At the same moment he was joined by the constable.

"What be you wanting with the clown?" asked Tom Rogers.

"He's my husband," she said quietly, and stepped inside the lamplit taproom.

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR GRAVES stepped out of the train at Rochester and gazed fretfully up and down the platform. His expression was still rather forbidding, as a slim, lithe figure in a well-cut gray flannel suit came forward and took his hand.

"It's nice to see you, Inspector."

But Graves was not to be placated by that keen-featured brown face and that cordial smile.

"I don't know why you telegraphed to me to come down here today," he grumbled. "I'm very busy at the Yard just now, Heron."

Isaac Heron, a wealthy gypsy who had helped the Yard in a number of cases, allowed his gray eyes to twinkle suspiciously for a moment.

"There's nothing like a change, Inspector. But I asked you to come down here for a purpose."

"What's that?"

"I thought we might go to the circus together tonight."

Detective Inspector Graves stopped abruptly in his walk.

"D'you mean to tell me," he began explosively, "that you've brought me all the way from town to see a damned circus?"

Isaac Heron laughed.

"I promise you won't be disappointed," he said. "It's one of the best circuses on the road. Several of my old gypsy friends are in it, and I can prom-



"I arrest you, Claud Goss," Graves said, "on a charge of misapprehension of funds. It is my duty to warn you—" He got no further; with a gasp of fear the clown leveled a pistol at him.

ise you a glimpse of some good riding and, above all, some very interesting clowns."

"Clowns!" muttered Graves, bitterly. He nevertheless allowed himself to be led out of the station by this extraordinary character whose assistance in solving mysteries that had baffled Scotland Yard had redounded to the credit of Detective Inspector Graves. "In any case, my dear fellow," he added presently in a less acrid tone, "what are you doing in this town?"

"I've been here three days," replied Isaac Heron vaguely. "I was a witness at an inquest upon a poor devil of an

old gypsy who had died of heart failure in a village pub near by."

"A friend of yours?" asked the detective ironically.

Isaac Heron nodded.

"Yes. I rather liked old Samuel Lee. He came to see me in town a little over a week ago. I gave him a couple of pounds and my visiting-card. The visiting-card was found in a pocket, when they searched his dead body."

"But not the two pounds, I'll bet," said Graves.

"No," said Isaac Heron quietly. "Actually, they found over a hundred and fifty pounds on him."

The detective whistled.

"Where did that come from?"

The gypsy took his Scotland Yard friend by the arm and led him across the street.

"Old Samuel Lee had just sold his caravan and pony to a stranger. He made a good bargain. And when the money was handed over, he set off to soak himself in whisky. I would like you to have a talk with his widow, old Myra Lee. She's here in Rochester."

Inspector Graves lit a cigarette impatiently.

"I can't say that old gypsies who drink themselves to death have any interest for me," he grumbled callously.

HERON ignored this remark. "I dare say you know a good deal about disguises, Graves," he murmured.

The Inspector nodded importantly.

"I've seen through a good many in my time."

"And what would you consider the cleverest disguise of all?"

Graves pondered.

"Well, there're few criminals who can get away with a disguise. They're not used to it. Spectacles or a false wig—they're easy to see. I should say the best thing is either to grow a real beard or get rid of one. Why do you ask?"

Isaac Heron smiled.

"I think I've discovered a cleverer disguise. Imagine a man, a criminal, whom the police are seeking everywhere. In the ordinary course of your search, I imagine the police would go into East End haunts, boarding-houses, or lodging-houses at the ports."

"Generally," agreed Graves.

"But supposing your hunted criminal is clever enough to realize that," went on the gypsy. "And suppose he realized that the best way of avoiding the police was to appear publicly before crowds of people, in the glare of limelight, and yet be unrecognized?"

"Impossible!" declared Graves. "It couldn't be done."

"But it is being done."

"How?"

"Have you ever considered a clown's face?" asked Isaac Heron irrelevantly. "There is that strange, unearthly white paint which smooths out the real features. There is the black arch of the eyebrows, and the two little black strokes that hide the real eyes. Above all, there is that wide, red-painted grin stretching across the face, with the re-

sult that all clowns look alike, and even a mother wouldn't recognize her son beneath that paint. Could you beat a painted grin for hiding the worst criminal in the world?"

Graves stopped abruptly in the street.

"What's all this talk mean?" he asked.

"There are ten clowns appearing at the circus here tonight," said Isaac Heron quietly.

"Yes?"

"Samuel Lee was one of those ten clowns. His caravan followed the circus. His wife told fortunes, and he himself did odd jobs. He agreed to tumble about the ring as a clown for five shillings a night."

"Well?"

"There are still ten clowns at the circus, although Samuel Lee is dead. His widow told me that the well-dressed stranger who suddenly offered to buy the caravan and horse for a hundred and fifty pounds insisted also on taking Samuel Lee's job as a clown. He said he was doing it for a lark."

"But wouldn't the circus people realize?" asked Graves.

"Not with ten clowns in the ring, most of whom are hired at five shillings a night," explained Heron. "And as there is an afternoon performance every day, the clowns keep their paint on most of the time. Some of them sleep in it. Old Samuel Lee died in his clown paint."

"I see," muttered Graves, resuming his walk. "And you think this well-dressed man who took on Samuel Lee's job as a clown was a man anxious to disguise himself."

"He was prepared to pay a hundred and fifty pounds for a very poor sort of joke," murmured Isaac Heron. "And when the idea of the disguise suddenly came to me at the inquest on Samuel Lee, I allowed my curiosity to take me to the local police station and asked if I might see the list of missing local people. I ventured to use your name, Graves, as authority."

GRAVES grinned. "Quite all right! And what did you find?"

"Nothing that looked possible. Several missing husbands, of course, who had abandoned their wives. But not a single criminal with enough intelligence to think out such a clever plan for avoiding the police. I was giving up the idea in disgust, when a telephone message came to the station from Scotland Yard. It announced that all the ports were

being watched for an absconding financier, Claud Goss."

"Claud Goss!" exclaimed Graves. "He bunked from the City with nearly a hundred thousand pounds in bearer bonds and Treasury notes in his possession. And now I come to think of it," he added, excitedly, "he was very interested in amateur theatricals. I know for certain he hasn't got out of the country yet. By Jove! I wonder if your theory is right?"

"Then you'll come to see the clowns at the circus tonight," said Isaac Heron, smiling.

"You bet I will," said the Inspector decisively. "But what are we wandering round this town for? Where are we going?"

"I thought you might like to call in here," indicated Isaac Heron.

He had brought the Scotland Yard man to the local police station.

IT was eleven o'clock at night. Isaac Heron and the Scotland Yard man had sat throughout the circus. They had seen bareback riders, lion-tamers, and acrobats. For the most part, however, they had concentrated their attention on the ten clowns.

Clowns! They seemed to be tumbling about the ring in every direction. . . . Clowns in checkered costumes with big flaring bows and in bedraggled tail coats. Clowns hitting each other with slapsticks. Clowns playing mouth-organs, tin whistles and comic bagpipes. One clown using a water-pistol on all and sundry with devastating effect. Another clown dancing with bells jangling from every limb.

But all the clowns displayed that same stark white face, those blinking eyes and that painted grin. . . .

"You're right, my friend," said the Scotland Yard man, later. "It's a perfect disguise. Except for their garb, I couldn't tell one clown from another. And it's certainly impossible to tell the real men behind those painted grins."

"Yet one of those ten is the man we want," murmured Isaac Heron. "This is our last gamble."

They were seated inside the caravan of the dead Samuel Lee. A dim oil lamp swung from the roof. A bed, a stand of crockery, and a few odds and ends told of the poverty of the old gypsy. But the show was over and the

two men were waiting for the return of the clown who now claimed this caravan as his home.

"The show moves on toward Dover tomorrow," murmured Inspector Graves. "If this is Claud Goss, it means that he is getting nearer the exit."

"Ssh!"

The gypsy had gripped his arm. On the turf outside they could hear the quiet crunch of footsteps. Some one was approaching the caravan.

The footsteps mounted the little ladder. A kick sent the doorway open. A clown with white painted face and red grin stared down suspiciously at the intruders.

"Who are you?" he asked.

Graves recognized the clown who had used the water-pistol, squirting liquid about the ring. The Scotland Yard man rose.

"I arrest you, Claud Goss," he said quietly, "on a charge of misapprehension of funds. It is my duty to warn you—"

He got no further. With a gasp of fear the clown produced a pistol and leveled it at the detective.

Graves laughed. It was the water-pistol.

"No more clowning, Goss," he said.

"Down, you fool!" yelled Heron—and even as he shouted, the gypsy swung his fist and caught the clown a shrewd blow beneath the chin. At the same moment, a loud report rang out, and a bullet smashed against the crockery.

The clown, with a groan, tumbled to the floor.

"I—I thought it was the water-pistol," gasped Graves.

"A good job I noticed it wasn't," said Isaac Heron grimly. "He's only knocked out for a moment. You'll find a sponge and a bucket of water in the corner there, Inspector. Let's wash this paint away while he's unconscious."

THEY bent over the supine figure on the floor of the caravan. In a few moments they had wiped away the white paint and the red grin. The real man was revealed.

"That's my man," said Detective Inspector Graves. "It is Claud Goss."

He produced a pair of handcuffs. But he found time to shake the gypsy's hand.

"Thanks, Heron."

Another colorful exploit of our gypsy detective, "The Murdered Barge-Man," will be William Makin's contribution to our December issue, on sale November 1st.



On and on Ydeni plodded, the girl lying across his shoulder as one dead; and just behind him followed Tarzan of the Apes.

TARZAN and

The world's champion adventurer fares forth to new dangers in dealing with a strange white race in the Abyssinian Hinterland—said to possess the secret of eternal youth.

The Story Thus Far :

TO Tarzan in the heart of the African jungle came a group of his native friends begging help: their young girls were mysteriously disappearing; and they suspected that the unfortunates were being carried away by the Kavuru, a strange race of men said to be white who lived in the farther fastnesses of the jungle. Tarzan, his pet monkey Nkima on his shoulder, took up the trail. . . .

To Jane, Lady Greystoke—Tarzan's beautiful young wife—in London came a wealthy woman friend who had married a titled foreigner much younger than herself, Prince Sborov. The new Princess Sborov brought a curious story: they had been amusing themselves by flying in their own plane; and their pilot, Brown, who had adventured in many remote places, had told them of a weird white race in the African Hinterland who pos-

sessed the secret of eternal youth. The aging Princess was determined to fly thither and learn this precious secret; and Lady Greystoke decided to accompany them, the rest of the party to comprise the Prince and Princess, Tibbs the valet, Annette the maid, and Brown. Buffeted by a storm over a trackless African forest, however, their plane ran out of gas; Brown was lucky enough to land unharmed in the treetops. And after Jane and Prince Alexis got down to *terra firma* they were scented by a lion. . . .

Tarzan also ran into dire peril; for inquiring of a native chief concerning the direction in which the Kavuru lived, he was himself suspected of being one of that dread race; and overpowered by numbers, he was bound hand and foot, and imprisoned in a hut to await execution. (*The story continues in detail.*)

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SUDDENLY the lion broke through the underbrush into the trail a short distance behind Jane. It was then that she called her warning to Alexis.

At sight of Jane, the lion bared his fangs and growled. Then he came toward her at a trot; and as he did so, the girl leaped for an overhanging branch. As she caught it, the lion charged. He leaped for her, and his raking talons just missed her bare foot as she drew herself safely out of his reach. With a hideous growl, he whirled, and leaped again.

The Prince was only a short distance away, but he was hidden by the dense underbrush beneath the airplane. The angry growl sounded very close; the man was paralyzed with terror.

From her position on the branch of the tree, Jane could see him. "You'd better get out of there, Alexis," she said; "but don't make any noise. If he hears you, he'll come for you; he's terribly sore about something—must have missed his kill last night."

up; fasten it around you," he said. "For Pete's sake, what's the matter with you? Get a move on." But still Alexis stood there trembling, his teeth chattering, and his knees knocking together.

"Alexis, snap out of it," cried Jane. "You've got to get that belt fastened around you before the lion discovers you. Don't you understand? It's a matter of life or death with you."

"You poor sap!" yelled Brown. "Get a move on."

With trembling hands, Alexis reached for the belt, and at the same time he seemed to find his voice, and commenced to scream lustily for help.

"Keep still," warned Jane. "The lion hears you; he's looking in your direction now."

"Hurry up, you boob!" shouted Brown.

The lion was tearing through the underbrush, searching for the author of these new sounds. Jane threw another branch at him, but it did not distract his attention. He only growled and started cautiously into the brush.

the Immortal Men

By EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS

Illustrated by Frank Hoban

Alexis tried to speak, but no sound came from his throat. He just stood there trembling, an ashen pallor on his face.

Jane could not see Brown, but she knew that he was directly above Alexis. "Brown," she called, "drop the end of the strap to the Prince. —Fasten it around your body underneath your arms, Alexis; Brown and Tibbs will pull you up. I'll try to keep Numa's attention riveted on me."

The lion was pacing back and forth beneath the tree, glaring hungrily up at the girl.

Jane broke off a small dead branch and threw it at the beast. It struck him in the face; and with a roar, he leaped again for the branch on which Jane stood.

In the meantime, Brown lowered the end of the strap quickly to Alexis. "Hurry

With fumbling fingers, Alexis was tying the belt about his body.

"Hoist away, Brown," cried Jane; "the lion is coming!"

Brown and Tibbs pulled away lustily, and Alexis rose out of the underbrush.

The lion came steadily on. Now he was directly beneath the terrified man. Alexis, looking down straight into the cruel eyes of the carnivore, screamed.

Slowly, a few inches at a time, Brown and Tibbs were raising Alexis out of harm's way; but still he was perilously close to the great beast. Then the lion reared up to its full height and struck at him. A raking talon touched the heel of the man's shoe; and with a final scream, Alexis fainted.

Brown and Tibbs redoubled their efforts. The lion dropped back to the ground, gathered himself and sprang.

Again he missed, but only by inches; and before he could spring again, Alexis was safely out of his reach.

The two men hoisted the limp body of Sborov to the ship, and with considerable difficulty dragged him into the cabin.

AT sight of him, the Princess commenced to scream: "He's dead! He's dead! Oh, my darling, and your Kitty was so cross to her Allie!"

"For Pete's sake, shut up," snapped Brown. "My nerves are about shot; and anyway, the sap isn't dead; he's just scared stiff."

"Brown, how dare you speak to me like that!" cried the Princess. "Oh, it's terrible; nobody knows what I'm suffering. I mean, no one understands me; everyone is against me."

"Lord," cried Brown, "a little more of this and we'll all be nuts."

"Excuse me, madam, but he seems to be coming to," said Tibbs; "I think he'll be all right in a minute, madam."

"Do something, Annette," cried the Princess. "What are you sitting there for, just like a bump on a log? I mean, where are the smelling-salts? Get some water. Oh, isn't it terrible?"

Alexis opened his eyes and looked about him. Then he closed them and shuddered. "I thought he had me," he said in a trembling whisper.

"No such luck," said Brown.

"It was a very close call, sir, if I may make so bold as to say so, sir," said Tibbs.

Jane stepped into the cabin doorway. "All right?" she asked. "From the noise

you were making, Kitty, I thought something dreadful had happened."

"The Lord only knows what they'd do if something really should happen," said Brown disgustedly. "I'm getting fed up on all this screaming and bellyaching. I never had no royalty in my hair before, but I sure got 'em now."

Jane shook her head. "Be patient, Brown," she said. "Remember, this is all new to them, and naturally, anyway, their nerves are on edge after all that we have passed through."

"Well, aint the rest of us got nerves, miss? Aint we got a right to be upset too? But you don't hear none of us bawling around like them. I suppose being royal gives 'em the right to be nuisances."

"Never mind, now," said Jane; "you're getting as bad as the others, Brown. The thing I am interested in just now is what we are going to do about that lion. He may hang around here for hours; and as long as he does, we're just blocked. He's in a nasty mood, and it won't be safe to go down there until we know that he's cleared out. The best thing for us to do is to kill him, as he may hang around this neighborhood waiting for a chance to get some of us. He's an old fellow; and because of that, he may be a man-eater. They get that way when they are too old to bag their regular prey."

"A man-eater!" The Princess Sborov shuddered. "How horrible! I mean, how terribly horrible!"

"I think we can get rid of him," said Jane. "You brought rifles, of course, Alexis?"

"Oh, yes, indeed—two of them: high-powered rifles; they'd stop an elephant."

"Good," said Jane, "where are they?"

"They're in the baggage compartment, miss; I'll get them," said Brown.

"And bring some ammunition, too," said Jane.

"Who's going down there to shoot the horrid thing?" demanded the Princess.

"I, of course," said Jane.

"But my dear!" cried the Princess, "I mean, you just couldn't."

Brown returned with a rifle. "I couldn't find no ammunition, miss," he said.

"Where is it packed, Sborov?"

"Eh, what?" demanded the Prince.

"The ammunition!" snapped Brown.

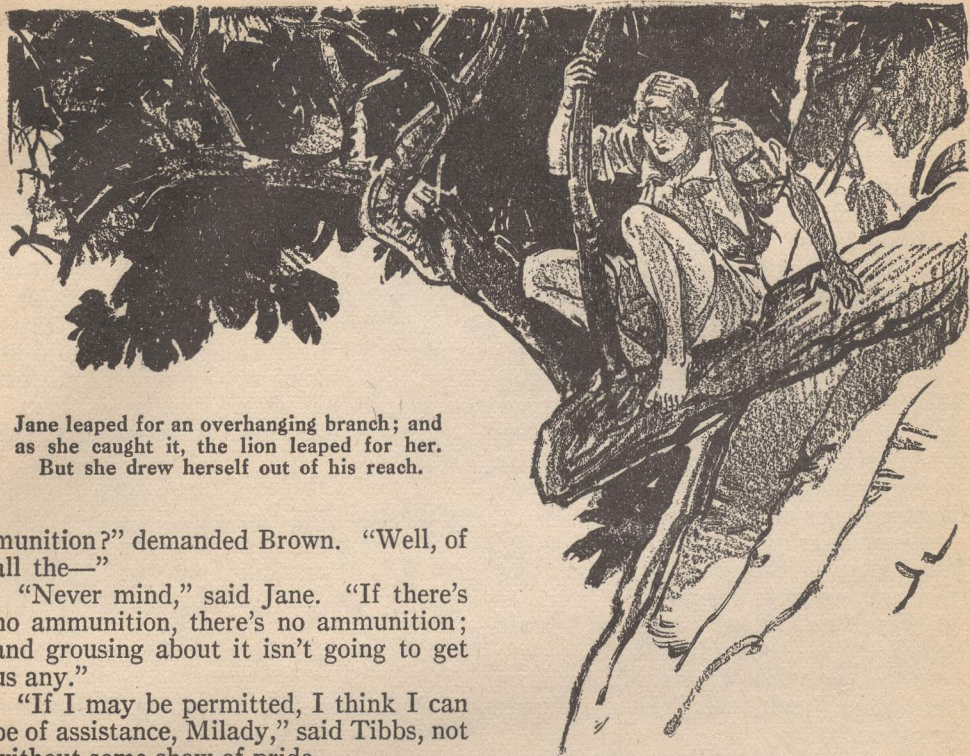
"Oh, ammunition?"

"Yes, ammunition, you—"

The Prince cleared his throat. "Well, you see, I—ah—"

"You mean you didn't bring any am-





Jane leaped for an overhanging branch; and as she caught it, the lion leaped for her. But she drew herself out of his reach.

munition?" demanded Brown. "Well, of all the—"

"Never mind," said Jane. "If there's no ammunition, there's no ammunition; and grousing about it isn't going to get us any."

"If I may be permitted, I think I can be of assistance, Milady," said Tibbs, not without some show of pride.

"How is that, Tibbs?" asked Jane.

"I have a firearm in my bag, Milady. I will kill the beast."

"That's fine, Tibbs," said Jane; "please go and get it."

As Tibbs was moving toward the doorway, he suddenly stopped. A flush slowly mantled his face; he appeared most uncomfortable.

"What's the matter, Tibbs?" asked Jane.

"I—I had forgotten, Milady," he stammered, "but my bag has already been lowered down there with the bloomin' lion."

Jane could not repress a laugh. "This is becoming a comedy of errors," she cried. "Rifles without ammunition, and our only firearm in possession of the enemy."

"Oh, my dear, what are we going to do?" demanded the Princess.

"There's nothing to do until that brute goes away. It's almost too late now anyway to try to make camp; we'll simply have to make the best of it up here for the night."

SO it was that a most unhappy and uncomfortable party shivered and grumbled through the long, dark night—a night made hideous by the roars of hunting lions and the shrill screams of stricken beasts. But at last day broke with

that uncanny suddenness that is a phenomenon of equatorial regions.

The moment that it was light enough, Jane was out reconnoitering. The lion was gone; and a survey of the surrounding country in the immediate vicinity of the ship, from the lower branches of the trees, revealed no sign of him or any other danger.

She returned relievedly to the plane.

"I think we can go down now and start making camp," she said, rapidly lacing up a pair of hiking shoes. "Is most of the baggage down, Brown?"

"All but a few pieces, miss," he replied.

"Well, get it down as rapidly as possible; then we'll cut an opening to the trail; it is only a few yards."

"All right, miss," said Brown. "Come on, Your Majesty; we'll lower you down to unhook the stuff at the other end."

"You won't lower *me* down," said Alexis. "I wouldn't go down there alone again for all the baggage in the world."

Brown looked at the man with disgust that he made no effort to conceal. "All right," he said, "you stay up here and help Tibbs; I'll go down and unfasten the stuff when you lower it to me."

"If you think I'm going to balance out there on that limb and unload the baggage compartment, you're mistaken," said the Prince. "It's absolutely out of

the question; I get very dizzy in high places, and I should most certainly fall."

"Well, what are you going to do?" demanded Brown. "—Sit around here while the rest of us wait on you?"

"That's what you servants were hired for," said Alexis.

"Oh, yeah? Well—"

"I'll go below," said Jane. "Brown, you and Tibbs lower the stuff to me. Now let's get busy." And with that she turned and dropped through the trees to the ground below.

WITH a grunt of disgust, Brown climbed out on the limb that led to the baggage compartment, followed by Tibbs; and the two soon lowered away the remainder of the luggage.

"Now lower your passengers," called Jane, after Brown had told her that there was no more baggage.

"Come on, Your Majesty," said Brown; "you're going first."

"I told you that I wouldn't go down there alone," said the Prince. "Lower the others."

"All right, Your Majesty; but if you don't go now, you'll either climb down yourself, or stay here till hell freezes over, for all I care. Come ahead, Annette; I guess you're the one to go first, and then we'll lower the old lady."

"Brown, how dare you refer to me so disrespectfully?" It was the voice of the Princess Sborov, coming from the interior of the cabin.

"There's nothing wrong with her ears," said Brown, with a grin.

"I'm terribly afraid, Mr. Brown," said Annette.

"You needn't be, little one," he replied; "we'll see that nothing happens to you. Come on, sit down in the doorway, and I'll put this belt around you."

"You won't drop me?"

"Not a chance, my dear. I might drop royalty, but not you."

She flashed him a quick smile. "You are so very nice, Mr. Brown," she said.

"You just finding that out? Well, come on, sister; climb out on this branch here. I'll help you. Steady—now sit down. Ready, Tibbs?"

"Ready, sir," replied Tibbs.

"All right. Now down you go."

Annette clutched her rosary, closed her eyes, and started praying; but before she realized it, she had touched the ground, and Jane was helping to take the belt from about her.

"Now, Princess—" called Brown.

"Oh, I can't move," cried the Princess. "I'm paralyzed. I mean, I really am."

Brown turned to Sborov. "Go in there, Mister, and fork your old lady out," he snapped. "We aint got no time to fool around. Tell her if she don't come *pronto*, we'll leave you both up here."

"You unspeakable ruffian!" sputtered the Prince.

"Shut up, and go on and do what I tell you to," growled the pilot.

Sborov turned back to his wife and helped her to the door of the cabin, but one glance down was enough for her. She screamed and shrank back.

"Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up!" said Brown.

"I can't. I mean, I just can't, Brown," whimpered the Princess.

Brown made his way to the cabin. He carried the end of a long strap with him. "Come on," he said, "let me get this around you."

"But I can't do it, I tell you. I mean, I shall die of fright."

"You won't die of nothing; half-witted people live forever."

"That will be enough out of you, Brown. I have endured all of your insults that I am going to." The Princess bridled and attempted to look very dignified—in which attempt, because of her disheveled condition, she failed miserably.

Brown had stooped and fastened the belt about her.

"Ready, Tibbs?" he asked.

"Yes sir. All ready, sir," replied the valet.

"Come on then, Princess. Here, Your Majesty, give me a lift. Shove on her from behind."

BROWN pulled from in front, and Alexis pushed from behind; and the Princess Sborov shrieked and clawed at everything in sight in an attempt to get a hold that they could not break.

"What's the matter up there?" demanded Jane. "Is anyone hurt?"

"Oh, no, no," replied Brown. "We're just moving the better half of the royal family. —Now listen, Princess, we're doing this for your own good; if you stay up here alone, you'll starve to death."

"Yes, go on, Kitty. You're delaying things," said Alexis.

"A lot you'd care if I were killed, Alexis! I suppose you'd be glad if I were dead—it's all that will you got me to make. I was a big fool to do it; but believe me, I mean, just as soon as I find



The ape-man, raising his face to the sky, voiced the kill-cry of the victorious bull ape. At that weird and hideous call, the white savage shrank back.

writing-materials, I'm going to change it, after what you said to me and what you called me. I'll cut you off without a cent, Alexis, without a cent."

The eyes of Prince Sborov closed to two ugly slits. His brow contracted in a frown, but he made no reply.

Brown took the Princess' hands and held them away from the chair to which she had been clinging. "There aint no use, Princess," he said, a little less harshly this time, for he saw that the woman was genuinely terrified. "Tibbs and I'll see that you don't get hurt none. We'll lower you easy, and Lady Greystoke and Annette are down there to help you. Just get hold of yourself and show a little spunk for a minute, and it will be over."

"Oh, I shall die, I know I shall die!" wailed the Princess Sborov.

But Brown and Alexis lifted her out of the cabin onto a branch that was close to the doorway. Slowly they eased her off it, and then lowered her carefully to the ground.

"Well, Tibbs," said Brown, "I guess you're next. Do you want to be lowered, or will you climb down?"

"I shall climb down," replied Tibbs. "You and I can go together and perhaps help one another."

"How about me, my man?" demanded Sborov.

"You climb too, you louse, or you stay up here," replied Brown; "and I don't mean maybe!"

CHAPTER VIII

YDENI THE KAVURU

FRAMED in the small doorway of the hut and silhouetted against the lesser darkness beyond, Tarzan saw the figure of his stealthy nocturnal visitor and knew that it was a man.

Helpless in his bonds, the Lord of the Jungle could only wait, for he could not defend himself. And though he chafed at the thought of giving up his life without an opportunity to defend it, he was still unmoved and unafraid.

The figure crept closer, groping in the darkness; then suddenly Tarzan spoke. "Who are you?" he demanded.

The creature sought to silence him with a sibilant hiss. "Not so loud," he cautioned. "I am Gupingu, the witch-doctor."

"What do you want?"

"I have come to set you free. Go back to your people, Kavuru, and tell them

that Gupingu saved you from death. Tell them that because of this, they must not harm Gupingu or take his daughters from him."

Darkness hid the faint smile with which Tarzan received this charge. "You are a wise man, Gupingu," he said. "Now cut my bonds."

"One thing more—" said Gupingu.

"What is that?"

"You must promise never to tell Udalo, or any of my people, that I freed you."

"They will never know from me," replied the ape-man, "if you will tell me where your people think we Kavuru live."

"You live to the north, beyond a barren country, by a high mountain that stands alone in the center of a plain," explained Gupingu.

"Do your people know the trail to the Kavuru country?"

"I know it," replied the witch-doctor; "but I promise not to lead anyone there."

"That is well—if you really know."

"I do know," insisted Gupingu.

"Tell me how you would reach this trail; then I shall know whether you know or not."

"To the north of our kraal, leading to the north, is an old elephant-trail. It winds much, but it leads always toward the country of the Kavuru. Much bamboo grows on the slopes of the mountain beside your village, and there the elephants have gone for years to feed on the young shoots."

THE witch-doctor came closer and felt for the bonds about Tarzan's ankles. "After I have freed you," he said, "wait here until I have had time to return to my hut; then go silently to the gates of the village; there you will find a platform just inside the palisade from which the warriors shoot their arrows over the top when enemies attack us. From there you can easily climb over the top of the palisade, and drop to the ground on the outside."

"Where are my weapons?" demanded Tarzan.

"They are in the hut of Udalo, but you cannot get them. A warrior sleeps just inside the doorway; you would awaken him if you tried to enter."

"Cut my bonds," said the ape-man.

With his knife, Gupingu severed the thongs about the prisoner's ankles and wrists. "Wait now, until I have reached my hut," he said, and turning, crawled silently through the doorway.

The ape-man stood up and shook himself. He rubbed his wrists and then his ankles to restore circulation. As he waited for Gupingu to reach his hut, he considered the possibility of regaining his weapons.

Presently, dropping to his knees, he crawled from the hut; and when he stood erect again upon the outside, he drew a deep breath. It was good to be free. On silent feet he moved down the village street. Other than in silence, he sought no concealment, for he knew that even if he were discovered, they could not take him again before he could reach the palisade and scale it.

AS he approached the chief's hut, he paused. The temptation was great; for it takes time and labor to produce weapons, and there were his own only a few paces from him.

He saw a faint light illuminating the interior of the hut—a very faint light from the embers of a dying fire. He approached the entrance, which was much larger than those of the other huts; and just inside and across the threshold, he saw the figure of a sleeping warrior.

Tarzan stooped and looked into the interior. His quick, keen eyes, accustomed to darkness, discovered much more than might yours or mine; and one of the first things they discovered were his weapons, lying near the fire beyond the body of the warrior.

The throat of the sleeping man lay bare and fully exposed. It would have been the work of but a moment for the steel-thewed fingers of the ape-man to throttle life from that unconscious figure. Tarzan considered the possibilities of this plan, but he discarded it for two reasons: One was that he never chose to kill wantonly; and the other, and probably the dominating reason, was that he was sure that the man would struggle even if he could not cry out and that his struggles would awaken the sleepers inside the hut, an event which would preclude the possibility of Tarzan's retrieving his weapons. So he decided upon another and even more dangerous plan.

Stooping and moving cautiously, he stepped over the body of the warrior. He made no sound, and the two steps took him to his weapons.

First of all, he retrieved his precious knife, which he slipped into the sheath at his hip; then he adjusted the quiver of arrows behind his right shoulder and looped his rope across his left. Gathering

his short spear and bow in one hand, he turned again toward the entrance, after a hasty glance around the interior of the hut to assure himself that its occupants were all asleep.

At that instant, the warrior rolled over and opened his eyes. At the sight of a man standing between himself and the fire, he sat up. In the gloom of the interior, it was impossible for him to know that this was an enemy, and the natural assumption was that one of the inmates of the hut was moving about in the night. Yet the figure did not seem familiar, and the warrior was puzzled.

"Who's that?" he demanded. "What's the matter?"

Tarzan took a step nearer the man. "Silence," he whispered. "One sound, and you die! I am the Kavuru."

The black's lower jaw dropped; his eyes went wide. Even in the semi-darkness, Tarzan could see him tremble.

"Go outside," directed the ape-man, "and I will not harm you; go quietly."

Shaking like a leaf, the warrior did as he was bid; and Tarzan followed him. He made the warrior accompany him to the gates and open them; then he passed out of the village of Udalo into the black jungle night. A moment later he heard the shouts of the warrior as he aroused the village, but Tarzan knew that there would be no pursuit. They would not dare follow a Kavuru into the night.

FOR an hour Tarzan followed the trail toward the north in accordance with Gupingu's directions. All about him were the noises of the jungle night—stealthy movements in the underbrush, the sound of padded feet, the coughing grunts of a lion near by, the roar of a distant one; but his sensitive ears and nostrils told him where danger lurked; and he was always alert to avoid it.

He was moving up-wind; and presently he caught the scent of a lion that had not fed—a hunting lion, a hungry lion; and Tarzan took to the trees. A short search revealed a comfortable resting-place, and here he lay up for the remainder of the night. Wondering what had become of Nkima, whom he had not seen since he was captured, he fell asleep.

With the coming of dawn, he moved on again northward; while back in the village of Udalo, little Nkima cowered among the branches of the tree above the chief's hut.

He was a most unhappy little monkey, a very frightened little monkey. During

the night the blacks had run from their huts shouting and jabbering. That had awakened Nkima, but he had not known the cause of it; he did not know that it meant that his master had escaped from the village. He thought Tarzan was still lying in the hut where Nkima had seen the Bukena take him.

WHEN Nkima awoke again, dawn was dispelling the darkness. Below him, the village seemed deserted. He heard no sound of life from any hut. He looked down upon that one to which they had dragged his master; and summoning all his courage, he dropped quickly to the ground and scampered along the village street to the entrance to this hut.

A woman, coming from her hut to start her cooking-fire, saw the little monkey and tried to catch him; but he escaped her, and racing across the village, scaled the palisade.

Not daring to enter the village again, and terrified at the thought of being alone in this strange country, Nkima fled through the jungle in the direction of home. And so Nkima went his way, not knowing that his master had escaped. . . .

All day Tarzan made his way north along the winding elephant-trail. It was not until late in the afternoon that he was able to make a kill; and then after feeding, he lay up once more for the night.

In the afternoon of the second day the nature of the country changed. The jungle became more open, and there were parklike places where there was little or no underbrush, and the trees grew farther apart. It was a country entirely new to Tarzan, and as such whetted his imagination and aroused within him the instinct of exploration which had always been a powerful factor in affecting his destiny; for he had that intelligent inquisitiveness which set him above the other beasts of the jungle.

As he moved silently along his way, constantly on the alert, a vagrant breeze carried to his nostrils a strange scent.

Tarzan was puzzled. The scent was that of a Tarmangani, yet there was a difference. It was an odor entirely new to him; and then, mingling with it, but fainter, came the familiar scent-spoor of Numa the lion.

Those two in proximity often meant trouble, and while Tarzan was not particularly interested in saving the man from the lion, or the lion from the man, whichever was hunting the other, natural curiosity prompted him to investigate.



"If Tibbs sees a lion, he can throw that thing at him," said Brown. "It aint any good for nothing else!"

The trees ahead of him grew sufficiently close together so that he could move through their branches; and this he elected to do, since always it gave him an advantage to come from above upon those he sought, especially where, in the case of men, they would not be expecting him.

The perception of the eyes of man is normally in a horizontal plane, while those of the cat family, with their vertical pupils, detect things above them far more quickly than would a man. Perhaps this is because for ages the cat family has hunted its prey in trees, and even though the lion no longer does so, he still has the eyes of his smaller cousins.

As Tarzan swung in the direction of the strange scent-spoor, he was aware that the odor of the lion was becoming stronger much more rapidly than the other scent, a fact which convinced him that the lion was approaching the man, though whether by accident or intent he could not of course determine; but the fact that the lion-scent was that of a hungry lion, led him to believe that the beast was stalking the man.

Any beast with a full belly gives off a different odor from one that is empty; and as an empty stomach is always a hungry one, and as hungry lions are hunting lions, to Tarzan's mind it was

a foregone conclusion that the man was the quarry and the lion the hunter.

Tarzan came in sight of the man first, and the initial glimpse brought the Lord of the Jungle to a sudden stop.

HERE indeed was a white man, but different from any white man whom Tarzan had seen before. The fellow was clothed only in what appeared to be a loin-cloth made of gorilla-hide. His ankles and wrists and arms were loaded with bracelets; a many-stranded necklace of human teeth fell across his breast. A slender cylinder of bone or ivory ran transversely through the pierced septum of his nose; his ears were ornamented with heavy rings. Except for a mane of hair from his forehead to the nape of his neck, his skull was shaved; and in this mane were fastened gay feathers which floated above a face hideously painted; yet, with all these earmarks of the savage negro, the man was undoubtedly white, even though his skin was bronzed by much exposure to the weather.

He was sitting on the ground with his back against a tree, eating something from a skin bag fastened to the string that supported his loin-cloth, and it was apparent that he was absolutely unaware of the proximity of the lion.

Cautiously, silently, Tarzan moved nearer until he was in the tree directly above the unconscious man. As he examined him more closely, he recalled the many fables concerning the Kavuru, and especially the one which described them as white savages.

This stranger, then, might be a Kavuru. It seemed reasonable to assume that he was; but further speculation on this subject was interrupted by a low snarl a short distance away.

Instantly the savage white was on his feet. In one hand he grasped a heavy spear, in the other a crude knife.

THE lion burst from the underbrush at full charge. He was so close that the man had no chance to seek safety in the tree above him. All that he could do, he did. Swiftly his spear hand flew back, and in the next lightning move he launched the heavy weapon.

Perhaps the suddenness of this unexpected attack had momentarily unnerved him, for he made a clean miss; and simultaneously Tarzan leaped for the carnivore from a branch above the two.

He struck the beast at the shoulder diagonally from above as the lion reared upon his hind legs to seize his victim. The impact of the ape-man's body toppled the lion upon its side; with a frightful roar, it regained its feet, but not before the ape-man had locked his powerful legs around the small of its body and encircled its massive throat with one great arm.

As the two beasts fought, the white savage stood awe-stricken, witnessing the strange duél. He heard the growls and roars of the man mingle with those of the lion. He saw them roll upon the ground together as lashing talons sought to reach the bronzed hide of the man-thing; and then he saw the knife-hand rise and fall; and each time it drove the blade deep into the side of the king of beasts, until at last the roaring ceased, and the tawny body collapsed in death.

The ape-man leaped erect. He placed a foot upon the carcass of his foe, and raising his face to the sky, voiced the kill-cry of the victorious bull ape.

At that weird and hideous call, the white savage shrank back and clutched the hilt of his knife more tightly. Then, as the last weird note died away in the distance, Tarzan turned and faced the creature whose life he had saved.

The two stood appraising each other in silence for a moment; then the savage

spoke. "Who are you?" he demanded, in the same dialect that the Bukena used.

"I am Tarzan of the Apes," replied the ape-man. "And you?"

"I am Ydeni the Kavuru."

Tarzan experienced that sense of satisfaction which one feels when events bear out his judgment. This was, indeed, a bit of good fortune, for now he would at least know what sort of people the Kavuru were. Perhaps this fellow would even guide him to the country he sought.

"But why did you kill the lion?" asked Ydeni.

"If I had not, he would have killed you."

"Why should you care if he killed me? Am I not a stranger?"

The ape-man shrugged. "Perhaps it was because you are a white man," he said.

Ydeni shook his head. "I do not understand you. I've never seen anyone like you before. You are not a black; you are not a Kavuru. What are you?"

"I am Tarzan," replied the ape-man. "I am looking for the village of the Kavuru; now you can take me there. I wish to speak with your chief."

Ydeni scowled and shook his head. "No one comes to the village of the Kavuru," he said, "other than those who come there to die. Because you have saved my life, I will not take you there; nor will I kill you now, as I should. Go your way, Tarzan, and see that it does not lead you to the village of the Kavuru."

CHAPTER IX

SHEETA THE LEOPARD

WITH the airplane party safely deposited on the ground, Brown cut a narrow path to the trail, using a small hand-ax that fortunately had been included in the heterogeneous and generally quite useless impedimenta that Prince and Princess Sborov had thought essential to the success of their expedition.

Tibbs had offered to help cut trail, but a lifetime of valeting had not fitted him for anything so practical as wielding a hand-ax. He meant well, but he could hit nothing that he aimed at; and for fear that he might commit mayhem or suicide, Brown took the implement from him.

Sborov did not offer to help; and Brown ignored him entirely, knowing that he would prove less efficient, if pos-

sible, than Tibbs. But when it came to transporting the baggage, the pilot insisted that the Prince do his share.

"You may be the scion of a long line of cab-drivers," he said, "but you are going to work, or get a punch on the nose."

After the luggage had been transported to the little clearing beside the stream Jane had found, she directed the building of a boma and some rude shelters.

IN this, the brunt of the work fell on Brown and Jane, though Annette and Tibbs assisted to the best of their ability. No one expected Kitty Sborov to do anything but moan, nor did she. Alexis was assigned to the building of the boma after some one else had cut the brush—a job that was far beyond either his physical or mental attainments.

"I can't see how guys like him ever live to grow up," grumbled Brown, "nor what good they are after they do grow up. I never seen such a total loss before in my life."

Jane laughed. "He dances divinely, Brown," she said.

"I'll bet he does," replied the pilot. "Damned gigolo, bringing along just a dinky little hand-ax and rifles without any ammunition." He spat the words out disgustedly. "And look at all this here junk! Maybe there's something in it; we ought to take an inventory and see what we got."

"That's not a bad idea," said Jane. "Oh, by the way, Tibbs, where's that gun of yours? We really should have it handy."

"Yes, Milady, right away," said Tibbs. "I never travel without it; one can never tell when one is going to need it, and especially in Africa, with all these lions and things."

He located his bag, rummaged through it, and finally located the weapon, which he withdrew gingerly and exhibited not without considerable pride.

"There she is, Milady," he said; "and rather a beauty, I fancy, too."

Jane's heart sank as she looked at the little single-shot .22 short pistol that Tibbs dangled before her so proudly.

Brown burst into a loud laugh. "Say," he said, "if the Germans had known you had that, there wouldn't have been no World War."

"Beg pardon, Mr. Brown," said Tibbs stiffly; "it is really a very fine weapon. The man I got it from said so himself. It stood me back seven bob, sir."

"Let me see it," said Brown. Taking the pistol, he opened the breech. "It aint loaded!" he said.

"Bless me, no!" exclaimed Tibbs; "I wouldn't think of carrying a loaded weapon, sir; it's too dangerous. One never knows when it might go off."

"Well," said Jane, "it may come in handy shooting small game. Got plenty of ammunition for it?"

"Well—er—Milady," stammered Tibbs, "you see, I've always been intending to buy ammunition for it, but I never got around to it."

Brown looked at the Englishman in pitying astonishment. "Well, I'll be—"

Jane sat down on an up-ended suitcase and burst into laughter. "Forgive me, Tibbs, but really it's too funny," she cried.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," said Brown. "We'll put Tibbs on guard tonight, and if he sees a lion, he can throw that thing at him. It aint any good for nothing else."

"I don't see how you can laugh, Jane," said Kitty. "Suppose a lion should come! Tibbs, you should have brought ammunition. It is very careless of you."

"It doesn't make any difference, Kitty; for as far as a lion is concerned, that pistol is just as effective empty as it would be loaded."

"I know we are all going to be killed," moaned Kitty. "I wish I were back in the ship; it's much safer there."

"Don't worry," said Jane; "the boma will be some protection, and we will keep a fire going all night. Most beasts are afraid of a fire; they won't come near one."

LA TE in the afternoon a shelter was completed with two compartments, one for the women and one for the men. It was a very crude affair, but it provided some protection from the elements, and it induced a feeling of security far greater than it warranted, for it is a fact that if we can hide in something, however flimsy, we feel much safer than we do in the open.

After the shelters and boma were well under way, Jane busied herself with another activity. Kitty had been watching her for some time, and finally her curiosity got the best of her.

"What in the world are you doing, dear?" she asked, as she watched Jane shaping a small branch with the hand-ax.

"I am making weapons—a bow and arrows, and a spear."

"Oh, how perfectly wonder—I mean, isn't it ducky? It's just like you, my dear, to think of archery; it will help us to pass the time away."

"What I am making will help us obtain food and defend ourselves," replied Jane.

"Oh, of course!" exclaimed Kitty. "How perfectly silly of me! But when I think of archery, I always think of little arrows sticking in the straw target. They are so colorful, my dear—I mean, the way they are painted. I recall such beautiful pictures of young people in sport-clothes, of green turf, and sunshine against a background of lovely trees. But who do you suppose ever thought of using bows and arrows to hunt game? I'm sure it must be original with you, my dear; but it's very clever of you, if you can hit anything."

BY the middle of the afternoon Jane had completed a very crude bow and half a dozen arrows, the tips of which she had fire-hardened.

Her work completed, she stood up and surveyed the camp. "You are getting along splendidly," she said. "I'm going out to see what I can get for supper. Have you a knife, Brown?"

"But, my dear, I mean, you're not going out there alone?" cried Kitty.

"Sure she's not," said Brown. "I'll go along with you, miss."

"I'm afraid," said Jane with a smile, "that where I am going, you couldn't follow. Here, let me have your knife."

"I reckon I can go anywhere you can go, miss," said Brown, grinning.

"Let me have the knife," said Jane. "Why, it's a nice big one! I always did like to see a man carrying a man-sized knife."

"Well, if we are ready," said Brown, "let's start."

Jane shook her head. "I told you, you couldn't follow me," she said.

"Want to lay a little bet on that?"

"Sure," said Jane. "I'll bet you a pound sterling against this knife that you can't keep up with me for a hundred yards."

"I'll just take you up on that, miss," said Brown; "let's get going."

"Come ahead, then," said Jane. And with that, she ran lightly across the clearing, leaped for a low-hanging branch, and swinging herself into the trees, was out of sight in an instant.

Brown ran after her, seeking to catch a glimpse of her from the ground, but he

was soon floundering in heavy undergrowth.

It didn't take him long to realize that he was beaten, and rather crestfallen, he returned to the camp.

"Gracious!" exclaimed the Princess. "Did you ever see anything like it? It was perfectly wonderful. I mean, it really was; but I am so afraid something will happen to her out there alone. Alexis, you should not have permitted it."

"I thought Brown was going with her," said Alexis. "If I had known that he was afraid, I would have gone myself."

Brown eyed Alexis with contempt too deep for words as he returned to his work on the shelter.

"I should think anyone would be afraid to go out there," said Annette, who was helping Brown patch the roof with large leaves. "Lady Greystoke must be very brave."

"She's sure got nerve," said Brown; "and did you see the way she took to them trees? Just like a monkey."

"Just as though she had lived in them all her life," said Annette.

"Do you really think she can kill anything with her bow and arrows?" asked Tibbs. "They look so—ah—inadequate, if I may make so bold as to say so."

"Say," said Brown, "she's not the kind who would go out there if she didn't know what she was doing. I thought all the time, until just before we crashed, that she was another one of them silly society dames that had never had anything in her noodle heavier than champagne-bubbles; but believe me, I take my hat off to her now; and you can believe me, when I take orders from a dame, she's got to be some dame."

"Lady Greystoke is a very remarkable woman," said Alexis, "and a very beautiful one. Kindly remember also, Brown, that she is a lady, a member of the English nobility, my man; I resent the lack of deference you show by referring to her as a dame. I know you Americans are notoriously ill-bred, but there is a limit to what I can stand from you."

"YEAH?" inquired Brown. "And what are you going to do about it?"

"Alexis, you forget yourself," said the Princess. "You should not stoop to quarrel with a—an employee."

"You're darned tootin', lady," said Brown. "He better not stoop to quarrel with this bozo; I'm just laying for an excuse to push in his face."

Annette laid a hand upon Brown's arm.

"Please, Mr. Brown," she said, "do not quarrel. Is it not bad enough as it is, that we should make it worse by always quarreling among ourselves?"

Brown turned and looked at her quizzically; then he covered her little hand with his. "I guess you're right, girlie, at that. I'll lay off him, if he'll lay off me." He closed his hand on hers. "I guess you and me's going to hit it off O.K., kid."

"Hit what off, Mr. Brown?"

"I mean, we're going to be pals!" he exclaimed.

"Pals? What are they?"

"Buddies—friends. I thought you savvied English."

"Oh, friends; yes, I understand that. I should like to be friends with you, Mr. Brown. Annette likes to be friends with everyone."

"That's all right, baby; but don't be too promiscuous; I have a feeling that I'm going to like you a lot."

The French girl cast her eyes down coquettishly. "I think, Mr. Brown, we had better get along with our work, or we shall have only half a roof over our heads tonight."

"O. K., kiddo; we'll talk about this friendship business later. There ought to be a full moon tonight."

AFTER Jane left the camp, she moved rapidly and silently through trees paralleling the little stream, which she tried to keep in view while she searched for a place where signs indicated that beasts were accustomed to come to drink.

A light breeze was blowing in her face, bringing faintly various scent-spoors to her nostrils, which, while not as sensitive as those of her mate, were nevertheless far more sensitive than those of an ordinary civilized person. Jane had learned long ago that senses may be developed by training, and she had let no opportunity pass to train hers to the fullest of her ability.

Now, very faintly, she caught the suggestion of a scent that sent her nerves to tingling with that thrill which only the huntsman knows. Quarry lay ahead.

The girl moved even more cautiously than before; scarcely a leaf stirred to her passage; and presently she saw ahead that which she sought—a small antelope, a bush-buck, which was moving daintily along the trail just ahead of her.

Jane increased her speed; but now more than ever it was imperative that she move silently, for the little animal

below her was nervous and constantly alert. At the slightest unusual sound, it would be gone like a flash.

Presently she came within range, but there was always intervening foliage that might deflect her arrow. Patience is the most important asset of the jungle hunter; and patience she had learned from Tarzan, and from her own experiences.

Now the antelope halted suddenly in its tracks and turned its head to the left; at the same instant Jane was aware of a movement in the underbrush in that direction. She saw that she could wait no longer; already something had startled her quarry. There was a small opening in the foliage between her and the antelope. Like lightning, she drew her bow; the string snapped with a *whang*, and the shaft buried itself deep in the body of the antelope behind its left shoulder. It leaped high into the air and fell dead.

Jane had reason to suspect that something else was stalking the antelope; but she could see nothing of it, and the turn in the trail had resulted in a cross-wind that would carry the scent of the creature away from her.

Trusting to luck and pinning her faith in her speed, Jane dropped lightly to the trail. She knew that it was a risky thing to do; but she was hungry, and she was aware that all her companions were hungry; they must have food, for a cursory examination of the baggage had revealed the dismaying fact that their stock of provisions consisted of a few chocolate bars and six bottles of cognac.

So she ran now to the fallen animal.

She worked quickly, as Tarzan had taught her to work. Slitting its throat to let it bleed, she quickly eviscerated it to reduce the weight; and as she worked, she heard again those stealthy sounds in the underbrush not far distant along the back trail.

Her work completed, she closed the knife and slipped it into her pocket; then she raised the carcass of the little antelope to her shoulder. As she did so, an angry growl shattered the silence of the jungle; and Sheeta the leopard stepped into the trail twenty paces from her.

INSTANTLY Jane saw it would be impossible to escape with her kill, but resentment flared high in her bosom at the thought of relinquishing her prey to the savage cat.

She felt reasonably sure that she could save herself by taking to the trees and leaving the carcass of the antelope to



Resentment flared in Jane's bosom at the thought of relinquishing her prey to the savage cat. . . . She drove an arrow straight at the breast of the leopard.

Sheeta, but a sudden anger against the injustice of this *contretemps* impelled her to stand her ground and caused her to do a very foolish thing.

Dropping the antelope, she strung her bow, and pulling it back to the full limit of her strength, she drove an arrow straight at the breast of Sheetta.

As it struck, the beast voiced a horrifying scream of pain and rage; and then it charged.

To those in the camp, the cry sounded almost human.

"*Sapristi!* What was that?" cried Alexis.

"*Mon Dieu*, it was a woman's scream!" exclaimed Annette.

"Lady Greystoke!" said Brown, horrified.

"Oh, Alexis, Alexis! Annette!" cried the Princess. "My smelling-salts, quick; I am going to faint."

Brown seized the puny hand-ax and started in the direction of the sound.

"Oh, where are you going?" cried Kitty. "Don't leave me, don't leave me!"

"Shut up, you old fool," snapped Brown. "Lady Greystoke must be in trouble. I am going to find out."

Tibbs pulled his empty pistol from his pocket.

"I'll go with you, Mr. Brown," he said; "we can't let anything happen to Milady."

CHAPTER X

ABDUCTION

WHEN Ydeni refused to lead Tarzan to the village of the Kavuru, he was neither surprised nor disappointed. He knew men, and especially savage men, and the numerous taboos that govern their individual and tribal lives. He would have preferred to go to the chief of the Kavuru with one of his own people whom Tarzan had befriended; but if this were impossible, he was at least no worse off than he had been before he had met Ydeni. And he was confident that no matter how brutal or savage the man might be, he was probably not without a spark of gratitude for the service Tarzan had rendered him.

"If I came as a friend," said Tarzan; "surely there could be no harm in that."

"The Kavuru have no friends," replied Ydeni.

The ape-man shrugged. "Then I shall come as an enemy."

"You will die! You saved my life; so I do not wish you to be killed, but I could not prevent it; it is the law of the Kavuru."

"Then you kill the girls that you steal?" demanded the ape-man.

"Who says the Kavuru steal girls?" the white savage countered.

"It is well known among all people. Why do you do it? Have you not enough women of your own?"

"There are no Kavuru women," replied Ydeni. "The rains have come and gone as many times as there are fingers and toes upon four men, since there was a Kavuru woman—since the last one gave her life, that the men of the Kavuru might live."

"Eighty years since there have been women among you?" demanded the ape-man. "That is impossible, Ydeni; for you are still a young man, and you must have had a mother; but perhaps she was not a Kavuru?"

"My mother was a Kavuru, but she died long before the last woman. But I have told you too much already, stranger. The ways of the Kavuru are not as the ways of lesser people, and they are not for the ears of lesser people. To speak of them is taboo. Go your way now, and I will go mine."

Convinced that he could get no more information from Ydeni, Tarzan took to the trees, and a moment later was lost to the sight of the Kavuru. Purposely he had gone toward the west so that Ydeni would be deceived into thinking that he was not on the right trail toward the Kavuru country. However, he did not go far in that direction, but quickly doubled back toward the spot where he had left the white savage; for he was determined that if Ydeni would not lead him willingly to his village, he should do so unknowingly.

When Tarzan had returned to the spot where he killed the lion, the Kavuru was no longer there; and assuming that he had gone toward the north, his pursuer set off in that direction.

After pursuing a northerly course for a short time, Tarzan realized that there were no indications that his quarry had come this way.

Quickly he started a great circle in order to pick up the scent-spoor.

FOR an hour he ranged through forest and open glade before Usha the wind carried to his nostrils the scent of Ydeni; and when at last he came upon the object of his search, Tarzan was perplexed, for the Kavuru was moving due south.

Tarzan reasoned that Ydeni might be doing this to throw him off the trail, or perchance he had misinformed him as to the location of the Kavuru village; but he was sure now that if he clung te-

naciously to the trail, Ydeni would eventually lead him to his goal.

Back over the long trail he had come since he had escaped from the village of Udalo the chief, Tarzan dogged the footsteps of his quarry; yet never once was Ydeni aware that he was being followed, though oftentimes he was plainly visible to the ape-man.

TARZAN found it interesting to study this strange man whose very existence was tinged with mystery. He noted the weapons and the ornaments of Ydeni, and saw that they differed from any that he had ever seen before. He was particularly interested in the slender fiber rope wrapped many times around the Kavuru's waist; for of all the savages in the jungle, as far as Tarzan knew, he alone used a rope as a weapon. He wondered just how Ydeni would employ it.

Late the next afternoon, when Tarzan knew they must be nearing the village of the Bukena, he was surprised to see Ydeni take to the trees, through which he moved with considerable agility and speed, though in no respect to compare with those of the ape-man.

He proceeded with the utmost wariness, stopping often to listen intently. Presently he uncoiled the rope from about his waist, and Tarzan saw there was a running noose in one end of it.

Now Tarzan heard voices ahead of them; they came faintly as from a great distance. It was evident that Kavuru heard them too, for he slightly changed his direction to bear more in that from which the voices came.

Tarzan was keenly interested. The attitude of the man in front of him was that of the keen hunter, stalking his prey. Tarzan felt that one mystery was about to be cleared up.

In a short time the Kavuru came to the edge of the clearing and halted. Below him, working in the small fields, were a number of women. Ydeni looked them over; presently he espied a girl of about fifteen, and made his way to another tree nearer her.

Tarzan followed, watching intently every move of the Kavuru. He heard him voice a strange call, so low that it must barely have reached the ears of the girl. For a moment she paid no attention to it; then presently she turned and looked with dull, uncomprehending eyes toward the jungle. The sharpened stick with which she had been cultivating the maize dropped from her limp hand.

Ydeni continued to voice that weird, insistent call. The girl took a few steps in the direction of the jungle; then she paused; and Tarzan could almost sense the struggle that was going on within her breast to overcome the mysterious urge that was drawing her away from the other women; but Ydeni's voice was insistent and compelling, and at last she again moved listlessly toward him.

Now the Kavuru retreated slowly deeper into the forest, calling, always calling to the helpless girl who followed.

Tarzan watched; nor did he make any effort to interfere. To him, the life of the black girl was no more than the life of an antelope or that of any other beast of the jungle. To Tarzan, all were beasts, including himself, and none with any rights greater than another, except that which he might win by strength or cunning or ferocity. Much more important than the life of the black girl was the possibility of fathoming the mystery that had always surrounded the disappearance of girls supposed to have been taken by the Kavuru.

Ydeni lured the girl deeper into the forest, halting at last upon a broad limb. Slowly the girl approached. It was evident that she was not in control of her own will—the weird, monotonous droning chant of the Kavuru seemed to have numbed all her faculties.

AT last she came directly beneath the tree and the branch where Ydeni crouched. Then the man dropped his noose about her.

She made no outcry, no protest, as he tightened it and drew her slowly up toward him; nor ever once did the chant cease.

Removing the rope from about her, he threw her limp body across one of his broad shoulders, and turning, started back in the direction whence he had come. . . .

Tarzan had watched the abduction of the girl with keen interest, for it explained the seeming mystery of the disappearance of so many other young girls during past times. He could readily understand the effect that these mysterious disappearances would have upon the superstitious minds of the natives; yet it was all very simple, except the strange hypnotic power of the Kavuru. That was not at all clear to the ape-man.

He wondered how the natives had come to connect these disappearances with the Kavuru, and the only reasonable

explanation seemed to be that in times past, some exceptionally tenacious relatives had prosecuted their search until they had come by accident upon the abductor and his prey, and so learned the identity of the former without ascertaining the method he had used to achieve his ends.

Feeling no responsibility in the matter, Tarzan was not moved by any impulse to rescue the girl, his only concern now being to follow Ydeni back to the village of the Kavuru, where he was confident he would find Muviro's daughter Buira—if she still lived.

YDENI kept to the trees for hours, until he must have been reasonably certain he had passed beyond the point where possible pursuers would be likely to search, since they had no trail to follow. Then he came to the ground; but he still carried the girl, who lay across his shoulder as one dead.

On and on he plodded, apparently tireless; and in the trees just behind him followed Tarzan of the Apes. . . .

It was very late in the afternoon when the Kavuru halted. He carried the girl into a tree then, and tied her securely to a branch with the same rope that had snared her. Leaving her, he departed; and Tarzan followed him.

Ydeni was merely searching for food; and when he found some edible fruits and nuts, he returned with them to the girl.

The hypnosis which had held her in its spell for so long was now relinquishing its hold upon her, and as Ydeni approached her, she looked at him with startled eyes and shrank away when he touched her.

Releasing her bonds, he carried her to the ground and offered her food.

By this time, full consciousness had returned; and it was evident that the girl was quite aware both of her plight and of the identity of her abductor, for an expression of utter horror distorted her features; then she burst into tears.

"Shut up," snapped Ydeni. "I have not hurt you. If you give me no trouble, I shall not hurt you."

"You are a Kavuru," she gasped in horror-laden tones. "Take me back to my father; you promised him that you would not harm any member of his family."

Ydeni looked at the girl in surprise. "I promised your father?" he demanded. "I never saw your father; I have never spoken to one of your men."

"You did. You promised him when he liberated you from the hut in which Udalo had you bound. Udalo would have killed you; but my father, Gupingu the witch-doctor, saved you."

This recital made no impression upon Ydeni, but it did upon the grim and silent watcher in the trees above. So this was the daughter of Gupingu! Apparently Fate was a capricious wench with a strange sense of humor.

Knowledge of the identity of the girl gave a new complexion to the affair. Tarzan felt that by accepting his freedom at the hands of Gupingu, he had given the witch-doctor passive assurance that his daughters would be safe from the Kavuru. It was a moral obligation that the Lord of the Jungle could not ignore; but if he took the girl from Ydeni and returned her to her people, he would be unable to follow the Kavuru to his village. However, with a shrug he accepted the responsibility that honor seemed to lay upon him.

Now he devoted himself to a consideration of ways and means. He could, of course, go down and take the girl by force, for it never occurred to him that any creature, man least of all, might be able to prevent him from having his way; but this plan he scarcely considered before discarding it. He did not wish Ydeni to know that it was he who took the girl from him, since he realized the possibility of Ydeni's being useful to him, in the event he reached the village of the Kavuru; for after all, he had saved the man's life; and that was something that only the lowest of beasts might forget.

He waited therefore to see what disposal Ydeni would make of the girl for the night, for he had it in mind now to take her by stealth; and if that failed, the likelihood of Ydeni's recognizing him would be greatly lessened after dark; and so he waited, patient as any other beast of prey that watches for the propitious moment to attack.

Seeing that she would be unable to move the Kavuru by her pleas, the girl had lapsed into silence. Her brooding eyes glowered sullenly at her captor.

DARKNESS was approaching rapidly when the Kavuru seized the girl and threw her roughly to the ground. She fought like a young lioness, but Ydeni was powerful and soon overcame her. Then he deftly bound her hands behind her back and trussed her legs so tightly that she could scarcely move them.

"Now," he said, when he had finished, "you cannot run away. Ydeni can sleep; you had better sleep; we have a long march tomorrow, and Ydeni will not carry you."

The girl made no reply. The man threw himself upon the ground near her.

ASILENT figure moved stealthily closer in the trees above them. It was dark and very quiet. Only the roar of a distant lion, coming faintly to their ears, gave evidence of life in the jungle.

Tarzan waited patiently. By the man's regular breathing, he knew that Ydeni slept; but his slumber was not yet deep enough to satisfy the ape-man.

A half-hour passed, and then an hour. Ydeni was sleeping very soundly now, but the girl had not yet slept. That was well; it was what Tarzan wished for.

He bent low from the branch where he lay and spoke to the girl.

"Do not cry out," he said in a whisper. "I am coming down to take you back to your people."

Very gently he lowered himself to the ground. Even the girl beside whom he stood did not know that he had descended from the trees. He stooped over her with a sibilant caution on his lips.

The girl was afraid; but she was more afraid of the Kavuru, and so she made no outcry as Tarzan raised her to his shoulder and carried her silently along the jungle trail until he could take to the trees with less likelihood of arousing Ydeni.

At a safe distance from the sleeping man, he paused and cut the girl's bonds.

"Who are you?" she whispered.

"I am the man that Udalo would have killed and that your father set free," replied the ape-man.

She shrank back. "Then you are a Kavuru too," she said.

"I am no Kavuru. I told them that, but they would not believe me. I am Tarzan of the Apes, chief of the Waziri, whose country lies many marches toward the rising sun."

"You are a Kavuru," she insisted; "my father said so."

"I am not, but what difference does it make—if I return you to your father?"

"How do I know that you will take me back?" she demanded. "Perhaps you are lying to me."

"If you'd rather," said the ape-man, "I will set you free now; but what will you do here alone in the jungle? A lion or a leopard will surely find you; and even

"I awoke with a start," said Annette. "I had a feeling that there was some one crawling around inside the hut."



if one did not, you might never find your way back to your village, because you do not know in what direction the Kavuru carried you while you were unconscious."

"I will go with you," said the girl.

CHAPTER XI

"SEVENTY MILLION DOLLARS"

BBROWN and Tibbs followed the game-trail in the direction of the uncanny scream that had startled the camp.

"Milady!" shouted Tibbs. "Milady, where are you? What has happened?"

Brown quickly forged ahead of Tibbs, who had not run a hundred feet in ten years.

"Miss!" Brown bellowed. "Where are you?"

"Here, follow the trail," came back the answer in clear, unshaken tones. "I'm all right; don't get excited."

Presently Brown came in sight of her. She was withdrawing the last of three arrows from the carcass of a leopard, and just beyond her lay the eviscerated carcass of an antelope.

"What the—what's all this?" demanded Brown.

"I just killed this bush-buck," explained Jane; "and Sheeta, here, tried to take it away from me."

"You killed him?" demanded Brown. "You killed him with your arrows?"

"Well, I didn't bite him to death, Brown," laughed the girl.

"Was it him or you that let out that yell?"

"That was Sheeta. He was charging; and when my first arrow struck him, he didn't seem to like it at all."

"And one arrow settled him?" asked the erstwhile pilot.

"I let him have two more. I don't know which one stopped him. All three went into his chest."

Brown wiped the perspiration from his forehead. "By golly," he said, "I've got to take my hat off to you, miss."

"Well, you can put it back on, Brown, and pack that antelope back to camp! I'll like that a whole lot better."

Tibbs had come up and was standing in wide-eyed astonishment, gazing at the dead leopard. "If I may make so bold, Milady, I might say that it's most extraordinary. I would never have believed it, Milady, upon my honor, I wouldn't. I never thought those little h'arrows would kill anything bigger than a bird."

"You'd be surprised, Tibbs," said Jane.

"I am, Milady."

"Do we take the cat back to camp too?" asked Brown.

"No," replied Jane. "Saving the pelt is too much of a job; and besides that, Princess Sborov would probably collapse with fright at sight of it."

The pilot picked up the carcass of the antelope, and together the three returned to camp.

Annette was standing wide-eyed, awaiting them. She breathed a sigh of relief when she saw that all three had returned safely.

"Oh," she cried, "you really got something to eat! I am so hungry."

"Where are the Prince and Princess?" demanded Jane.

Annette snickered, and pointed toward the shelter. "As soon as Brown and Tibbs left, they ran in there and hid," she whispered.

Almost immediately the Prince appeared. He was very white, and he was also very angry. "You men had no right running off and leaving this camp unguarded," he snapped. "There's no telling what might have happened. Hereafter, see that both of you are never absent at the same time."

"Oh, Lord, give me strength!" groaned Brown. "I am long-suffering, but I can't stand much more out of this bozo."

"What's that?" demanded Alexis.

"I was just going to say that if you ever shoot off your yap in that tone of voice to me again, I'm going to make a king out of you."

"What do you mean?" demanded Alexis suspiciously.

"I'm going to crown you."

"I suppose that is another weird Americanism," sneered the Prince; "but whatever it is, coming from you, I know it is insulting."

"And how!" exclaimed Brown.

"Instead of standing around here quarreling," said Jane, "let's get busy. Brown, will you and Tibbs build a fire, please. Alexis, you can cut up the antelope. Cut five or six good-sized steaks, and then Annette can cook them. Do you know how to grill them over an open fire, Annette?"

"No, madame, but I can learn, if you'll just show me once."

The Princess emerged from the shelter. "Oh, my dear, whatever have you there?" she demanded. "Oh, take it away; it's all covered with blood."

"That's your supper, Kitty," said Jane.

"Eat that thing? Oh, don't; I shall be ill! Take it away and bury it."

"Well, here's your chance to reduce, lady," said Brown; "because if you don't eat that, you aint going to eat nothing."

"How dare you, Brown, intimate that you would even think of keeping food away from me?" demanded the Princess with marked hauteur.

"I aint going to keep no food away from you. I'm just trying to tell you that there aint no food except this. If you won't eat this, you don't eat, that's all."

"Oh, I never could bring myself—really, my dear, how it smells!"

LESS than an hour later the Princess was tearing away at an antelope steak like a famished wolf. "How perfectly thrilling," she took time out to remark. "I mean, isn't it just like camping out?"

"Quite similar," said Jane dryly.

"Terrible," said Alexis; "this steak is much too rare. Hereafter, Annette, see that mine are quite well done."

"You take what you get, playboy, and like it," said Brown. "And hereafter don't use that tone of voice in speaking to Annette or anyone else in this bunch."

Tibbs was very much embarrassed. He always was when what he considered a member of the lower classes showed lack of proper deference to one of what he liked to call the aristocracy. "If I may make so bold as to inquire, Milady," he said, addressing Jane in an effort to divert the conversation into another channel, "might I ask by what possible means we are going to get out of here and back to civilization?"

"I'VE been thinking about that myself, Tibbs," replied Jane. "You see, if we were all in good physical condition, we might follow this stream down to a larger river, when eventually we would be sure to come to a native village, where we could get food and employ guides and carriers to take us on to some settlement where there are Europeans; or failing in that, we could at least hire runners to carry a message out for us."

"I think that is a splendid idea, Milady; I 'ope we start soon."

"I doubt that we could all stand the hardships of a long trek," said Jane.

"I suppose you mean me, my dear," said the Princess, "but really I am very fond of walking. I remember I used to walk a mile every morning. That was before dear Mr. Peters passed on. He insisted upon my doing it; he was such an athletic man himself. He played golf every Wednesday afternoon. But after he went, I gave it up; it hurt my feet so."

"We could build a litter," suggested Alexis. "I have seen pictures of them in the cinema. Brown and Tibbs could carry the Princess."

"Yeah?" demanded Brown. "And who'd carry you?"

"Oh, I think that would be just wonderful—I mean, I think that would solve every problem!" exclaimed Kitty. "We could build the litter large enough for two, and then we could both ride."

"Why not a four-passenger job?" demanded Brown; "and then Tibbs and I could carry you all."

"Oh, no," exclaimed the Princess. "I'm afraid that would be much too heavy a load for you."

"The fellow is attempting to be facetious, my dear," said Alexis; "but cer-

tainly there is no reason why they could not carry you."

"Except only one," said Brown.

"And pray, what is that?" asked Kitty. "I mean, I see no reason why you and Tibbs should not carry me."

"It's absolutely out of the question, Kitty," said Jane, with some asperity. "You simply don't know what you're talking about. Two men could not carry anyone through this jungle; and no matter what you may think, you wouldn't last an hour if you tried to walk."

"Oh, but my dear Jane, what am I going to do—stay here forever?"

Jane sighed patiently.

"One or two of us will have to go out and look for help; the others will remain here in camp. That is the only way."

"Who's going?" asked Brown. "Me and Tibbs?"

Jane shook her head. "I'm afraid Tibbs couldn't make the grade," she said. "He's never had any experience in anything of this sort; and anyway, he'd be very much more useful in camp. I thought you and I should go. We know something about Africa, and how to take care of ourselves in the jungle."

"I don't know about that," said Brown. "I don't see how both of us can go and leave these people. They are the most helpless bunch of yaps I've ever seen."

The Sborovs showed their resentment of Brown's blunt appraisal, but they said nothing. Tibbs appeared shocked, but Annette turned away to hide a smile.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," continued the pilot. "You stay here and take care of these people and run the camp. I'll go out and look for help."

"I wouldn't trust him, Jane," said Alexis. "If he once got away, he'd never come back; he'd leave us here to die."

"Nonsense," snapped Jane. "Brown is perfectly right in saying that both of us should not leave you. None of you is experienced; you couldn't find food; you couldn't protect yourselves. No; one of us will have to stay; and as I can travel faster through the jungle than any of you, I shall go out and look for help."

THERE were several protesting voices raised against this program. Alexis sat regarding Jane through half-closed lids; he seemed to be appraising her; the expression in his eyes was not pleasant. Presently he spoke.

"You shouldn't go alone, Jane," he said. "You're right in saying that I

couldn't be of much help around the camp. I'll go with you; you should have some one to protect you."

Brown laughed, a very rude and annoying laugh. The Princess looked shocked and startled.

"Why, Alexis," she cried, "I am surprised that you would even suggest such an impossible thing. Think of Jane's reputation."

NOW it was Jane's turn to laugh. "My dear Kitty," she cried, "don't be ridiculous. I don't intend to let Alexis go with me, but not for the reason that you suggest. When one's life is at stake, one may ride rough-shod over conventions."

"Well," said the Princess definitely, "Alexis may go; but if he goes, I go with him."

"That's right," said Alexis, "you got us into this mess; and now you're trying to put obstacles in the way of our getting ourselves out of it. If it were not for you, we could all leave together; and as for that, if it hadn't been for you and your American pilot, we wouldn't be in this fix now."

"Oh, Alexis," sobbed the Princess, "how can you be so cruel to me? You don't love me any more."

He shot a contemptuous glance at her, then turned and walked away. There was an uncomfortable silence that was finally broken by Jane.

"I shall leave in the morning," she said, "very early. Do you think, Brown, that you could provide food for these people while I am away?"

"I reckon I can if they're light eaters and aint particular what they eat," he replied with a grin.

"Do you know which plants and fruits are edible and which are unsafe?" she asked.

"I know enough of the safe ones to get by on," he said, "and I'll leave the others alone."

"That's right; be very careful about what you eat and drink."

And they fell to discussing the possibilities of living on edibles found in the jungle.

In the growing coolness of the jungle night, the warmth of the beast-fire was pleasant; and most of the party remained around it, only Alexis, moody and sullen, holding aloof. He stood in the opening of the men's shelter, glowering at the figures illuminated by the fire. His dark eyes rested upon his wife, who sat with

her back toward him; and his expression at this time that he was free from observation was marked with loathing. The thoughts that were passing through his petty brain were not lovely thoughts. In the outer rim of the light from the fire he looked what he was, a small, cheap grafter who had suddenly become sinister and dangerous.

And then his eyes moved on to Jane, and his expression changed. He licked his full, weak lips—lips that were flabby and seemed repulsive in his moments of relaxation.

His gaze wandered again to his wife. "If it were not for you," he thought, "seventy million dollars—I wish I were out of here . . . that fellow, Brown—I'd like to kill him. . . . Annette's not so bad looking. . . . Seventy million dollars—Paris, Nice, Monte Carlo. . . . The old fool. . . . Jane is beautiful—I suppose the old fool will live forever. . . . Dead, dead, dead—seventy million dollars."

OVER by the fire, Jane was arranging the guarding of the camp by night. "I think three four-hour shifts will be long enough," she said. "It's just a matter of keeping the fire going. If any animals come around, you'll be able to see their eyes shining in the dark. If they come too close, light a brand and throw at them. They are all afraid of fire."

"Oh, my dear, do I have to do that?" cried Kitty. "I never could, really—I mean, do I have to sit out here alone at night?"

"No, my dear," said Jane, "you'll be excused from guard-duty. How about you, Annette? Do you think you could do it?"

"I can do my share, madame," said the girl, "—whatever the others do."

"Atta girl!" said Brown.

"If I may make so bold as to suggest it, Milady," said Tibbs deferentially, "I rather think the three men should stand guard. It's no job for a lady, ma'am."

"I think Tibbs is perfectly right," said the Princess. "And I really think that Alexis should not stand guard; he's a very susceptible person to colds; and night air always affects him. And now I think that I shall go to bed. Annette, come and help me."

"You'd better turn in too, miss," said Brown. "If you're going to start out early in the morning, you'll need all the sleep you can get."

Jane rose. "Perhaps you're right," she said. "Good night."

When she had gone, Brown glanced at his watch.

"It's nine o'clock now, Tibbs," he said. "Suppose you stand guard until midnight, then wake me, and I'll take it until three. After that, his nibs the Grand Duke can watch until morning."

"Really, Mr. Brown, if you mean the Prince, I rather fawncy he won't be caring to stand guard."

"Well, he's going to," said Brown; "and he's going to like it."

Tibbs sighed. "If it weren't for the Princess," he said, "we wouldn't have to stay here at all. I don't fawncy staying here and just waiting. I'm sure something terrible will happen to us if Lady Greystoke leaves us. She's the only one that can do anything."

"Yes," said Brown; "the old girl is a damned nuisance. You might bump her off, Tibbs." Brown grinned, rose and stretched. "I'll be turning in, Tibbsy. Wake me at midnight."

Sborov was sitting in the entrance of the shelter which was only a few steps from the fire; and as Brown entered, he spoke to him: "I couldn't help but overhear your conversation with Tibbs," he said. "I am perfectly willing to do my share. Call me at three, and I will stand guard. I'm going to bed now. I am a very sound sleeper, and you may have difficulty in waking me."

The change in the man's tone and attitude so surprised Brown that for once he had no reply to make. He merely grunted as he passed on into the shelter. Sborov followed and lay down, and in a few moments Brown was fast asleep.

IT seemed to him when Tibbs woke him at midnight that he had not slept at all.

He had been on guard but a few minutes when Annette joined him.

"What the dickens are you doing up this time of the morning, girlie?" he demanded.

"Something awoke me about half an hour ago," she said, "and I haven't been able to get back to sleep. I don't know what it could have been, but I awoke with a start; and I had a feeling that there was some one crawling around inside the hut. You know, it's really very dark in there after the curtain is hung up in front of the door."

Even more exciting are the adventures of Tarzan and Lady Greystoke in the ensuing chapters. Don't miss the next installment, in our December issue.



The Return Of Blazes Burnham

By JAMES FRANCIS DWYER

He had lived an easy life; but when a perilous crisis came, his valiant swashbuckling ancestor came in spirit to his aid.

ROGER BURNHAM of Boston, known in political circles as "the Wily Badger," was annoyed. He had reached this village on the Spanish frontier at nightfall, intending to push on over the Pyrenean pass into France, but the local police discovered that the chauffeur, hired in Madrid, lacked the necessary visa to cross the border.

Quick of temper, Burnham had fired the chauffeur, garaged his car at the little hotel, eaten a poor dinner, and now, still ruffled, sat on the square before a glass of sherry and glared at the shopkeepers and their wives and families who had gathered to listen to the string band. At dawn, he told himself displeasably, he would take the wheel, drive his car over the spine of the Pyrenees and drop down into the smiling valleys of France.

The square was rather picturesque. There were strings of red and blue globes in the branches of the trees. There were inky shadows that the moonbeams battled with; there was the wail of the violins, the massed whisper from adjoining tables, and there was, curiously, a slight feeling of awe brought by the nearness of the great mountain range. The peaks of the Pyrenees were calling to each other in the summer night.

A song that Burnham had chanted as a college boy came to his memory:

*To the blue Alsatian mountains
Came a stranger in the spring
And he lingered by the fountains
To hear the maidens sing—*

He, Roger Burnham, was a stranger. And there was something rather magical

about that word *stranger*. It suggested a lofty and thrilling loneliness. Not a person on the square knew Burnham's name or was aware of his political importance. Not one. No clever mother with a marriageable daughter was pointing him out and whispering softly: "Darling, the distinguished-looking man sitting alone. Yes! That's Roger Burnham! Old Boston family. Frightfully rich. Most eligible bachelor in New England." Here he was unknown. . . .

A large Spaniard, his larger wife and three children rose from a neighboring table, and Roger Burnham saw the girl for the first time. The physical bulk of the departing family had blocked his view. She was sitting alone, leaning slightly forward, her elbows on the little table. The gently waving branches above her head sieved the moonlight down upon her dress of dark blue so that, from Burnham's viewpoint, she seemed to be under a shower of silver pieces.

ILDLY he speculated about her. She too was a stranger, surely. She did not belong to the little frontier village. There was a possibility that she was not Spanish. He thought she might be American. He ordered another drink.

The band played a thrilling finale, bagged their instruments, and departed. The majority of the local inhabitants followed their example. The exodus, so Burnham thought, increased the atmosphere of romance that was upon the square. These fat shopkeepers had no dreams. The night was sorting them out, dragging them homeward by the leash of sleep. Those who remained were the persons who sought more—the dissatisfied, the strangers, the hungry lovers of romance.

A man, lean, dark and stealthy, rose from a table where he was drinking with three companions and approached the girl. The fellow bowed before her, thrust his head forward and began to speak.

Roger Burnham was alert. He watched with unblinking eyes. What was the fellow saying? He surely did not know the girl; he had been sitting quite close to her for some time and had given no evidence of acquaintanceship.

The girl showed quickly that the talk was not to her liking. The lithe body stiffened. There was hot resentment in the movement of the shapely head, thrown back defiantly. The conceit of the fellow, so visible on his approach, was dwindling. He drew back a pace.

The girl rose hastily. For an instant she stood undecided, then she fled across the square, to be engulfed in the shadows. Burnham had half risen from his chair. He had a vague belief that he should do something. What, he didn't know. The square seemed strangely deserted now that the girl had fled.

The cavalier returned to his companions. He leaned across the table and spoke in a whisper to the three. A waiter came from the café, glanced at the table at which the girl had been sitting, uttered an angry yelp and threw up his hands.

Burnham understood. In her haste to avoid the man who had addressed her the girl had fled without settling for her citronade. The night was working changes with the character of the Wily Badger of Massachusetts. He signaled the waiter, thrust ten pesetas into his hand and waved the change aside. He swung his chair so that he faced the table occupied by the quartet.

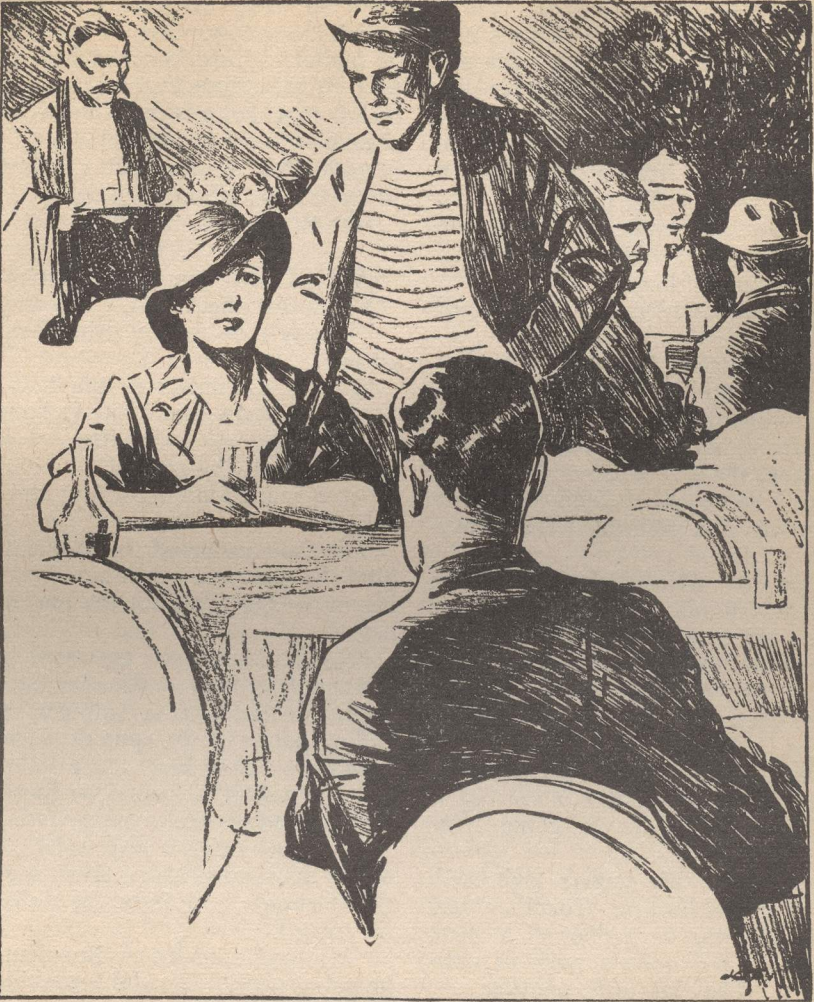
They were watching Burnham. Their furtive glances and their whispering pleased him. They didn't know who he was. They might think him a fighting-man, ready to take up the cudgels on behalf of the girl. The thought thrilled him.

In the moments that followed Roger Burnham had an amazing experience. Burnhams—dead and forgotten Burnhams—whispered to him there on the square that was dappled with moonbeams and shadows.

THERE was one Burnham particularly assertive, crowding out the rest. He was David Burnham of New Bedford, known throughout New England and the Orient as "Blazes" Burnham. He was grandfather to Roger, and in his day he had commanded the clipper-ship, the *Golden Lass*, of Portsmouth. . . .

Quite a fellow, this Blazes Burnham. On going back to his ship one black night in Canton, he had been set upon by nine Chinese thugs. When the police arrived there were seven Chinamen lying unconscious in the roadway, while Blazes had the other two, one in each big hand, bumping their heads together.

There were a thousand stories told about Blazes. Once off St. Helena his crew, the toughest bunch of rapsallions that had ever been shipped, staged a mutiny. Blazes Burnham and a blue-nose mate responded. Burnham and the mate put up a show that was something between the Battle of Bunker Hill and



The fellow began to speak. . . . The girl showed that the talk was not to her liking.

Leonidas holding the bridge. The crew gave up after they had lost two dead and fifteen injured, and in the log of the *Golden Lass*, Burnham reported the result of the fray: "*Crew suitably impressed, and those that are able have returned to work.*" The words "*those that are able*" were deeply underscored.

It was curious how the doings of Blazes Burnham filled the mind of his grandson as he sat on the square—very curious. As Roger Burnham watched the quartet, he addressed a query to himself. At least he thought he had asked the question, but the language was not Roger's: "What the hell are those four furriners whisp'rin' an' grinnin' about? Are they tryin' to poke fun at a man from New England?"

A little startled, Roger Burnham considered the phrasing. It was a question that Blazes Burnham would have asked.

Surely! In fancy, Roger saw his grandfather striding to the table occupied by the four and demanding an apology for their bad manners. There in the dappled square he saw for an instant the tall strong form of the ship captain. . . .

Some one came running across the square. Roger Burnham sprang to his feet. It was the girl. She had remembered the unpaid-for citronade and had come back to settle for it.

The waiter met her. He made a negative gesture and pointed to Roger Burnham. The girl, purse in hand, moved toward Burnham's table, but the dark man who had been repulsed earlier in the evening rose quickly and intercepted her. In broken English he begged her to drink at his table. She tried to brush him aside, but he grabbed her arm.

Roger Burnham felt that he was possessed—possessed by Blazes Burn-

ham, his long-dead grandfather. There was no doubt about it. Old Blazes had a liking for a throat punch. A quick upward swing from the right hip, the fist twisting as it rose, so that the knuckles were uppermost when the jolt was driven home. Roger, as a little child, had seen Blazes demonstrate this punch.

The fellow clutching the girl's arm stopped that punch. He dropped as if old Blazes himself had hit him.

The three companions of the stunned man rose together.

The girl clutched Burnham's arm.

"Quick! Run with me!" she cried. "They will arrest us! Run!"

Burnham found himself running down a dark lane, the girl at his side. From the square came shouts and yells, the shrill whistle of a policeman rose like a red loop of sound.

Running now with fingers intertwined, the girl guided him. A turning to the right, another to the left, then along the dark bank of a canal. Burnham could see the water, flowing silently without visible ripples, like the water one sees in dreams.

Across a ramshackle bridge, clinging to the handrail. Burnham wondered if the girl knew where she was going. Was she running blindly?

Her clutch on his fingers tightened. She pulled him sideways. Together they dived through the dark door of a shed, stumbled and fell upon a mass of new-mown hay. They lay still, panting.

Roger Burnham wondered idly if the perfume which he inhaled came from the hay or from the girl. He turned his head and sniffed the grass. Sweet it was, but—ah, her sleeve brushed his face, as she rose to her feet. He knew!

She spoke—a little musical whisper in the thick murk of the place: "Did you—did you kill him?"

ROGER BURNHAM almost laughed as he too, having regained his breath, rose also. It was nice to have a woman ask such a question. "*Did you kill him?*" Great Lord of Combats, was ever a more delightful query thrust at the ears of man?

"Pardon?" he murmured. Of course he wanted her to repeat the question. He thought he could lie there for a thousand years and listen to that question repeated over and over again.

He answered her in the suave polished manner that those Boston politicians who were enemies of the Wily Badger

knew so well. He didn't think he had killed the fellow. No, he was sure that he hadn't. "Just knocked him out," he said. Again there rushed in on him the belief that he was not himself. That phrase—"just knocked him out," was a remark that Blazes had often used to round off his Chinese stories.

But Roger was puzzled.

"**W**HY did you come back to the café?" he asked.

"To pay for—for my drink," came the whisper.

"But it was only a peseta."

"Yes, I know, but—but I thought the waiter might do something. I thought he might call the police."

"And you didn't wish him to call the police?"

The girl considered the implication behind the question. Burnham had a longing to see her face, but the darkness hid her.

"No, I didn't," she answered bravely.

Roger Burnham remained quiet. Skilled politician that he was, he knew the compelling power of the spur of silence. Her admission would have to be followed by an explanation. It would be inartistic to leave the admission unsupported.

It came—softly, very softly. Little words like musical feathers waving in the darkness. "I hate the police," she whispered.

"Me too," said Roger Burnham. Was he going mad? He, the law-abiding Mr. Burnham of the Back Bay, had said emphatically "Me too!" when this girl expressed her dislike of the guardians of the law. Why, the police were the pillars of government. Without the police there would be— He interrupted his own thoughts by a remark—a startling remark: "They stop a fellow from doing what he wants to do," he said; "cramp your style, y'know."

That was surely a Blazes phrase. He had heard his grandfather say it times without number. Perspiration bathed his forehead.

An invisible hand patted his sleeve. One finger, more adventurous than the rest, touched his wrist—her soft little finger. "You are charming," she breathed. "I love that phrase 'Cramp your style.' It's—it's so colorful. What is—what is your profession?"

His fool tongue wished to say "Sailor" in answer to the question. With an effort he thrust back the word. What would a sailor be doing in the shadow of

the Pyrenees? But he couldn't tell this girl that he was a subtle politician, a collector of pictures, a supporter of the fine arts. "I'm a chauffeur," he said.

The fingers slipped from his coat sleeve and tightened on his wrist. Thrilling—devilishly thrilling! He knew that she had thrust her face closer to his. Her breath was on his cheek.

"A chauffeur?" she cried. "Have you—have you a car? I mean here—here in this village?"

"Yes," answered Burnham. "Yes, yes!" There had come to him a little feeling of fear when he had uttered the first yes, but this was swept away by the double affirmation that followed. He had a belief, a strange idiotic belief that the "Yes, yes!" was not uttered by him. The voice seemed hoarse, a seaman's voice.

The admission created an electrical discharge in the dark shelter. It stirred the girl so that her delight, expressed in little fluttering whispers, flowed over Burnham, enveloping him, lifting him up to the stars.

She had his right hand in her two little ones now. She was speaking. No, speaking does not explain what she was doing. She was sweeping Roger Burnham's senses away with a flood of intoxicating music! Pleas and prayers! She called upon the saints to help her in her entreaties. She spoke their names in a familiar manner. Burnham thought they might be her friends. They couldn't resist her voice.

Dimly Roger Burnham understood. He was to get his car and drive her somewhere. He tried to stiffen his will, the will that was being swept away by the music of her voice. He uttered a word, a word that told him he was completely lost. "Where?" he had asked. "Where?"

"Into France!" she breathed. "Over the Somport Pass into France!"

"Tonight?"

"Tonight!"

IN the silence that followed, the whip-lash of memory struck the brain of Roger Burnham. It was a Blazes Burnham story that reared up out of the days of childhood. The *Golden Lass* of Portsmouth tied up at Pagoda Landing, Blazes Burnham on the bridge. A white girl was fleeing from a Chinese mandarin and a group of thugs that worked for him.

As a boy, Roger had listened to that story as it rolled from the lips of old Blazes. Fine colorful words: hot, molten,

burning into the brain of the child! Choking him. "Twenty yellow devils at her heels!" Blazes would cry. "Pulled her over the side of the *Lass* and smashed the three Chinks that were grabbing at her dress! Ordered Mr. Colwell, the first mate—God rest his soul. . . . We buried him off Java Head—to cut the *Lass* loose and shake out every rag she carried. The cook threw a bucket of slumgullion over the old mandarin himself. Funniest sight I ever saw. The old devil trying to scoop the stuff off his pig-tail! Seven of them cold on the wharf before the *Lass* got the wind. Police scurrying down the side-streets. The girl standing wide-eyed on the poop, and my bullies laughing as they pasted the Chinks with everything they could throw at them. . . . A great boat, the *Golden Lass*! Scurried out to sea as if she knew. A woman in trouble, Roger—Listen to this, me lad: a woman in trouble calls for the very best efforts that a red-blooded man can put forward. The very best! Remember that!"

ON his feet now; the girl whispered of the necessity for speed. . . . The words themselves inaudible, incomprehensible, but full of a magic quality that gave them a value far above ordinary speech. Roger Burnham, hurrying at her side, heard the thrash of the sails as the *Golden Lass* headed for the open sea. Heard the hoarse barks of Blazes directing Mr. Colwell, who was later given to the sea off Java Head. . . .

Back along the bank of the canal in which the water ran like that in dream rivers. The village dark, apparently asleep.

The girl knew the village. "Lived here when I was a little girl," she breathed. "Know your hotel—the Casa Martino. . . . End of this street."

There was a surly watchman in the yard of the hotel, a suspicious fellow. The señor, he asserted, could not depart without speaking to the proprietor.

Roger Burnham assured him that he had no desire to converse with the proprietor. His debt to the house amounted to some twenty pesetas. Well, he would give the watchman one hundred pesetas and allow him to keep the change. The fellow fawned.

Burnham took the car out through the creaking wooden doors of the hotel yard. The girl pushing at one door while the watchman thrust back the other. The headlights bored holes in the darkness.



"Quick! Run with me!" she cried.
"They will arrest us! Run!"

Burnham paused for the girl to enter. He moved a bunch of golf-clubs to make room for her. Quite a bit of luck that he had a steel-shod club in his hand at the moment. For, as the girl slipped into her seat, the three friends of the man whom Burnham had struck at the café on the square, rushed the car.

Fine weapon, a golf-club! Burnham "poked" the leader of the three with it—accurately and with violence. He went down without a groan. Burnham was thrilled. Who was it that had a weapon he used like that? Ah, he remembered as he made a fine swing at the second man. It was *Umslopagaas*, the big Zulu, in a Rider Haggard romance. Well, he—Roger Burnham, bred of the stock that had produced Blazes Burnham of the *Golden Lass*—was as good as any big Zulu.

Wham! Number Two received the swipe at the back of his right ear. Burnham, at that moment, decided that he would write a letter to the manufacturers of the golf-club, telling them every respectable American driving through Europe should have one beside him.

Here was Number Three. He had stumbled in the first rush, but he was aching for a fight. The fellow whipped up his right arm; there was a silvery flash, then Burnham felt something like the sting of a hell-born mosquito on the lobe of his left ear. The swine had

thrown a knife! A golf-club was a respectable fighting weapon, but a knife! He remembered that Blazes had once said that no man with nerve would use a knife.

The golf-stick crashed. The fellow must have had a hard head, for the club splintered. Burnham flung the broken handle at Number One, who was attempting to sit up; then he dropped back into his seat and stepped on the gas.

Would the girl ask him if he had killed the three? He hoped she would. He wondered if that girl in the Chinese port had asked Blazes if he had killed the Chinks that were pursuing her. She probably had asked. That was why Blazes remembered. The fixative power of a woman's words. Extraordinary!

She discovered that he had been slightly wounded. He wouldn't slow down, so she dabbed at his ear with her little handkerchief. Her fingers touched his neck, setting his nerves a-crawl.

She was speaking of the dangers ahead. Police, customs officers, sharpshooters. Gentlemen on the lookout for merry smugglers. Difficult, this Somport Pass over the Pyrenees.

IN the whistling wind he hurled a question: "Who was it said 'There are no Pyrenees'?" She thought it was a French king—Louis something or other.

"He was darned well right!" shouted Burnham. "He said a mouthful. There are no Pyrenees for us tonight!"

A searchlight far up the road picked up the car, enveloped it. The fingers of the girl touched Burnham's arm. Here was danger.

He drove into the blinding light, holding the road with difficulty. There came warning shouts. A burst of rifle-fire. He saw little figures dancing madly as he shot by. The searchlight whipped around and followed them. A spent bullet found a home in the padded back of his seat.

The girl pointed ahead. He heard her shouted cry of "Danger!" It seemed as if that old French king was wrong. There were Pyrenees! And rather vicious Pyrenees, at that. Well, Spaniards were rotten shots. . . . Dewey had said that.

Burnham grinned. He recalled how he had been taken to see Blazes when his grandfather was dying. The old man had lifted himself on his elbow, patted the head of his grandchild and spoke in the shattering voice that was always under the belief it was competing against a sixty-mile gale. "You're a nice quiet

boy," said the big voice. "Guess you'll never do anything very excitin'."

Pity Blazes couldn't see him slipping over the Pyrenees! Possibly he could. Funny, how he had hit the man on the square with the same queer blow that his grandfather used.

"French!" gasped the girl. "French *douâniers!*"

French, eh? One had to be more careful with the French. Cunning little devils. Sharpshooters, *tirailleurs*; always monkeying with guns.

Crash! A bullet hit the windshield. There was a cascade of glass.

"Crouch down!" yelled Burnham. "Get on the floor!"

The girl didn't change her position. He had a belief that she laughed at his order. Had her nerve all right. That girl that Blazes had rescued was like that—stood on the deck, so Blazes said, and watched the scrimmage.

They were in France now. They had flashed by a painted frontier post with two shelter cabins from which startled sentries had leaped into the road and then leaped back again as the car roared down on them. The little wretches unloosed a hail of lead. A lamp was put out of commission.

A devil's corkscrew is that road down from the spine of the Pyrenees to the flat fields of Pau. Straightened out, it would run halfway to Bordeaux. Hair-pin turns, twists, wild curves with frightening gorges on either side, it slides down the slopes toward the historic town where gay Henry of Navarre lived and loved in the days of fine romance.

Those little watchers on the Somport Pass had telephoned ahead. "*Madman in the big black car. Stop him!*"

AT Urdos the gendarmes had drawn a wagon across the one street. Three red lamps and five shouting police. Roger Burnham thundered down on them. He swung the car over onto the sidewalk, took the awning from the local bakery, capsized a barrel of flour and tried to make mincemeat of a fat gendarme.

As they fled down the smooth road beyond the obstruction the girl reached up and kissed him on the cheek. He laughed aloud. He longed for more obstacles. He shrieked a challenge to the gendarmes as he fled through Sarrance. A bullet whistled by his ear. . . . Another.

Through tiny villages where the houses crouched on each side of one narrow street. Crouched fearfully as Roger

Burnham roared by. A light in the *Bureau de Police*. Some one bawling into the telephone, demanding instructions. The heights calling to the villages to halt the madman. The sleepy fools!

By Oloron. Down the winding road to Haut-Gan. Below, the towers of the Château of Henry IV visible in the milky dawn. The wide Gave, scuttling in a ghostly fashion toward the sea.

ROGER BURNHAM pulled himself together; couldn't run into Pau with a car full of bullet-holes. Some one was whispering to him. "What?" he asked. "*Do what?*"

Surely that was an answer! Yet it couldn't be. A hoarse voice, so it seemed, had cried out: "Scuttle her! Open up her sea-cock and scuttle her!"

It was Blazes speaking—Blazes telling him what to do! He remembered a story of his grandfather. Pressed too close by a British gunboat, suspicious of his cargo, Captain Burnham had scuttled his boat, scattered his crew, and had then taken rooms at a high-class hotel, where he drank with the English officers who recounted stories of a daredevil Yankee skipper whose ship disappeared when they were on the point of seizing it. "The demned thing ran into a fogbank, and when the jolly fog lifted there was nothing at all," they told him.

Burnham confided his plan to the girl. "Going to give the bus a nose-dive into the river," he said. "Busted windshield, broken lamp, lots of bullet-holes an' all that. Couldn't take her into town."

He swung from the road down a grassy stretch to the river. Deep water. Black beneath the whitening surface.

"Jump out," he ordered. The girl obeyed.

Burnham stood on the running-board. He set the nose of the car at the river and flung in the clutch. As she sprang forward he slipped to the grass. The car shot out over the bank, poised for an instant in mid-air, plunged and disappeared. . . .

Roger Burnham walked back to the spot where the girl was standing, curiously quiet after the disappearance of the car. A little frightening.

Brushing the dust from his clothes, he spoke. "Two tourists out for a walk now," he said. "Don't you love these early-morning strolls before breakfast?"

She smiled. Her long white fingers were busy opening the metal fastenings of a strapped-on purse. Hurriedly she

thrust her hand within, took out a silk pocket handkerchief, unknotted it, then dropping upon her knees, she spread the kerchief so that the contents were visible to Roger Burnham.

Eyes of devils in the ghostly light. Precious stones. Glaucous, garter-blue, crimson, stammel, crocus, bishop's purple. Weird, startling. Will-o'-the-wisp, fire-drake, *ignis-fatuus*. Fighting with each other in the green grass.

Down the road from the Pyrenees roared a car. Gendarmes. They didn't see the two in the field.

The girl was speaking. "Take what you want," she said softly. "A handful of them. *Please!*"

Roger Burnham smiled. "Why?" he asked.

She glanced back at the *massif* of the Pyrenees. "But for you I would never have got through," she said. "Those four were trailing me. Spain is not kind to her aristocrats. They must—they must leave with bare hands. I am—I am the Duchess of Cortina-Marcante."

"I have been paid," said Burnham. "Paid a thousandfold. It—it is difficult to explain. You see, I—I gave a night out to an ancestor who has been dead for thirty-one years."

She seemed puzzled as she gathered up the jewels that he refused to share.

"We must enter the town separately," said Burnham. "Stroll in carelessly. It is advisable that we part here."

She moved toward him with a quick impulsive motion. "Your name?" she breathed.

"Blazes Burnham," he answered.

She lifted her head and kissed him on the cheek. "I shall always remember you, Blazes," she whispered. "Each night you will be in my prayer. Dear Blazes!"

She turned and walked toward the bridge across the Gave. Roger Burnham, politician, collector of paintings, supporter of the fine arts, stood and watched her go.

"The kiss was meant for you, Blazes," he murmured. "Lucky old dog! And she's going to pray for you each night. And you once said nothing exciting would happen to me!"

He made a grimace, turned, and walked along the river-bank away from the town. He would give her every chance to make an entry that would not excite suspicion. And he had to shake off the clutch of the clipper captain and become his normal self again.

A Man

Last year this same gifted writing-man gave us that much-commented-upon football story "You're Young But Once." Here is another of the same high quality.

By

EUSTACE
COCKRELL

"A MAN," I said, with the dogmatism one employs in coming out with an uninteresting generality, "who doesn't subordinate himself to the general welfare of the team, can't ever be a great football-player. Football, of *all* games, demands coöperation; and the man who doesn't contribute that coöperation to his teammates simply can't ever be very good." I sat back and took a drag off of my cigarette, and contemplated that somewhat obvious remark.

Mac looked at me and grinned. He had been a mighty good football-player down at Henderson ten years ago, and he was a mighty good lawyer in New York now. We had been close friends for a lot of years, and I had come to see him as soon as I hit town.

He picked up a phone, told his secretary he was out, and looked at me and grinned again. "Is that a fact?" he asked.

"Sure, it's a fact," I said. "And," I added, a bit petulant at his patronizing tone, "you know damned well it is."

He sighed. "You people from the Coast," he said, "are all the time coming out flatfooted about something—usually something you don't know anything about. But you asked for it. I'll tell you a story about a fellow—man named Smith. I went to school with him. He was a genius on the football-field—one of the few I've ever seen. But the minute he started coöperating, he was a second-rater—no, a fifth-rater."

"I can take it," I said. But my ears were cocked.

Named Smith



NOW, Henderson's a pretty big place, and so I didn't know much about him (Mac said) until we were both seniors. I knew who he was, where he lived, and all that sort of thing, had a nodding acquaintance with him. But he wasn't interested in athletics, and I wasn't much interested in anything else. I ran with the muscles gang, and thought that everybody else in school had come there to sit in the bleachers.

Well, anyway, Thorne—our head coach—died the summer of my senior year, and when I came back to school we had a new head coach. Name of Caulfield, from some place in the East. And he recognized Smith the first morning he was on the campus. Seems Smith had played prep-school football somewhere back East, and Caulfield had seen him.

Caulfield told me—I was captain that year—about this Smith. "MacDonald," he said, "I saw this kid play in prep school, and he looked to me like a great man in a broken field. He's been going to Henderson for three years; how is it he hasn't been out?"

"He didn't come out," I told him. "He just never reported. We aren't a bunch of swamis around here—God knows, he doesn't *look* like a football-player."

"Well," Caulfield said, "you go around and talk to him. I'd like to have him out. If he's what he used to be, you'll see why."

So I went around and looked Smith up. He was staying at a sort of new

club they had organized there a couple of years before; interested in dramatics, or folk-dancing, or some such thing—naturally, I hadn't known him well.

I CORNERED him up in his room. He was put together pretty well, I noticed, though terribly light. One fifty-five, I guessed, and maybe five nine or nine and a half. He had beautiful curly blond hair. He did *not* look like a football-player.

"Smith," I said, coming to the point very quickly and bluntly, "Caulfield, our new head coach, says you used to be a football-player. How does it happen you've never tried out for our team?"

He looked at me a minute sort of shyly, and I'll swear he blushed. "You are MacDonald," he said, "the captain this year?"

"That's right," I admitted. "But that doesn't answer my—"

"I don't like to play football," Smith said. "I played some in prep school, but I didn't like it. You see," he went on, "by your standards, I'm a coward. I dislike being hurt."

I grunted. And I thought for a minute. I didn't know whether he was kidding me, just giving me a stall, or what; but I thought he was telling the truth. And if he was telling me the truth, and I started to give him the old school-spirit-owing-it-to-himself line, we would never see him in a football suit. "I see," I said finally. "I don't hold your attitude against you. I don't understand it,

though I might be able to if I were your weight; but I'd like to have you come out, anyway." I paused a minute. "As a personal favor to me."

"I came fifteen hundred miles away from home," Smith said, "to go to school. I came all that way because I could run a little faster with a football than some of my schoolmates; I hoped I had got away where nobody knew that. I'm a little sorry I haven't." He stopped and looked at me. "But I'll come out," he said, "as a personal favor to you." And that was that.

WE limbered up for three or four days, and Smith looked just like anyone else, only smaller; then Caulfield threw together a tentative varsity eleven and gave us some plays, and we ran some dummy scrimmage, and got to looking like some sort of football team. I didn't see anything of Smith during this time, except that I noticed he was playing halfback off and on for the scrubs. But we had a pretty good team, we thought, and we were all feeling pretty good. In a day or two I had forgotten all about Smith.

Ten days before our first game, and it was figured a set-up, Caulfield got what looked like a starting line-up together, and told us to kick off to the scrubs, and that they would run some plays against us that this little school we played next week were using. I noticed, as we went out, that Smith was in the jayvees' backfield. He looked small, very small; and I felt a little sorry for him. We kicked off, and he got the ball. And he brought it back.

He brought it back straight up the field, and he never had a hand laid on him. I missed him four feet. He was coming toward me taking little short steps, and I had him going wide and in my hands. I tackled him—but he wasn't there. He was running across in front of me, and as I looked up, he was out in the open and running on his heels and loafing; but Gear was after him, and he made Gear look as if he were going to the dentist's. Smith was all by himself when he scored.

And were we burning up! We lined up again, calling each other all kinds of choice names; but when we kicked off again, Caulfield had taken Smith out of there. And that burned us up more than ever. But we looked pretty good. We gave the scrubs an awful lacing, and I don't believe they made ten yards



against us all the rest of the time we scrimmaged. But we saw no more of Smith. Caulfield never put him in another scrimmage, though he came in, and we ran some plays with him in the first-string backfield.

We saw no more of him in action until the last four minutes of the first game. The score was fifty-six to nothing in our favor, and I was the only starting player left in the game. Caulfield sent Smith in at left half. I was playing fullback and calling signals. We were on our own twenty-yard line, and it was third and three to go. I called Smith on the first play through left tackle. They were playing us pretty even now, with our third- and fourth-string men in the line-up.

And as I gave the signal, I looked at Smith. He was white, and his face looked drawn. I felt sorry for him, but he looked at me and tried to grin.

We shifted into position, and the ball came back to him. He straightened up and went for the line like a ballet-dancer, standing straight up. There had been a little hole there at tackle, but it closed before he made the line of scrimmage, and their big guard made a hard lunge across at him. He stopped and danced back, and I thought: "Pure yellow." He went back three yards, and the defensive end had him boxed in, and he lost another yard saving himself from the end. It was pitiful—pitiful and sad. The defensive halfback had come up, and the defensive fullback had come across, and Smith had netted us a six-yard loss because he was yellow.

HE gave a frightened little jump then, still taking those little steps on his toes, and got away from the fullback; and then he was across in front of the halfback, running in one beautiful smooth stride, wide open, and he was away. He was past the line of scrimmage and going like a scared rabbit.



"I think Smith is yellow. . . . He doesn't like to take it, and that's why he can thread a broken field. I say let's shake him loose, when he comes in there."

He was gone. Jackson got through and took the safety man out, and Smith was moving, and the stands were yelling. It was the damndest thing I ever saw, because I couldn't figure out how he had done it. But there he was, away. He was gone.

Caulfield took him out.

I went over to see Caulfield that night. "Coach," I said, and I came out flatly, "this Smith is yellow. He's yellow clear through. I know he scored on us in practice, and I know he ran a lot of yards this afternoon to score. But he's yellow, and I don't like that. I'd as soon you had him turn in his suit."

"Yes," Caulfield said, "I guess the way we figure, he is yellow. But I don't like to use that word, and he's a genius with the ball. He can offer a tackler his foot and then take his foot away. And he's fast. He can be running like hell, straight up on his toes, and he's not moving; and in one stride he can be slogging it on his heels faster than any man we've got, and carrying the ball besides."

"I don't care—"

Caulfield went on as if I hadn't interrupted him. "And besides, he'll win some games for us, maybe, and I'm supposed to win football games. They may tell you I'm hired to develop youth and all that, but I'm not. I'm hired to win football games. Please try to understand."

I did understand. I knew Henderson, and I knew the alumni, and I knew Caulfield pretty well by then. And he was right. And he's one fine man—fine, honest man; and he may deride the fact, but he is a developer of youth.

"YOU see, Mac," Caulfield went on after a while, "he's afraid. Smith is very much afraid of being hurt. There may be a lot of reasons why he's afraid, but they don't concern us. He *is* afraid. If he wasn't afraid, he wouldn't be what he is. And what he is, is a genius—a genius carrying the ball. He has fine, unbelievably fine, coördination; and he's fast as light. He can take a punt running wide open. You haven't seen him do that yet, but you will. He can play a safety position fifteen yards too deep when they are punting to him, because he can come under the ball running his best. You won't see one football player in a hundred thousand that can do it. I've known only one before in my life, and football has been my life. But the reason *he* does it, is because he doesn't want to be hit. He avoids being hit. He's a genius, and that's all you can say. I hope he wins some football games for us."

And so, for no good reason, just because I was a bigger fool than I am now, I went over to see Smith.

I found him up in his room. He was studying, or at least he had a book open

in front of him. I went in and sat down. "Hello," I said. "Nice run today."

He got up then, and walked back and forth across the room a couple of times. "I know," he said, his voice sounding tense and strange; "I know what you are going to say, and I would rather you didn't say it. I came out for football because I like you, and admire the sort of a person you are. I can't be that sort of person, though, and I don't think it is worth while to try. You came to tell me that I'm yellow for going into the line standing up, and that it was a fluke I got away; and I would agree with you when you said that. But I came out for football because I like you, not for any other reason; and I wish you wouldn't say what you came over to say."

I stammered around a minute, and told him I had come over to compliment him on his run because I hadn't seen him after the game. But he knew I was lying, and I knew he knew I was lying. I wished, then, I had never come over. Because, walking home, I decided that I liked Smith. I felt like hell.

We had a club that year. Eberhart and Gear, tackles, Jackson, center—but that means nothing to you. But we had a club. We were right. And we were unbeaten up to Tech; but Tech had a team themselves. They had a big full-back, name of Whiteman, and he was the toughest man I ever saw. He weighed two eighteen; he was fast; he was good. He was wonderful, and he was indestructible.

CAULFIELD had had Smith in there two or three times during the season—Tech is our last game—and he looked fairly good on offense, terrible on defense. He wouldn't tackle. He would look as if he were trying to tackle, but he wouldn't tackle. Of course, in justice to Smith, I've got to admit that he beat Buckham for us in the third quarter with two long runs. One bringing back a punt and one on the subsequent kick-off. But I will always think we would have beaten them anyway. As I saw it, we had a good club.

I kept away from him. He embarrassed me horribly. I hated to meet him on the campus. Because he had said he liked me? Well, I guess that's the reason. Or one of the reasons. When you have some one admiring you that you can't admire yourself, it makes you feel like—well, damned funny.

"I don't encourage the do-or-die attitude," Caulfield told us in the dressing-room, before the Tech game. "I don't hold with the school of thought that holds the best football coach is the best psychological engineer—that the best football coach is the man who can throw his team on the field with the biggest tears in their eyes, and the most venom in their hearts. I've given you a number of plays. I think they are good plays, and I feel that if you execute these plays to the best of your ability, and tackle hard and play hard both on offense and defense, you will probably score enough to win. I don't guarantee this, though; and if you don't win, I don't want you to feel that all is lost."

He stopped a minute then, and looked around. "You haven't noticed," he said, "probably haven't noticed, I should say, that Smith isn't here. Smith is upstairs." He paused again. "I think," he said, "that Smith is our margin of victory. I believe that he will win for us. And I believe that you all will resent it. But," he concluded, "I ask you to go all out for Smith. To try to get him away. Much obliged." He turned and left the room.

The trainer came in and read the starting line-up. Smith, as usual, wasn't in it. The team got up slowly, looking glum, and started to file out. The trainer had gone. Then suddenly I heard myself:

"Wait a minute," I said. "Wait a minute. I want to tell you something." They waited, looking at me queerly.

"I want to tell you," I said, "that I think Smith is yellow. I think he is everything that we all think he is, and more. But I think that his very yellowness is what's going to pull us through today. He doesn't like to take it, and that's why he can thread a broken field. I say let's shake him loose, when he comes in there. . . . I'm going to do my best."

I noticed that they were all standing there, looking stupid. I thought I was getting over. They looked rapt, stupidly rapt. I noticed Gear particularly. He looked hurt, numb. I turned around to lead them out—and ran right into Smith!

HE didn't say anything. He simply looked at me, looked at me with his head down, looking up through those beautiful long blond eyelashes, and there were little unfallen tears in both his eyes. But he smiled.

"I just came in," he said, "I just—I just came in to wish you luck. I hope



Every time I could meet him hard, hard enough to hurt myself, I had a swell time.

Henderson wins today. I just this second came in."

I liked that first quarter. I liked every minute of it. Every time they socked that big Whiteman into the line, and I could meet him head-on, hard, hard enough to hurt myself, I had a swell time. Every time I could bust into one of their big tackles, blind, hard, I was having a swell time. Because then I wasn't thinking. I had to hurt myself, to keep from thinking.

And we were going good. We scored in ten plays, and if I do say it myself, we scored in ten plays because I was going to town. I was running twice as blind as a good line-plunger runs, but I was running twice as hard, and we scored and we converted. We had seven points, and we were looking back. We were looking back at them from behind seven points, and we were playing ball.

We were going, but we couldn't go that way all afternoon. We simply couldn't do it. The muscles God gives a man won't let him, try as he will. But we were looking back from seven points when we left the field at the end of the half.

I went over and climbed onto the rubber's table, and he taped the rib I'd cracked, and it hurt like hell; but I didn't mind it.

Caulfield came in and talked to each of us. He talked to each of us in turn. And he talked as if he didn't know we were played out and that we were going to lose. He told me: "You've played a little too much football, this first half, Mac. Stay in there, but save yourself. Seven points are enough."

BUT every time the trainer rolled me over to wind another coil of tape around my ribs, I saw Smith sitting there, looking at me—his uniform beautiful and clean, and wearing those special shoes that the trainer'd had made for him. They looked clean, smooth and black; and I thought, thought a lot of things. Because I knew then that Smith wasn't yellow. The trainer had told me. Had told me his brother had been killed playing football, and that his mother—well, you can imagine. One of those rare accidents. The trainer told me, taping up my rib. Caulfield had told him to tell me. Caulfield knew about my little speech.



"I just came in,"
he said, "—just
came in to wish
you luck."

They beat our ears down in the third quarter—beat our ears down because they were a better football team. They hadn't played all out, and they were picking up confidence as they went along. And that Whiteman! I said he was indestructible, and that's the word I meant. He got better, bigger, tougher, faster, smarter, every play. And he was better than I was. He made me like it in big chunks; and I asked MacDonald to meet him when he came through the line, and stop him, and I asked God to help MacDonald. But Whiteman piled first downs on us, and pretty soon he scored. Scored because he was better than I was. My line would play his even, but when he hit the hole, the man who was supposed to fill the hole, and back the line, and stop him at the line of scrimmage, was MacDonald; and MacDonald couldn't do it.

They scored, but they didn't convert. We were still ahead, but we had one point where before we had had seven; and we saw the handwriting on the wall.

They had plenty of time. Tech knew they had plenty of time. They had ten minutes, and so they kicked off. They decided that they would kick off. They wanted us to fool around and wear out what was left of ourselves, and then they would put over that other score—that other score that would beat Henderson.

And as they started to kick off, I saw, coming in from the sideline, Smith. And he looked like money from home. He

was running easily with his feet wide apart as he came out on the field, with that deceptive, terrible speed of his, and I breathed thanks and a prayer.

He took Lowery's place at left half; and I took heart, just looking at those new shoes.

But they had heard about him. They didn't kick to Smith. They kicked to me. And I was duck soup. Running blind, trying to run hard, I went straight up the middle, and they took me on the thirty-yard line, and I fell pretty hard.

But we had Smith. He would shove one across for us with a long run, and Tech wouldn't have time to score twice. And so I called him on the first play. He didn't look at me as I called the signals; he looked at the ground back there in the huddle, with the referee standing behind him to see he didn't say anything. I called him on a delayed cross buck that was a play built for him, and one that was designed to get him in the open.

I sent him, and he ran where the play was called. He ran fast, in a straight line, low. They tossed him hard, for no gain. Had he cut back and stalled, as he always had, he would have had a hole he could have walked through; but he ran where the play was called. And when they set him down, they set him down with a crack. He still had his eyes tight squinted shut when I picked him up. The significance of that!

You see, he had hit where he was supposed to hit. He had shut his eyes, and he had hit low. But at one fifty-five, he was giving that big tackle of theirs almost a hundred pounds, and he was like a child. And it was my fault.

I had said that he was yellow, and that he gained because he was yellow, and did things wrong, and went into the line straight up. And so now I knew. Smith liked me. He was in here now—in here trying to play the way I played, because he liked me. He didn't care about the game. He wanted to prove to me that he wasn't yellow, and all the time seeing them carrying his big brother off the field with a broken neck. . . .

He had showed me, all right. I saw then they do not teach you everything in college.

WE had to kick. We stalled as long as we could, but we had to kick.

Tech took the ball on their own eighty-yard line. And Whiteman grinned at me. I knew why he was grinning. He had just time to carry that ball down and

score. Carry the ball down in leisurely line plunges against a played-out team, and score. He knew we were played out, and didn't have the reserves to stop him; and though he didn't know a couple of things that I knew about Smith, he knew the threat of Smith was past.

I called time out.

"We have one point," I said. "We have one lousy point. That's enough. We'll hold these guys, and that one point will be enough. I do not ask you to play any better than you have been playing, because you have played a fine game. If we lose the game, I lost it. If we win the game, I'll feel a little better about what I said in the dressing-room, because what I said there was a dirty lie." I didn't look at Smith. I was afraid to.

Whiteman took the ball off tackle, and he gained five yards. Whiteman took the ball through center, and he gained three yards; and I got up tired and hurting all over. Whiteman helped me up—and grinned.

Oh, he was good. Very, very good. But, believe it or not, on the forty-yard line we stopped him, or rather we slowed him up, and we got them fourth and three, and they went back into punt formation. I breathed a sigh of relief. I believe I actually smiled, because if they kicked, we could run line plays until the game was over, and Smith didn't miss punts. I looked back, and he was under his own goal-posts, and he had taken off his helmet. His hair looked very yellow, and he looked very small; but he didn't miss punts.

Whiteman was back to punt, and I was practically relaxing. Of course, we were a bunch of damned fools, but we had had all the ability to think hammered out of us. The ball went to the short man on the weak side, and he ran back faking it on an end around; and the next thing we knew, Whiteman was over at the side of the field by himself waiting for the pass. And it was in there. And he was gone. We didn't have a man on the field that could catch him on a bicycle except—except Smith.

Smith came up with a rush, and then suddenly he stopped. Stopped cold. I was going down as hard as I could, but the whole picture seemed miles from me. As if I saw the whole thing while running slowly in one spot, clearly, far away.

But Whiteman, he was no elusive wraith in a broken field, and he knew it. He shoved his head around and took in the picture of me ten yards behind him,

and he threw his head to the front, and saw Smith waiting for him. And he did the smart thing.

He pushed that big hard head down; he churned those big piston-moving knees up, and he moved into high gear. And between that big hard head, propelled by two hundred and eighteen pounds of muscles, and those two punishing knees, he left about one-sixteenth of an inch.

One-sixteenth of an inch for Smith to tackle. Smith, who wouldn't tackle, who weighed a hundred and a half.

Whiteman pulled into the twenty-yard line going like a tank down a steep hill, and headed right for Smith, with me behind him. Smith saw what he was doing then, standing there on the eight-yard line, and he ducked his own head, and he turned on all that beautiful speed, and came in low, running on his stomach. He came in so fast that Whiteman never had a chance. There was a crack, a crack that sounded like an explosion; and Whiteman ricocheted into the air one way, the ball flew off at an angle, and Smith fell flat on his face with his arms still out, limp as a rag.

I fell on the ball.

They carried Smith off the field; and I crept, slow-motion, into the line two times, and the gun got us.

As I ran to the dressing-room, I felt like a murderer.

Smith was lying on the table, his eyes wide open, babbling. I bent over him, and the trainer said he would be all right; and Smith saw my face, and started begging me to let him carry the ball. I went into the shower and ran water over my face so the rest of them wouldn't know I was crying.

MAC lit a cigarette. I didn't say anything for a minute, but Mac didn't either, and so finally I said: "I guess you're right. Let's go down and get a drink."

We met a fellow just coming in as we left, and Mac introduced him as his partner. He was a nice-looking little fellow, quite fair, but I didn't catch his name. I was still thinking about Mac's story. I remembered that in the bar. "What did you say your partner's name was?" I asked. "I was thinking about that fellow Smith, and didn't get it."

Mac turned his glass a couple of times, and I guess he was remembering that game too.

"My partner's name—" he said slowly. "It's quite a common name. It's Smith."

The Willie Sneakshoes

*A specially attractive novelette that brings back to us
Tiny David and his friends in the State police.*

By ROBERT R. MILL

HIS name, according to the neatly engraved card he presented when he appeared at the barracks of the Black Horse Troop of the New York State Police, was Theodore Lightfort. The card also bore an address in Maiden Lane, New York.

He was short, stout and good-natured, with a full face which became lined with wrinkles when he smiled, and made him resemble a grotesque Billiken. He appeared genial, inoffensive—harmless. And he had the manner of a man bringing gifts.

Captain Charles Field, commanding officer of the Black Horse Troop, who was listening intently to uninterrupted conversation that was almost a monologue, was more cautious and saving of words than was his custom. His manner indicated strongly that he suspected the gifts had strings attached to them.

Lieutenant Edward David, the third occupant of the room, lolled comfortably in his chair. His indolent manner indicated that he was neutral in this clash of wits. In reality, he was enjoying every word of it.

In a terse, laconic telephone message, Albany had prepared them for the arrival of this little man. Headquarters had frankly admitted he stood head and shoulders above any other private detective when it came to the recovery of stolen jewelry. It conceded that his underworld contacts were excellent—too excellent, in fact. For it added the information that in most of his spectacular recoveries the police had well-founded suspicions, but no legal proof, that Lightfort had merely acted as a go-between for the thieves.

All this knowledge, as Headquarters pointed out, had been acquired in a painful manner by police departments in all parts of the world. The little man always worked with the police, bringing information they could not afford to ig-

nore, and then, when his own purpose had been served, leaving the officers to hold the bag. They had not done this willingly. But the little man always kept inside the law, ignored hard words and nasty suspicions, and calmly transferred his operations to another section. Now, apparently, he had chosen the Black Horse Troop.

"Watch him!" Albany ordered.

Lieutenant Edward David, who stood well over six feet, was broad in proportion, and therefore was known as Tiny, was frankly disappointed when he first saw Theodore Lightfort. The disappointment quickly vanished in the early stages of the interview.

Beneath Lightfort's commonplace appearance, and behind his genial, casual manner, there were brief hints of something deep, dangerous and sinister. During those brief flashes, Tiny David noted, the little man seemed to undergo a transformation. The genial Billiken disappeared, and in its place was a hooded cobra, coiled and ready to strike.

"Suppose I told you that the largest diamond in the world was floating around in your territory."

THE genial voice belonged to the Billiken, but it came from the snake. Tiny David watched the little man fascinatedly. This was the meat of the visit. All that had gone before was merely the prelude.

Captain Field realized that, too. He straightened in his chair.

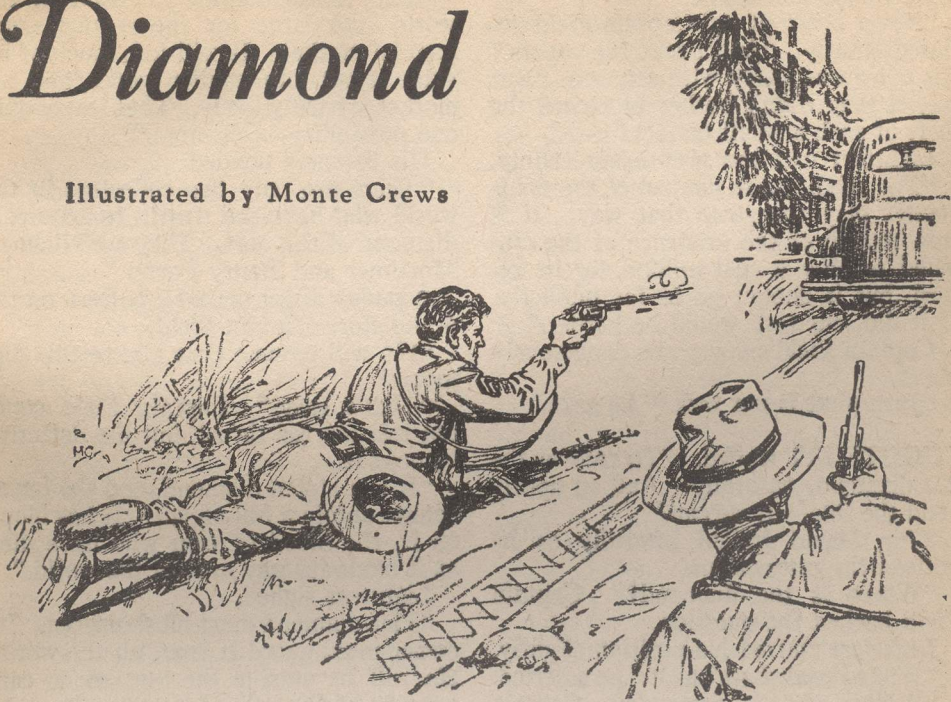
"Are you telling me that?" he asked.

The little man contented himself with a nod in the affirmative. Inwardly, he was bursting with the desire to share his knowledge. Outwardly, he was cold, indifferent, like a poker-player with a strong hand, seeking to lead on his adversary.

But Captain Field was not to be drawn. He nodded calmly, then traced a pattern on the blotter-pad of his desk.

Diamond

Illustrated by Monte Crews



Crosby fired into the air; then as the car continued its flight, he fired at the gas-tank. But the automobile vanished around a turn in the road.

"This," purred Theodore Lightfort, "is a stolen diamond."

Still Captain Field refused the bait.

The little man waited until the silence was almost intolerable.

"There is a reward." He smacked his full lips. "A reward of one million dollars."

Captain Field lighted his pipe. He made a ritual of the operation, giving it his entire attention. Only when the pipe was drawing freely, and blue smoke was curling toward the ceiling, did he turn to his visitor.

"A million dollars," he admitted, "is a lot of money."

The little man nodded.

"I could use it." He waited, but there was no comment, so he added: "Perhaps you could too."

Captain Field drew on his pipe.

"Our share of a reward, if any, would go to the pension fund. So let's skip the million dollars."

There was silence, a long, seemingly interminable silence. Tiny David, watching the two men, saw the little detective in the light of a boxer, who had staked much on the result of a blow, saw that blow blocked, and now was sizing his opponent up with more respect, seeking a vulnerable point.

"It is a wonderful diamond." This, obviously, was a feeler. But Captain Field ignored it. So Lightfort continued: "This diamond weighs 3026 carats, almost a pound and a half. The largest diamond on record before this time weighed only 3024 $\frac{3}{4}$ carats."

He closed his eyes as he drew upon memory:

"That was the Cullinan Diamond, named for the man who found it. It was worth from two million, five hundred thousand dollars to five million dollars. An English syndicate bought it, cut it into nine stones, presented them to King Edward VII, and each stone was large and fine enough to rate a name and grace the crown jewels of England."

He laughed softly.

"But you aren't interested in history. Well, this diamond came from the Pretoria Fields, Transvaal, where the Cullinan was found. A Kaffir stumbled on it. He smuggled it out, God knows how. They search them—search their clothes, and search their bodies."

His plump fingers indicated dimensions.

"This diamond measures four and five tenths inches, by two and five tenths inches, by one and five tenths inches. No, it wasn't done that way."

He folded his hands.

"Never heard of it," Captain Field declared bluntly. "And I read the papers." His voice was heavy with sarcasm. "But maybe they didn't bother to record the theft of such a small trinket."

Lightfort met the skepticism calmly.

"The syndicate in control of the fields doesn't play the game that way. It is sure enough of the existence of the diamond to offer a cool million for its return, but it doesn't go in for publicity. If it did, our task would be harder."

Captain Field's voice was dangerously bland.

"Just what is our task?" he asked.

LIGHTFORT smiled. "To recover the diamond, naturally. And to apprehend the thief—if we can."

Tiny David smiled inwardly as he noticed the reservation.

"Where is the diamond?" Captain Field barked the question.

Lightfort shifted his position slightly.

"Willie Sneakshoes has it," he asserted.

"Willie—who?" demanded Captain Field.

"Willie Sneakshoes," the little man repeated. "We don't know who he is, so we call him Willie Sneakshoes."

The State Police officers were smiling.

"Sort of like *John Doe*." That was Tiny David's first contribution.

"Exactly," Lightfort agreed. "And Willie Sneakshoes has taken the diamond around the world. It appeared in the thieves' market in Bombay. It was seen in a hovel on the waterfront in Marseilles. It traveled to Holland. Here and there, as the diamond went along, a man died. Several times the stone changed hands. But Willie Sneakshoes always had it. You see, the man with the diamond always is known as Willie Sneakshoes. Do you understand?"

Captain Field ignored the question. "Where is the diamond now?"

The little man smiled.

"I don't know," he calmly admitted.

Captain Field stood up.

"Tell the rest of it to Lieutenant David," he instructed. "I like fiction as much as anybody—and your story isn't half bad; but I happen to be busy."

Lightfort ignored the interruption.

"But I know where the diamond is going," he asserted.

Captain Field sat down. "Where?" he demanded.

The detective evaded the question by plunging into a singsong monologue:

"This is the largest diamond in the world—too large for the regular commercial market. It will lose much of its value if cut into smaller stones, and the market is hardly lively. That leaves only one possibility—collectors."

His listeners nodded.

"There are only two collectors in the world who have the wealth to acquire a diamond of this sort. They are Nicholas Mortimer and Henry Porter."

A pudgy finger traced a pattern on the desk before Captain Field.

"We will assume that I have this diamond."

"That's easy." Captain Field could not restrain the thrust, but the detective ignored it.

"It is a stolen diamond, and the buyer cannot obtain a bill-of-sale. It has blood on it, the blood of men who have died as it made its way around the world."

Lightfort sighed.

"This diamond must blush unseen. Its owner must guard it from all the world. He will be outside the law, so he cannot rely on the police for protection. The envy of others will not add to the joy of his possession."

The little man made a ruthless gesture.

"That eliminates Porter. He could really enjoy this diamond only if he could exhibit it to the world. Also, he is what the world calls an honorable man."

Lightfort's eyes were half closed.

"Some men love women. Other men love fine paintings. Still others crave most of all that elusive something the world calls fame. But into the blood of a very few men there is poured the deadly virus of a real love for fine jewels."

HE seemed unaware of his audience as he continued:

"These men treat jewels as sacred things, not baubles to be hung about the neck of some thoughtless woman. They would regard a diamond of this sort as a masterpiece, a priceless symphony created by nature. To them, the intrinsic value of the stone would justify any steps necessary to insure its possession. For them, the blood of the men who have died would be washed away in the icy brilliance of the diamond. They would gloat as they added it to their collection, gladly hiding it away from all the world, because they would be unwilling to share its splendor with others."

Lightfort paused, apparently embarrassed by his own eloquence.

"Nicholas Mortimer is such a man," he added gruffly.

There was a poignant silence.

"Willie Sneakshoes and the diamond will come to him. They have no other destination."

Again the silence.

"Nicholas Mortimer is in his camp in the Adirondacks."

"So what?" Captain Field shot the question.

The little man shrugged his shoulders.

"Help me recover the diamond, and— and apprehend the thief."

That was the second time he showed hesitation regarding the man who stole the diamond. Tiny David smiled.

Captain Field, too, was smiling. He stood up again.

"I think we can work together, Willie Sneakshoes."

Lightfort made a gesture of negation.

"Not Willie Sneakshoes," he protested. "Willie Sneakshoes is the man who has the diamond."

Captain Field's smile was more pronounced.

"Exactly. We can work together. I am going to turn you over to Lieutenant David, this young man who acts as if he is too lazy to move, and looks as if he doesn't have enough intelligence to come in out of the rain. And I am going to give him his instructions right in front of you."

He turned to Tiny David.

"Work with this man. Recover the diamond. Get the man who stole it. Land his accomplices—all of them. And always remember that our friend, Willie Sneakshoes here, is playing on our side of the fence only because it suits his own ends, and that his real sympathies prob-

ably are with the other side. Do you understand?"

Tiny David's face was creased with a crooked grin.

"Perfectly, Captain." He addressed the detective. "Let's get started. Now we understand each other, I think we'll get along right well, Willie Sneakshoes."

SERGEANT JAMES CROSBY glanced at Sergeant Henry Linton. Sergeant Linton, in turn, looked at Sergeant Crosby. Neither man seemed cheerful.

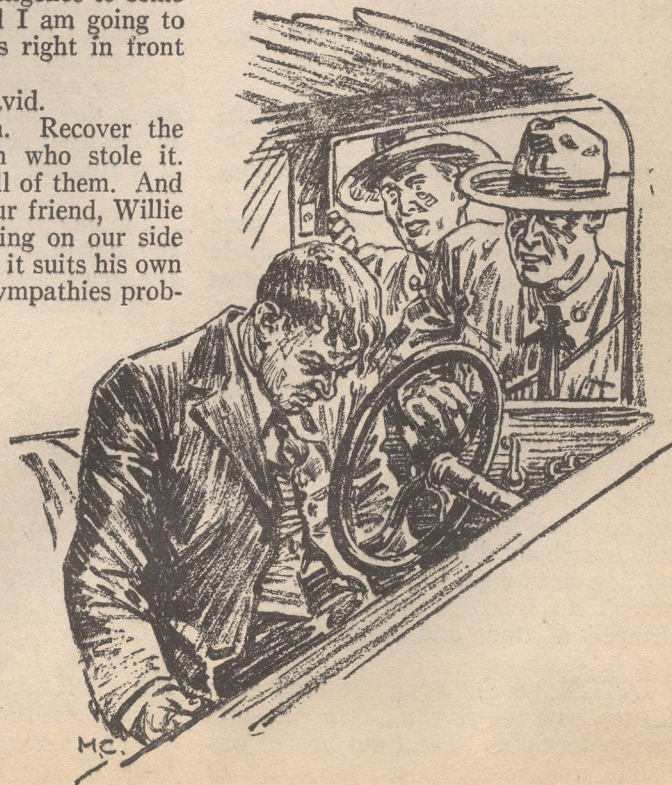
"This," said Sergeant Crosby, "is the bunk." He glanced up and down the private road, which, a good quarter mile behind, turned off from the main road, and which, ahead of him, wound along for three lonely miles to the Adirondack camp of Nicholas Mortimer.

"It's a fool's errand," admitted Sergeant Linton, brushing angrily at the branches which screened him and his companion from the view of any person who might pass along the private road.

"That guy Lightfort is no fool," Crosby objected.

Linton sighed gloomily.

"No, but we are," he asserted. "We are the goats." He put a cigarette in his mouth, then triumphed over temptation and removed it. "What got my goat was



They approached warily, revolvers in hand. The driver remained in the front seat, but as they drew near they saw they had nothing to fear from him. . . . Linton was the first to speak. "That's one for the book! Shot in the back of the head!"

Mc.

Tiny. He stood by and let that crook order us around." Linton imitated the tone of the little man: "Hide yourselves about here. Let regular delivery wagons go. Watch for a sedan with a license other than New York State. Knock it off fast, and watch out for trouble. Search the driver thoroughly, and don't give him a chance to throw anything away. Then call us at the hotel." His voice was filled with sarcasm as he repeated the last sentence.

Crosby grinned. "Leave it to Tiny to make himself comfortable!"

"And taking our car with them was a bright idea," Linton continued. "Suppose the car does show up, and the driver decides not to stop."

"In that case," declared Crosby, "it will be up to us to persuade the driver to change his mind. You can try it on him, Linny. Remember how that movie actress worked out on you when you pulled her up for speeding?" His voice changed to shrill falsetto. "I just can't believe that poor little me will be arrested by a big, handsome man like you."

Sergeant Linton snorted his disgust.

"You aren't so funny, except in appearance. And there is something phony about this whole deal. How does Lightfingers, or whatever his name is, know that the car is due today?"

"Information, laddie," declared Crosby. "Something you are short on."

Linton was unconvinced.

"Your Uncle Tiny," Crosby asserted, "has something on the fire. I had brains enough not to ask too many questions. Now you—"

"Me?" Linton interrupted. "I have brains enough to know that my Uncle Tiny can turn out some sour messes when he starts cooking. I have seen him get burned; and I've known the grease to splash on innocent bystanders, including two sergeants. Something tells me this is one of those times."

Crosby cocked his head inquiringly.

"Something tells me a car is coming along. Stick that bullet-head of yours out, and see what it looks like. Probably somebody selling something. And our new head-man, Gajoofus, told us we weren't to interfere with the regular channels of trade and commerce."

LINTON, peering from the leafy shelter, saw the radiator of a pleasure-car approaching. The front license was visible, and he recognized the colors of the State of New Jersey. The man at

the wheel, whose features were shielded by the brim of a soft hat, was the only occupant of the car.

"Business!" Linton hissed warningly.

They waited, muscles tense, until the car was almost upon them. Then they leaped out from their place of concealment.

"Halt!" cried Linton. "State Police!"

"Pull over!" ordered Crosby.

BUT the driver, instead of heeding the shouted commands, stepped on the gas. The car rushed toward the troopers. They leaped to safety just in time. The car sped on toward the camp.

Crosby, lying in the ditch at the side of the road, drew his revolver. He fired into the air. The car continued its mad flight. Crosby fired three times, aiming at the gas-tank of the car. He checked his fire as the automobile, apparently under full control, vanished around a turn in the road, five hundred feet ahead.

The two men leaped to their feet, and stood for a moment uncertainly.

"Come on!" roared Crosby.

They raced forward. But as they rounded the turn in the road they paused in amazement. A short distance ahead was the car. Its front end, badly crumpled, was pressed against the trunk of a large pine tree.

Again Crosby was the first to act.

"Let's go!" he growled.

They approached warily, their revolvers in their hands. The driver remained in the front seat, but as they drew near they saw they had nothing to fear from him.

Linton groaned hollowly; then pointed to the man slumped face-downward, over the steering-wheel.

"I knew it!" he muttered. "That guy Lightfingers is bad medicine."

Crosby pushed by him, threw open the door of the car, and entered. For just a moment he peered at the motionless driver. Then he recoiled in horror.

The felt hat the man had worn had been pushed or knocked off. The hair at the base of the back of his neck was clipped close. In that hair, only partly hidden by the blood that had trickled out, was a small, round hole.

Crosby, his fingers twitching, looked up to see Linton standing beside him. For a full minute they were silent; then Linton was the first to speak:

"That's one for the book. Shot in the back of the head. And he probably hasn't a gun on him. Won't that look

swell in the papers! Well, Hard-Luck, let's get to work."

Crosby felt for a pulse he knew did not exist, then dropped the limp wrist with an exclamation of dismay. Linton, meanwhile, was searching the driver thoroughly. Crosby then turned his attention to the interior of the car.

"Hold everything!" The command came from Linton. He pointed to the belt of the lifeless man, where the vest and shirt were disarranged. "How about it, Jim? Can we take a chance on moving him before the coroner gets here?"

Crosby nodded gloomily.

"We are in the soup so far a little thing like that won't matter. But you keep out of it, Linny. This is my party."

"Nothing doing."

Linton moved the body so that the man was on his back on the seat. The fingers of the trooper began to explore. "Hello!" The fingers encountered a belt the man wore next to his skin. Linton tore the clothes aside. There was a pocket in the belt. Linton's fingers dived into it. They emerged—empty.

Linton's shoulders sagged.

"That's that," was his comment. "Here; push him back the way he was."

THEY worked quietly. Then they stood in the road beside the car.

"I fired four times," Crosby said. "The first shot was straight up. I pumped the other three at the gas-tank." He spoke mechanically, as though he were reciting a lesson learned by heart. "I have done some rotten shooting in my time, but I couldn't be that bad." He studied the exterior of the car. "And where did the bullet go in?"

Linton pointed to the open window at the right of the driver. "Through there. Car was on the turn."

Crosby nodded. "It could have," he admitted. "But I doubt it."

Linton shrugged his shoulders.

"Seeing is believing. No glass is broken. No holes in the metal." He stepped to the rear of the car. "And you got the gas-tank twice." His nod indicated the driver. "That was Number Three."

"Well," said Crosby, examining the small change and bills Linton had pulled from the man's pocket, "with good luck I should be out in fifteen years. Will you drop in now and then to see me, Linny?"

"Shut up!" ordered his companion. "You shag down and get Tiny and Bad News. I'll hold down the fort."

When he was alone, Linton went over the car and the person of the driver again. He found nothing new. The man had not been armed. There were no papers in his pockets. All marks of identification had been removed from his clothing. Linton examined the license-plates. Then he whistled softly.

"Poor paint job," was his verdict. He spoke aloud. "And crude lettering. I am betting they are a home-made job." Then the elation caused by that discovery vanished. "But that doesn't get us out of the woods. We haven't anything on this guy, and as far as I know there has been no open season declared on motorists, even if they carry phony license-plates. Moral—don't do your shooting while you are flat in a ditch."

HE was deep in the task of making out a written report of the incident when Lightfort, Tiny David and Crosby arrived. Crosby, who evidently had given his version of what had happened, stood quietly at the side of the Lieutenant as that officer made an examination of the car and the driver.

Lightfort remained a short distance away. He took no part in the proceedings. He watched the scene from half-closed eyes, his head cocked to one side.

Tiny David stepped from the car to the road.

"Recognize the car?" he asked.

Lightfort's tone was half apology, half defiance, as he answered:

"I wouldn't know that, Tiny. It answers the description in the information."

"Know the driver?"

"I wouldn't know him, Tiny."

"How do you know?" Tiny David demanded. "Take a look at him."

Lightfort, heaving a sigh of resignation, climbed to the running-board, and peered down at the driver. "Never saw him before." He stepped down hastily.

"Maybe not," Tiny David admitted, "but you'll hear a lot of him from now on." He turned to Sergeant Linton. "Give me your gun, Linny."

Linton flushed a dull red as he handed over the weapon.

"I didn't do any shooting, Tiny. Not that I am trying to climb out."

Tiny David grinned.

"I know it, Linny. But we will have to convince other people." He broke the weapon and peered at the heads of the unexploded cartridges. Then he sniffed at the end of the barrel. "When did you fire this last?" He returned the weapon.



Hastings found a place in the shadows.

"Two weeks ago, on the range."

"Turn your gun in when you get back to the barracks," he instructed Crosby. He glanced about him. "The district attorney and the coroner will be here before long. Meanwhile, we will get organized."

He sat on the running-board of the wrecked car.

"Jim, you and Linny were acting on my orders. I told you to halt this car and notify me. That is your alibi. Tell the exact truth about everything that happened."

He glanced at Lightfort.

"You had received information that a man wanted for questioning in connection with a certain crime was due along here in this car. You passed that information along to me. Is that right?"

Lightfort shifted from foot to foot.

"I guess that's about right, Tiny. But I hadn't counted on any shooting."

"Never mind the shooting." David's voice was harsh. "Just at present, that is my funeral." His glance held the little detective. "Both you and I will refuse to tell what crime this man was suspected of. We will claim that publicity at this time will obstruct justice. We aren't going to have the whole world

laughing at us for chasing a diamond that probably doesn't exist. Do you understand?"

Lightfort nodded.

"I see the point," he admitted. "But there *is* a diamond. It was right here." He pointed at the body. "Willie Sneakshoes had it." He turned to Crosby and Linton. "Did you search him carefully?"

"Yes." Linton's reply was curt. Crosby was about to speak, but Tiny David silenced him with a motion of the hand.

"Just where would you have looked for the diamond, Willie Sneakshoes?"

Tiny David's voice was low and mild, but full of insinuation.

Lightfort ignored the use of the name.

"I wouldn't know that, Tiny," he protested.

"He wore a money-belt next to his body," Crosby explained. "His clothing was pulled away from it when we reached him. The belt had a large pocket. There was a flap on the pocket, and the flap had been opened. The pocket was empty."

Lightfort nodded. His eyes were blinking rapidly.

"Did he have a chance to throw anything away?"

They were silent.

"All right." The statement came from Tiny David. "Jim, you and Lightfort take the left side of the road. Linny and I will take the right. Start where you hailed him, and work up to the car and a little beyond it. Make it thorough."

The search was more than thorough, but it yielded nothing.

"That's that," was Tiny David's verdict. "Linny, you go on to the camp and question Mortimer. Forget all about his millions, and give him the works. Ask him if he expected a visitor. Ask him if he expected to buy anything. Then, if you think you are getting anywhere, tell him just what has happened and what we know."

"I wouldn't do that," a mild protest came from Lightfort.

"I would," barked Tiny David. "Get started, Linny." He addressed Crosby. "Jim, you stay here with our friend, Willie Sneakshoes, and wait for the coroner. For the present, you'll have to take the rap. The district attorney probably will feel he has to present the case to the Grand Jury. Chances are they will indict you for manslaughter. We can fix all that later."

He lighted a cigarette.



Lightfort glanced about him for a moment or two, then walked off toward the north.

"While you are waiting, pick up the four shells that fell from your gun when you did the shooting. The D. A. will want them."

He stood in the center of the road, his arms swinging, his glance darting to the left and right of the highway, and with no trace of his usual inertia.

"Going somewhere, Tiny?"

The soft-spoken question came from Lightfort.

Tiny David laughed aloud.

"Yes, Willie Sneakshoes." His voice was a drawl. "Going for a walk in the woods. Nothing like a walk to chase your worries away. Besides, a girl I know collects wild-flowers. Woods around here look as if they might be full of them. Going to see what I can find."

LIEUTENANT EDWARD DAVID sat at his desk in the barracks of the Black Horse Troop. The chair beside the desk was occupied by Sergeant James Crosby, now clad in the garb of a civilian, and wearing a woebegone expression. Both men were bending over a newspaper.

The front page of the paper chronicled the fact that Sergeant Crosby and Sergeant Henry Linton had that afternoon been arraigned before a Justice of the

Peace on a charge of manslaughter. Crosby, according to the account, had waived examination, entered a plea of not guilty, and had been held under bond of ten thousand dollars for the Grand Jury. Bail had been furnished by Captain Field.

Linton, who had faced a similar charge, had been relegated to the rôle of a material witness after a spirited plea from Lieutenant David, who acted as counsel for the two men. The witness had been paroled in the custody of Captain Field.

There were two paragraphs of direct quotes, in which the District Attorney pointed out that he was merely doing his duty. Captain Field also had been interviewed, but with scant success. "No comment," was his only contribution.

A second column contained a story with a date-line, in which the New Jersey authorities declared they had been unable to establish the identity of the dead man, but that a check-up had established the fact that the license-plates on his car were counterfeit.

In a third story, which bore the signature of the reporter, the writer expressed surprise at the faulty marksmanship. He pointed out that Crosby was the crack

revolver-shot of the troop. He dwelt upon the fact that the officers of the troop had nothing to say.

"All of which," he concluded, "leads to the belief that there is considerably more to this case than has appeared up to the present time."

Tiny David pushed the paper aside. "Fair enough," was his comment.

Crosby leaned forward eagerly. "What did you find in the woods, Tiny?"

"Nothing."

Crosby's shoulders sagged.

"What of it?" Tiny David demanded. "I didn't expect to find anything."

Crosby nodded.

"How did Linny make out with Mortimer?"

Tiny David shook his head.

"Drew a blank. Thought he would. He wasn't expecting any visitors. He never heard of the diamond. Only cars at the camp that day belonged to local tradespeople. About what I expected."

"Then why did you send Linny to work on him?" Crosby demanded.

"Ever study psychology?" Tiny David countered.

"No. I am not a detective-story cop."

"Neither am I," Tiny David admitted. He grinned. "But I have a rough idea how it works. I wanted to find out how our friend, Willie Sneakshoes, felt on the subject of putting the buzz on Mortimer. He wasn't in favor of it. That showed he hadn't included it in his plans. When we did it, that made it necessary for him to change his plans. Every time you make the other fellow change his plans, you gain an advantage. That's psy—"

He broke off abruptly as a knock sounded at the door.

"Come in," he called.

QUIETLY Lightfort entered the room. His manner was casual as he nodded to the two men.

"Sit down," Tiny David invited. "You are just in time to join us at the wake."

The little detective slipped into a chair. His eyes were blinking rapidly.

"It was unfortunate." His voice was unemotional.

"Fortunes of war." Tiny David waved a hand.

Lightfort nodded.

"Misfortunes, rather," he corrected. "A cool million has slipped out of our hands."

"For my part," came the quiet assertion of Tiny David, "the million never

was close enough for me to decide whether it was cool or hot. It turned out to be rather hot for Sergeant Crosby, though."

"Very unfortunate," Lightfort admitted. "The breaks of the game. And the game is over."

They were silent.

"I go back to the city tonight," Lightfort continued. "If anything turns up, I'll advise you at once. And you—"

"We will keep in touch with you," Tiny David promised. "We may need your testimony at the trial. Meanwhile,"—he picked up the telephone,— "meanwhile, I'll call the station and reserve a berth for you. To New York, of course, Willie Sneakshoes?"

Theodore Lightfort's smile was bland.

"Yes," he murmured. "New York."

SERGEANT WILSON was in his lair in the basement of the barracks, with the door tightly locked. Before him, on a rough bench, with the rays from powerful lights playing upon them, were two revolvers. Near the guns, resting upon a tiny mound of cotton, was a misshapen leaden pellet, which, a few hours before, had been removed from the head of the unidentified man who had figured in the clash with Crosby and Linton.

Sergeant Wilson examined the bullet with interest, placing it beneath the lens of a powerful microscope. The head had been split and blunted. The base, he noticed with satisfaction, was unmarred. Mechanically he picked up a rule, graduated to the thousandth part of an inch, and applied it to the base.

That operation caused him to give an exclamation of disappointment. The measurement obtained showed the bullet was the size of ammunition used by the troop. cursory examination of the bullet also indicated that it was regular State Police ammunition.

Sergeant Wilson picked up one of the revolvers, glanced at the serial number on it, and noted the number on a piece of paper. Taking careful aim, he fired three times at a mass of cotton-waste at the far end of the room.

Limping painfully,—for he had been wounded in a battle with a burglar two years before, and then was transferred to identification work,—he made his way to the waste and extracted the three bullets. He placed them on the bench, with the gun from which they had been fired beside them.

Picking up the second revolver, he repeated the process. Then he seated him-

self before the bench and skillfully went to work.

Carefully and exactly he worked with a bullet from the first pile, measuring the width of each groove on the soft lead, marking it down; measuring the width of the flat space, or land, separating it from the next groove. These lands and grooves had been formed by the rifling of the barrel of the gun. They would be the same as the rifling at the muzzle.

Sergeant Wilson measured the second bullet; then the third. The results were the same. He turned his rule on the muzzle of the gun from which they had been fired. The measurements checked with those of the bullets.

He repeated the operation with the second pile of the bullets and the second gun. Then he leaned back and studied other objects on the bench.

The autopsy report showed that the bullet had entered the neck at the right, on an angle, and moved toward the left. Sergeant Wilson studied a photograph of the scene of the shooting.

The car had been turning toward the right. There was an open window beside the driver. Again he gave an exclamation of dismay. No hope there.

He turned his attention to the bullet removed from the body of the driver. But before he had even applied his rule for the first measurement, something caught his attention. He stared at it with unbelief at first, and then with excitement, relief and joy crossing his face. Yes; it was very plain. He examined it again. No; it was not a mark made by contact with bone or other hard object.

Sergeant Wilson kicked the bench aside. He was across the room with three hops, fumbling at the locked door. He negotiated the stairs by means of a process that was part a crawl and part a run. He was out of breath and panting as he made his way through the general office. He threw open the inner door with scant ceremony.

TINY DAVID and Crosby, sitting by the desk, looked up. Hope was mirrored in Crosby's eyes. Tiny David was grinning, a crooked little grin. His drawl was very pronounced as he said:

"Close the door, Jim."

Crosby obeyed. Wilson struggled to regain his breath and his voice.

"The bullet—wasn't—it couldn't—"

Tiny David's grin grew broader.

"It couldn't have been fired from Jim's gun," he said simply.

Wilson nodded.

"And it couldn't have been fired from Linny's gun," Tiny David added.

Again Wilson nodded.

"That's the way I doped it out," Tiny David stated calmly.

Wilson dropped into a chair.

"The barrel of the gun it was fired from," he explained, "had a marked defect. That defect showed on the bullet like a signature. The barrels of the guns Jim and Linny carried are clean as a whistle."

"How about the measurements?" Tiny David asked.

"I haven't taken them yet."

"That can come later," Tiny David agreed. He chuckled. "Too bad Willie Sneakshoes is on his way to the station, and can't hear the good news." He arose, and stretched luxuriously. "Yep, Willie Sneakshoes surely would be interested."

LIGHTFORT picked up the reservation David had made for him, shook hands with the trooper who had driven him to the station, and followed the porter into the Pullman. He had a berth in the center of the car. After giving instructions regarding the disposal of his luggage, he seated himself and glanced about.

Two girls were seated in the section across the aisle. Lightfort dismissed them from his mind. He paid scant attention to an elderly man, obviously a farmer, several seats ahead. None of the other occupants of the car claimed his attention. Then a porter appeared, carrying a traveling-bag and a sample-case. Behind him came a young man, apparently a salesman. A quiet smile appeared upon Lightfort's face.

So—the game was on! The smile vanished from Lightfort's face, but he still smiled inwardly. He hadn't fooled them. Well, neither had they fooled him. That was fair enough.

The opening periods of the game had been fought beneath the thin veneer of polite usage. He, Lightfort, had been bound by that usage. The other side had not observed it as closely. There had been constant thrusts, repeated insinuations. Their every use of the name *Willie Sneakshoes* had been an open insult. He had taken it without a murmur. A million dollars, he reflected grimly, furnishes recompense for many and grievous insults.

And now the need for false diplomacy had vanished. This was the finale. The



The mask that usually hid Nicholas Mortimer's feelings from the world, was gone. . . . "Perfect!" he enthused. "Faultless workmanship! What refraction!"

final moments of this game would be played quickly and surely.

This, the little detective recalled gloatingly, would be the master *coup* of his career. There was a reward of one million dollars, which would be paid with no questions asked, for the return of the diamond. And even before the diamond was returned to the syndicate there would be a purchase price, at least equal to the reward, which would pour into the same set of pockets.

That this *coup* placed him definitely outside the law worried Lightfort not at all. For months his always dubious status had been wearing thinner. That no longer mattered. Once this deal was completed, and his share of the loot was in his hands, he would pass out of the picture. The office in Maiden Lane would remain closed. True, he would be a hunted man. That worried him hardly at all. His work had carried him all over the world. He knew a score of places, veritable paradises all of them, where a man of means could live life to its fullest, with the laugh of a woman and the pop of a cork to furnish a melody designed to silence the hum of a pursuit so far away that it never would be a menace. . . .

Resolutely he put the picture from his mind and came back to the present. All that could come later. Now the game was on. There were several matters at hand, the most pressing of them being a

young man, who wore a faultless suit of blue serge, and who labored conscientiously at giving an impersonation of a traveling salesman.

The train had left the outskirts of the village behind, and was gaining speed as it roared south. Lightfort yawned. He glanced at his watch. He fidgeted from one side of the seat to the other.

All the while, he knew, the man in the suit of blue serge was studying him from behind the protecting shield of a newspaper. He chuckled quietly as the man threw the paper aside, yawned, and then made his way to the smoking compartment. That was headwork. Well, he would reward it.

Lightfort also stood up, yawned, and walked to the compartment. He sat down beside the man in blue serge. Outside the window the red and green of a signal flashed by.

"Tough trip." The man in blue made the first advance.

Lightfort registered mild surprise; then he smiled.

"Tough trip is right. No point in turning in. They throw you out of your berth when they cut the train apart to drop the westbound cars at Utica."

A mile or more clicked by.

"On the road?" asked Lightfort.

"Cigars." The man smiled. "They happen to be good cigars, even if the natives didn't stage any rush. Excuse me a minute."

When he returned, he carried the sample-case. He placed it upon a cross-seat, opened it, studied the contents for a moment, and then selected a box.

"These should be about right." He extended the box. "Try one."

LIGHTFORT'S smile, as he accepted the cigar, was sincere—the tribute one painstaking worker pays to another of like ability. No, they had not rated him lightly. They had selected a man Lightfort never had seen, pulling him in from some distant patrol—had provided him with realistic props. Originally Lightfort had planned a bad moment for the man by expressing curiosity regarding the contents of one of the other boxes. Now he knew that gesture would be futile. The sample-case was exactly what it appeared to be. A warm glow enveloped him. They did rate him seriously.

"Play poker?" he asked.

"Some."

"Shall we promote a game?"

The man in blue smiled.

"My mother told me never to play cards with strangers."

Lightfort chuckled. He produced a wallet, and offered his card.

"Just an everyday private dick," he explained. "Not bright enough to be a confidence man."

His companion, in turn, offered a card bearing the name of Roland Hastings, who represented a firm of cigar importers with officers in West Forty-ninth Street. So they had prepared for that, too. Clever, was Lightfort's verdict.

"Now that we are old friends," Hastings suggested, "we might stage that game you were talking about."

Lightfort stood up.

"I'll proposition the conductor. Maybe I can promote a stateroom."

Fully ten minutes elapsed before he returned and motioned Hastings to follow him. He led the way to a stateroom in the car in back of the one their berths were in, and the last car on the train.

A table had been put in place. Two unbroken packs of cards were upon it. There were glasses, a bowl of cracked ice, and several bottles of charged water. Lightfort produced a flask, uncorked it and added it to the collection.

"All the comforts of home," he chuckled. "I'll go scare up two or three other customers." He smiled, and his resemblance to a Billiken became more pronounced. "When they look at me

they know they can trust me." He paused in the doorway. A wave of his hand indicated the table. "Try my samples while you are waiting."

Hastings hesitated just a moment.

"Thanks." He placed ice in a glass, poured an inch or so from the flask and added charged water. Lightfort stood watching.

"Here's how!" And Hastings raised the glass toward his lips. Lightfort smiled. Then he stepped from the room, closing the door, and walked toward the rear platform. The train was slackening speed. Off to the right gleamed the lights of Lake Crystal Junction, where the train would wait for the arrival of a northbound train.

Lightfort retraced his steps, passed the stateroom, and entered the car in which he had his berth. There he waited patiently, keeping a wary eye on the rear car.

The train came to a stop. There was a long wait. Lightfort kept his eyes on his watch. When a whistle heralded the arrival of the other train, he stood up. He was tense; now he was the cobra.

Swiftly he walked to the door, crossed the vestibules, and entered the rear car of the train. He paused a moment before the stateroom; then opened the door. He was alert, wary. But what he saw caused a smile to flit across his face.

HASTINGS sat in a chair by the table, his back turned to the door. There was a glass, containing ice and about half an inch of liquid, at his elbow. His body was relaxed, and the sound of his heavy breathing was plainly audible.

Lightfort closed the door quietly, and made his way back to his berth. There he picked up his luggage, walked to the platform and stepped to the ground.

The northbound train had pulled in on a track between the New York train and the station. The first rush of passengers making the transfer had subsided. This end of the platform was almost deserted, and there was no sign of the porters.

Lightfort walked rapidly to the end of the train, stepped around to the far side of the rear car, and glanced about him. The light of the moon revealed a field, dotted with clumps of pine trees.

Picking his way carefully, he sought shelter beneath the largest tree. From that point he watched the New York train pull out. The northbound train followed a few minutes later.

Lightfort rubbed his hands with glee. It had been a fair battle of wits. Neither side had under-rated the other. He had scored a victory in this, the first round of the finale. That was good.

Resolutely he picked up his luggage, and walked toward the now almost deserted platform of the station.

THE door of the stateroom closed. Roland Hastings spat a mouthful of liquid back into the glass, made a grimace, and rubbed his lips with the back of his hand. One bound carried him to the door, which he opened cautiously and peered down the aisle. He had a fleeting glimpse of Lightfort entering the vestibule, bound for the car ahead.

Working rapidly, Hastings opened a window of the stateroom. He used his fingers to hold back the ice, and threw the contents of the glass through the screening. The glass was replaced on the table. He swung a chair around, so that its back was toward the door. Then he dropped into it.

A glance out the window showed Hastings the train was approaching Lake Crystal Junction. He smiled sardonically. Then he relaxed in the chair, closed his eyes, and allowed his head to fall forward.

He held that position through what seemed like endless minutes. He felt the train stop. There was another long wait. He heard the arrival of the northbound train. Again a long wait.

A slight click informed him the knob of the door was turning. Before the panel swung open he was breathing heavily. He heard the door close. Still he held the position.

It was a good ten minutes later when he swung cautiously around. He was bent almost double as he walked to the door, a precaution against casting a shadow on the curtain of the window that might flash a warning to anybody outside. With the door held open only a crack, he assured himself Lightfort was not in the car. He walked to the forward vestibule. From its shadows, he inspected the next car.

Repeating that process at each car, he worked his way forward to the combination smoker and baggage-car at the head of the train. There he swung himself to the ground, walked even farther away from the station in order to get by the rear car of the northbound train, and came out from the tracks on a road that led to the station.

He walked along that road warily, making his way back toward the station. The buildings across the street from it were shrouded in darkness. He found a place in the shadows that gave him a view inside the lighted windows.

Both trains pulled out. The two or three automobiles parked near the station drove away. The agent worked with a telegraph-key; then picked up a book and began to read. He put the book aside as the door leading from the train-platform opened and Theodore Lightfort entered.

The two men talked for some minutes. Then Lightfort left the station by the door leading to the road. Standing on the sidewalk, he glanced about him for a minute or two, and then walked off toward the north.

Hastings, crowding back into the shadows, made no attempt to follow him. When ten minutes more had elapsed, he stepped out and entered the station.

The clerk looked up from his book. "Hello, Sergeant."

The traveling salesman smiled.

"Easy with the titles, Pete. What did that bird just talking to you want?"

The clerk closed the book before he answered:

"Wanted to know where he could hire a car. I sent him over to Hank Brady's. Is there anything wrong?"

The man in blue serge shook his head. He showed no disposition to leave the station. But he did move along the counter until he was out of the range of vision of anybody who might have peered through the windows.

"By the way, Pete,"—he produced the stub of his Pullman ticket,—“you might wire ahead to the next station and ask them to unload two bags from that berth. I'll pick them up from the agent later.”

The clerk nodded.

"Mystery business, eh?"

"Something like that," the owner of the ticket admitted.

AT least fifteen minutes later, Hastings stood outside Brady's garage. A glance through the window showed only one man in the office, so he entered.

"Hello, Sergeant King," said the garage-man.

"Hello, Hank." He placed a cigar on the desk. "You had a customer a few minutes ago. What did he want?"

"He wanted somebody to drive him to Dalefield. I sent Ernie with him. They left about five minutes ago."

"What is the license number of the car?"

The garage-man pawed through some papers.

"I aint in bad on this deal, am I?"

"No," his questioner assured him, "you are doing us a big favor." He copied the number the man called off. "Use your phone?"

The garage-man nodded. He listened eagerly while his visitor told the operator:

"Sergeant John King speaking. I want to speak to Lieutenant Edward David, at the State Police barracks. And I want him to pay for the message. Will you rush it through, sister?"

CAPTAIN FIELD put his pipe aside as Tiny David entered the office.

"Any luck?" he asked.

Tiny David buttoned the coat of his rough tweed suit.

"Lightfort left the train at Lake Crystal Junction. He is in an automobile, supposedly bound for Dalefield."

"King have any trouble?"

Tiny David grinned.

"No trouble." He launched into a rapid recital of what had happened.

"Good man, King," was Captain Field's verdict. "And this means?"

"This means Willie Sneakshoes thinks we have lost the trail. He thinks we won't know we have lost it until some time tomorrow morning. He is figuring that it will take us at least a day to pick it up. But in the meantime—"

"What?" demanded Captain Field.

"I am going to Dalefield."

"That may not be his real destination."

"I have the license of the car. I can check where it clears the Customs. It can't get far in Canada. As a last resort, I can call on the Canadian police. But I don't want to do that. This is our party."

Captain Field nodded.

"Taking anybody with you?"

"No, sir. This is strictly my party. I pulled Crosby and Linton in on the last one. Now it is up to me to pull them out, and without pulling anybody else in."

Captain Field traced a pattern with the stem of his pipe.

"In Canada, you are not a cop."

"I know that, Captain. I am just one of I don't know how many persons who are grabbing for a big diamond. But I don't care a hang about the diamond. That makes me one-up on the field."

"How will you find Lightfort in Dalefield?"

Tiny David's grin was broader.

"I am not looking for Lightfort," he said quietly. "The man I am after is Mortimer."

Captain Field leaned forward over the desk.

"What do you mean? How many pieces of this crazy picture have you been able to put together, Tiny?"

"Not many, Captain. But Willie Sneakshoes told enough of the truth to make his story stand up, at least temporarily. I have just been trying to sort out the truth."

He stood close to the desk as he continued:

"Willie Sneakshoes was telling the truth when he said the diamond was on its way to Mortimer. What happened on the road—it may have happened by accident or design; and I can't even attempt to explain it fully—made it impossible for the diamond to go to Mortimer. Now, either the game must stop or Mortimer must go to the diamond. That is obvious. And no game stops when there is a stake of a million dollars."

"Sound enough," Captain Field admitted. "We have kept a patrol on the road leading to Mortimer's camp, and Lightfort is smart enough to know that. He also knows that we have no right to attempt to detain Mortimer if he leaves his camp, and that to follow him unobserved over lonely roads is almost an impossibility. What happened on the train tonight is proof that the game isn't over, and that it is to be played in this vicinity. Transferring it to Canada takes it out of our jurisdiction, at least in theory." He stood up. "Yes, I think you have something." He extended his hand. "Good hunting, Tiny."

FOG blanketed the shores of the St. Lawrence, making Dalefield a ghost city in another world. The white mists, driven by a steady breeze, eddied about the turrets of a prison, which resembled a school, and then settled about the walls of a great mill, which looked for all the world like a prison.

Upon the rear balcony of a hospital a priest walked back and forth, a book clasped in his hands, his lips moving as he uttered his early morning devotions. On the main thoroughfare, which fronted on the river, a lone traffic signal blinked warnings to vehicles that did not exist.

It was very quiet in the street known as St. Isidore. The houses here were much alike—frame structures, the fronts of which were disfigured by gingerbread designs, intended for ornamentation. The occupants of those houses apparently were sleeping.

But a lone man sat in the unlighted front room on the first floor of Number Fourteen. He was tall, lean, and his otherwise handsome features were marred by a scar that began in the hair above his left forehead and extended diagonally across his face to the right cheek. There was something about his regular features that just separated them from fineness.

That something was hard to define. Men—and women—in all parts of the world had puzzled over it. The nearest approach to a solution had come from the lips of an aged priest, who, upon encountering the man on the street in a South American town, had crossed himself and murmured in Spanish:

"That one, he is at war with the whole world, and most of all with himself. In his soul, the esthetic and the sensual battle for supremacy, and the bitterness of that struggle is mirrored on his face. May the good God some day give him the peace this world will always deny."

Now, the man with the scar gave his undivided attention to the deserted street. Every now and again he glanced at the luminous dial of his wrist-watch.

He was upon his feet, eagerness reflected on his face, when he saw a short, stout figure emerge from the fog and climb the steps. He was at the door before the knocker sounded. Throwing the door open, he stepped aside with a gesture of welcome.

"Come in, Theodore. All is well?"

Theodore Lightfort entered, closed the door and locked it carefully.

"Hello, Ralph. My end of the game is breaking well. And yours?"

The man with the scar nodded.

"Come. We must work quickly."

He led the way to a room on the second floor. When they were seated he turned to Lightfort:

"What has happened, Theodore?"

THE detective launched into a rapid description of the events following the shooting of the driver. Dull color mounted his cheeks as he described the suspicions and insults he had been forced to tolerate. A look of complacency crossed his plump face as he told of the plans of the State Police to shadow his



movements. Pride replaced it as he explained how he had eluded his pursuer.

The man with the scar shook his head impatiently.

"A petty triumph; yes," he admitted.

Lightfort squirmed under his glance.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"You gained a respite of less than twelve hours. Then the pursuit will begin. Your petty triumph will give it impetus. You admit they are clever."

Lightfort flushed. "What would you have done?" he asked.

The man with the scar waved his hand airily.

"Gone on to New York. Lived a routine life for the next few weeks, or months. I am quite able to handle this end of it alone."

Lightfort regained his composure. A mocking smile appeared on his face.

"And in a few weeks, or months, you and the diamond would be—where? No, Ralph. We know each other."

"I wonder if we do," mused the man with the scar.

Lightfort changed the subject:

"You have communicated with Mortimer?"

"Naturally. He was reluctant to take the added risk, and the former experience frightened him, but the lust to possess this prize triumphed over his

Tiny David fought back the impulse to raise the revolver he held in his hand. Instead, he allowed the weapon to fall to the floor. "Right much traffic in that hall!" he drawled.



fears. He will be here between eight and nine this morning. The transaction will not take long. And then?"

Lightfort showed some surprise at the question.

"Then," he declared, "we will separate. That is the safest way. We will wait until the excitement has died down. Then we will strike, and carry the deal through to its conclusion."

When the man called Ralph smiled, the scar on his face became livid. His laugh was mirthless.

"But, as you pointed out, we know each other. If we were apart while we waited for the excitement to die down, think of the possibilities: There would be no public announcement, of course. But somewhere—it might be at opposite corners of the earth—we would hear the whisper that Nicholas Mortimer had lost a valuable diamond. That whisper would plant sorrow, anger and suspicion in our hearts. Still later there might be another whisper to the effect that a certain syndicate had paid a huge reward for the return of a diamond stolen from it. Speaking for myself, I know that such a whisper would increase my sorrow, anger and suspicion. Blended with all this would be the knowledge that I had been a fool."

His voice grew hard, metallic:

"I am not a fool, Theodore. So from now on we will be together. We will be together until the final whistle blows in the game. We will share the result equally—win, lose or draw. Is that plain, Theodore?"

Lightfort glanced about him like a man in a trap.

"Very plain, Ralph," was his answer.

NICHOLAS MORTIMER stepped from a limousine that drew to a halt before 14 St. Isidore Street. He was a little man, so plump that his body resembled a bulging barrel. The unusual smallness of his head was accentuated by his weight, and the effect was almost grotesque. His tiny, beady eyes peered forth from mere slits surrounded by fleshy pouches.

While his appearance might promote mirth, very few persons laughed in the presence of Nicholas Mortimer. It has been said that a million dollars is no laughing matter. According to that scale of values, Mortimer had wealth enough to subdue even the slightest smile.

He paused for a moment beside the chauffeur, who stood at the open door of the car.

"I want no bungling, Evans. If I fail to return within an hour, you are to go to the police at once. If other men are with me when I return, and my instructions to you are different than those I already have given you, you are to watch your chance and call for assistance at the first opportunity. Do you understand?"

The man in livery touched his cap.

Mortimer stood on the sidewalk for a moment, viewing the tawdry surroundings with distaste. Then he mounted the steps and signaled with the knocker.

The man with the scar met him with outstretched hand.

"Good morning, Mortimer."

MORTIMER'S face made its closest approach to a smile.

"Ah, Lashton."

They were silent as they made their way to the room on the second floor. Lightfort stood up as they entered. Mortimer's face showed his displeasure at the presence of a third party.

"This," said Ralph Lashton, "is Theodore Lightfort." An ironical smile ran over his face as he added, "My partner."

Mortimer took command of the situation. He spoke with short, decisive sentences:

"Suppose you know your business. I've heard of Lightfort—read about you in the papers. Always thought you were on the other side of the fence."

"A man plays many rôles," Lightfort murmured. He was smiling. It was a disarming smile. His resemblance to a Billiken had never been more striking than it was at that moment.

Mortimer turned to Lashton:

"You have the diamond?"

The man with the scar advanced to a table, opened a drawer, and produced a wooden box. He placed a felt pad upon the surface of the table. He was prepared to open the box when he glanced at the prospective buyer.

The mask that usually hid Nicholas Mortimer's feelings from the world was gone. Plainly revealed upon his face were all the desire, all the cupidity and all the lust created by this, his overwhelming passion. His swarthy skin was bleached by the light of anticipation.

Lashton saw the state the man was in, and acted to turn it to his own profit.

"The customer does the work," he drawled. "Will you officiate at the unveiling?"

He stood aside, his lips twisted in the ironical smile.

Perspiration glistened on Mortimer's forehead. His thick, blunt fingers fumbled at the fastening of the box, wrenched it open, and clawed at tissue wrappings. He had surrendered completely to his desire for this stone.

Fine diamonds! He lived for them. He would bid for them. He would fight for them. His obedience to the laws of God and man would be subordinated to his overwhelming desire for them.

All that was visible in his face. To the man with the scar it was sacrilege; for he, too, loved this diamond—with all the intensity of his twisted soul, in which the sensual and the esthetic were forever clashing. But he stood by silently, his face expressionless, as the diamond fell from Mortimer's clutching fingers to the felt pad. It lay there, sparkling in all its brilliance. The sheer beauty of it held them spellbound. It was an old experience to the man with the scar, but now it had an added meaning. Now this prize was about to slip out of his hands, at least temporarily. So his love for it was intensified by sadness.

ONLY one man in the room was completely master of his emotions. Lightfort blinked at the brilliance of the diamond. He marveled at its size and beauty. But he looked at it with appraising eyes, seeing it as a means to an end, rather than as a thing of delight.

Mortimer broke the silence:

"Perfect! Larger than the Cullinan. The Brilliant Cut, and faultless workmanship."

He enthused with abandon:

"Note the display of prismatic colors, Lashton. What marvelous refraction! Yes, that is a property possessed in the highest degree by the colorless tone."

Lashton nodded.

"You have left very little for me to say," he declared. He produced a paper and handed it to Mortimer. "Van Anda's report. He looked at the diamond as it—as it passed through Antwerp."

Mortimer accepted it.

"Yes, it is well to have that. Sound man, Van Anda."

He walked back and forth, asserting:

"I bought a diamond from you. You told me it was your property. I knew nothing of its history. When I asked you, you told me it came from a client badly pressed for money, who wished to remain nameless because news of his financial plight would react upon the fortunes of others. The sale was made

at my camp at Moon Lake, State of New York. Prepare a brief statement to that effect and sign it."

Lashton smiled as he produced a paper.

"This statement is along those general lines, but with considerable more detail, all of which is designed for your protection. Past experience should tell you you can trust me."

Nicholas Mortimer chuckled.

"Right. You have a powerful ally, Lashton." His thumb indicated the diamond. "Usually there are conditions. It would be reasonable to stipulate that delivery be made to my camp."

Lashton shrugged his shoulders.

"The price named has waived many conditions," he suggested.

"Yes, I will brave the Customs." Mortimer nodded. "I have a plan." His good humor returned. "I will be quite frank. I came here prepared to haggle a bit. It is in the blood. But the charm of your ally has removed the temptation."

He produced a wallet, drew from it a packet of banknotes, held by a paper band, which he tossed upon the table.

"Half a million, Federal Reserve notes. Denomination of ten thousand dollars. Fifty in the package. It was short notice. My people had to scurry about a bit to round them up. You will count them?"

LASHTON studied the face of the top note.

"An excellent likeness of Mr. Chase," he asserted. He flipped the package, and glanced at the reverse. "The denomination is engraved quite plainly. I have no trouble reading it. I am content to leave the count to Nicholas Mortimer. He has the reputation of being very accurate in those matters."

Mortimer bowed his acknowledgment. His clutching fingers seized the diamond, and began to swathe it in its wrappings. Lashton took one last look; then turned away.

"Well," began Mortimer, "that is—"

"Just a minute!" A deep voice came from the door. They wheeled to face Tiny David. "Put your hands up, all of you! It won't be healthy for you if you don't."

He stepped into the room, his revolver in his hand.

"You might as well all sit down." Tiny David spoke with a drawl. "Nobody is going to leave. It has taken a long time and a lot of chasing around to get the whole cast together. I don't aim to do any more of it."

He sighed ponderously.

"But first you better let me do a little prospecting in your pockets. I'll take that diamond off your hands, Mortimer. And there is a gun here our experts are right anxious to get a look at."

THEY were a picture in contrasts. Mortimer cringed; his fear struggled with his desire to keep his treasure. That conflict was visible upon his face.

Lightfort, for the moment at least, was disconcerted. The rapid blinking of his eyes, the twist of one corner of his lips, and the wavering of the hands he held aloft proved that.

Only Lashton remained unruffled; but this man, alone of all the three, was dangerous at this minute. Tiny David sensed that; he kept his revolver trained upon the man with the scar, but he spoke to Mortimer:

"Hand over the diamond!"

Tiny David could not restrain a smile as he watched Mortimer struggle to overcome his cupidity as he slowly produced the wooden box. But the trooper kept a wary eye upon Lashton.

"Thanks." He took the box from Mortimer, shoved it carelessly in the pocket of his top-coat. "Now your gun. You carry a gun, don't you?"

Tiny David wheeled to face Lashton.

"Your right hand," he cautioned him. There was a note of reproof in his voice.

"You must have been a street-car conductor back in the days of the old fare registers. You seem to have trouble in keeping your right hand above your head."

Lashton smiled his acknowledgment of the thrust. His right hand was elevated to the same height as his left.

Tiny David pocketed the pearl-handled revolver Mortimer produced.

"Nice toy," was his comment. He faced Lashton. "I'll pay you the compliment of being much more careful. Keep your hands right where they are. You, Willie Sneakshoes, move over a bit so I can see just what you are doing. No, not too close to your boy friend. That's better."

Keeping his right hand and the revolver as far away as possible, Tiny David used his left hand to explore the person of the man with the scar. The hand emerged with a revolver, found in a shoulder holster.

Tiny David examined it with interest.

"Long barrel." He spoke aloud. "Marks near the muzzle of the barrel. Where is the silencer?"

Out of the corner of an eye he saw Lightfort wilt visibly. But the man with the scar remained unperturbed.

"Isn't that your problem?" he asked. Tiny David chuckled.

"Sort of," he admitted. He continued his search. "Don't expect to find it. Sort of surprised you didn't ditch the gun. Doing this just in case. Read a story about a man who carried two guns. —You're next, Willie Sneakshoes."

It was the work of a moment to disarm the little detective. When the task was completed, Tiny David dropped in a chair at the far end of the room. He sat facing the three men. Each of his hands held a revolver.

Lashton was the first to speak. He addressed Lightfort:

"The aftermath of your little triumph on the train." There was acid in his voice.

Tiny David grinned.

"Not entirely," he pointed out. "Give Mortimer due credit on the program. We sort of figured that, all things being equal, he would go to the diamond."

He put one gun aside to light a cigarette.

"Patrol notified us when he left his camp this morning. Customs men at Bass

River gave us a buzz soon as they cleared him for Dalefield. We do have to thank Willie Sneakshoes for the fact that I was waiting on the outskirts of the village when Mortimer showed up."

He turned to Mortimer.

"Easy to follow an imported car, particularly in the fog. Leaving it parked in front of the house wasn't smart, either. All I had to do was go to the back. Little work on the door there made the rest easy."

The man with the scar sneered.

"Back to your old trade, eh?"

Tiny David laughed easily.

"You owed me that for my crack about the conductor. Always try to pay your debts, don't you?"

There was no answer.

Tiny's voice was stern as he addressed Mortimer:

"You are the fall-guy in this opera. How much did you pay them?"

Mortimer hesitated; then—

"Half a million," he faltered.

"Where is it?" Tiny David shot the question at Lashton.

"In the drawer of that table."

There was just the trace of a sneer upon Lashton's face as the trooper found the banknotes and pocketed them.

"Stiff price," was Tiny David's comment. "Plenty, even if they really were selling you the diamond. But they only loaned it to you."

"What—what do you mean?"

The question came from Mortimer.

Tiny David returned to the chair.



The man with the gun nodded his satisfaction. "That's for Burt," he declared. "That one scar made you look lopsided; this evens things up, in more ways than one."

"The plot was that they were to steal it back. There is a reward of a million for its return. Lightfort and this man planned to split that."

Mortimer swallowed hastily. Lashton leaned forward.

"The reward still stands." There was insinuation in every word. "There is only Mortimer to swear that any money changed hands here today. And such a statement from him would not be to his advantage." He eyed the trooper closely. "If you and I had a talk in private—"

Tiny David chuckled.

"Ever hear the story about the Union general stationed in New Orleans during the Civil War?" he asked. "Well, they kept propositioning him about looking the other way when blockade-runners came in. He held out for a long while, but one day he wired Washington about like this:

"Please transfer me. They are getting near my price."

He stretched his huge form.

"I don't feel any urge to send a telegram. Besides, this isn't an ordinary business transaction. This is murder."

His voice was stern as he continued:

"Two gangs fought for possession of that diamond as it made its way around the world toward its only logical destination. Your crowd lost out almost at the finish. But it had one great asset in reserve, Willie Sneakshoes. He could play with the police, use them. And he did. He baited the trap well."

THE trooper leveled an accusing finger at Lashton.

"You hid in the woods above the turn in the road leading to Mortimer's camp. The car hit the patrol. It failed to stop. You knew it would. There was shooting. You knew there would be. Just as the car was rounding the turn, and it was out of sight of the patrol, you shot the driver with a revolver that had a silencer attached."

He lighted another cigarette.

"A silencer doesn't do such a good job on a revolver, but it was good enough while Crosby was blazing away.

"Well, the car crashed almost as soon as the driver was hit. You jumped out, grabbed the diamond from the driver, and made your get-away. You had plenty of time. The car was around the bend from the members of the patrol, and it took them some time to pull themselves out of the ditch and take after it."

He grinned, his crooked little grin.

"It was clever, but two or three things went wrong: Ordinarily, we would have been inclined to believe that there had been some wild shooting. But Crosby is the best shot in the troop. That was why he had orders to do all the shooting, if it was necessary to do any."

His drawl grew more pronounced.

"Then, there was another little matter. Crosby had shot four times. He picked up his four empty shells in the road. I found a fifth at the fringe of the woods, right at the turn in the road. Naturally, we put our ballistics man to work. When he got through there was only one logical solution. So that makes—"

HE broke off suddenly, attracted by a noise in the direction of the door of the room. Two men, coat-collars pulled up and caps pulled down, stood there. The sub-machine guns they carried were trained on the occupants of the room.

Meeting their menacing glance, Tiny David fought back the impulse to raise the revolver he held in his hand. Instead, he allowed the weapon to fall to the floor.

"Right much traffic in that hall." His low drawl seemed to boom in the quiet room. "If it keeps up, we'll have to put a cop there to direct it."

The two armed men entered the room.

"Shut up!" The harsh command came from the leader.

Tiny David watched the proceedings, an amused smile playing over his broad face. Mortimer cowered in his chair, additional terror inspired by this unexpected development visible upon his gross face. But Lashton and Lightfort had undergone a transformation.

The caustic smile of the former was gone. He still retained a vestige of poise, but it was thin, and his fear was evident.

Lightfort, on the other hand, appeared to have regained his self-possession. He regarded the scene with equanimity.

"Watch them," ordered the leader of the two men. "I'll take the cowboy-cop."

He walked toward Tiny David.

"Hand over the rock and the jack. I'll get the gats."

Tiny David handed him the diamond and the package of bank-notes. The man smiled as he pocketed them.

"Thanks."

Tiny David's smile matched his. "Consider it a loan," the trooper murmured.

"Oh, yeah!"

The man wheeled, and with his companion advanced upon Lashton.

"Hello, killer!" The leader spoke the grim greeting. Lashton cowered before him. The man's hand grasped the cylinder of one of the revolvers he had taken from Tiny David. He pressed the sharp sight of the weapon into the skin of Lashton's forehead on the side opposite from the scar. He drew the sight diagonally across Lashton's face. Then he stepped back to survey his handiwork.

Lashton sat erect, his fists clenched. His great self-control had blocked any cry of pain. He was silent now, although he obviously was suffering agony. His face was disfigured by two great scars. From one of them the blood was pouring. The two scars formed a large "X."

The man with the gun nodded his satisfaction.

"That's for Burt," he declared. "That one scar made you look lopsided. This evens things up, in more ways than one. Not payment in full, but something on account."

He turned to his companion.

"Tie 'em up." A sneer crossed his face. "Cop, crooks and customer. What a package! We will leave it for the first person to claim it." He hesitated a moment. "No, don't bother to gag them. Yelling too soon will get them a slug of lead. Once we are gone, I can't see that their yelling is going to help them."

The two men produced short lengths of rope from their pockets and tied Tiny David, Mortimer, Lashton and Lightfort to their chairs. Then the leader stuffed the captured weapons in his pockets.

TINY DAVID strained at his bonds as he leaned forward. Foolhardiness had cheated him of victory, just when it was within his grasp. He made a desperate attempt to save himself from utter defeat.

"You spoke of a payment on account," he told the leader. "You can make another substantial payment."

The man stood in the doorway.

"How?" he demanded.

"Unload Lashton's gun and leave it with me. I need it to convict him of murder."

The man in the doorway hesitated. Theodore Lightfort turned, swinging the chair to which he was tied, as he tried to face the leader.

"It has been a hard game, but a fair one," he asserted. All his guile was in his voice. All his knowledge of the underworld was brought into play as he sought a vulnerable spot to assure success for his plea. He went on:

"Your man died on the road to Mortimer's camp. One of our men died in Bombay. Check. All part of the game. And we don't need to cut any coppers in on it."

The shot had struck home. Tiny David realized that, and he remained silent. Lightfort, too, saw that he had scored, and wisely refrained from additional pleas and arguments.

JEEERINGLY the two men waved at the occupants of the room, backed away from the door, and disappeared.

Tiny David strained at his bonds. The mocking laugh of Lightfort halted him.

"The diamond is gone." The little detective had the tone and the manner of a district attorney summing up his case to a jury. "The money is gone. The gun is gone. Just what do you have left, copper?"

Tiny David made no answer. The taste of defeat was in his mouth, and it was bitter. Willie Sneakshoes, if not victorious from a financial standpoint, had scored again against his traditional foes, the police.

"Granted that it's a game," Lightfort continued. "First man free wins. Assume you are that man. Then what?"

Tiny David concentrated on his attack on the ropes.

"You have three prisoners. And you have a weird story to tell the twelve good men of the jury."

Lightfort chuckled softly.

"You can't convict Mortimer of criminally receiving stolen property or attempted smuggling, because you haven't either the diamond or the money."

He continued, in high good humor:

"You can't convict Ralph of murder because you haven't the gun."

An expression of mock humility crossed his plump face.

"And just what can you do to your humble servant, myself? Did you ever stop to consider, my dear friend, that our positions are much the same?"

He laughed aloud, a shrill, gurgling laugh that was almost effeminate.

"You aren't a cop in Canada. Common sense tells me you overlooked the little formality of visiting the Canadian authorities before you began operations. That makes you either one of two things: Either a blundering glory-hog, or a copper transacting some strictly private business. Any jury will get the inference. A good defense lawyer won't let them miss it."

He appeared to relish every word as he continued:

"You will repeat certain conversations you overheard. Ralph and I will have a different version. Mortimer will support us." His voice was harsh. "He enjoys life and freedom."

The laugh sounded again. Tiny David, struggling with his bonds, was seized with an overwhelming desire to leap at the throat of the speaker.

"Three to one, copper. One of us a man of wealth and position. And two strikes called on you before you start because you entered Can—"

Lightfort checked himself abruptly. From the street below there came the sound of a ringing command. It was followed by three sharp cracks from a revolver. Then the cough of a machine-gun, sounding for all the world like a stick being drawn across the pickets of a wooden fence. A cry of pain. More revolver shots. A hoarse command. Then silence. After that the sound of shuffling feet, and then the murmur of a crowd.

The four men waited tensely. Then the slow drawl of Tiny David sounded: "I told him it was only a loan. Well, Willie Sneakshoes, I guess the loan has been called!"

INSPECTOR GEOFFREY HOWARD, of the Mounted, entered the room warily. Beside him walked two constables. Behind them came three members of the Provincial police.

The Inspector blinked with astonishment.

"Keep them covered," he ordered his men. He turned to the four captives.

"I say, you chaps, what's it all about? And which one of you is the trooper fellow?"

Tiny David flushed.

"I am Lieutenant David," he admitted.

The Mountie smiled.

"Inspector Howard," he responded. Making quick work of the ropes, he talked as he worked. "Chauffeur came running to our sub-station. Said his boss had told him to come to us if he failed to return within the hour. Then he said that while he was waiting, a trooper in civies came along, flashed his badge and questioned him. The trooper also told him to let the order about going to us stand, and to pull his car around the corner. But before the hour was up he saw two chaps with machine-guns entering the house where his boss was. So he hurried to us right away."

Howard chuckled.

"We didn't arrive a minute too soon. The two chaps were in their car and all ready to pull away."

His face expressed bewilderment.

"We hadn't the slightest idea of what it was all about, but we have a natural aversion to lads who promenade our streets with machine-guns." A shadow crossed his face. "It was rather messy."

HOWARD bent over and rubbed Tiny David's wrists at the point where the rope had bitten into them.

"But be a good fellow and tell me what it is all about, won't you?"

Tiny David did. He began with an apology for not visiting the Canadian police when he had first arrived.

"I was pressed for time," he began. "There was so much—"

"Forget it, old chap," Howard ordered. "The fact that you told the driver to come to us proves you weren't trying to hold out on us." He shrugged his shoulders. "Too much stress on that blooming line, I always maintain."

Tiny David told of the theft of the diamond. He related what he knew of the battles staged by the two gangs as the diamond traveled around the world. He described the visit of Lightfort to the barracks. He told of the murder on the road to Mortimer's camp, and the awkward spot Crosby and Linton found themselves in. He covered the episode with King on the train. Then came the account of his arrival in Dalefield, and the scene when he entered the room. He wore a rather sheepish grin as he described the entrance of the rival gang.

"Hadn't counted on them being as close on Lightfort's trail as I was. Only bright thing I did was to tell Mortimer's driver to pull his car around the corner. If I hadn't done that they would have found it and eliminated the driver."

Tiny David swallowed.

"But that was luck, rather than head-work. And I am not bragging about it. The driver deserves more credit than I do. He used his head."

"Stout lad," agreed the Mountie. He regarded Lightfort with interest. "I have heard a lot about that laddie. Hard to realize he is really Theodore Lightfort."

"In person," said Tiny David. The little detective swore bitterly. "And wired for sound," added Tiny David.

Howard shrugged his shoulders.

"We went through the two chaps downstairs rather hurriedly, but I fancy we

got everything. The way I dope it out, we keep the diamond and prosecute Mortimer for guilty knowledge in receiving stolen property, also for complicity in smuggling. The two lads below are earmarked for the coroner. You take Lightfort and his pal on the murder charge. I'll turn over the gun to you."

"That is more than decent," Tiny David declared.

"Only tentative," Howard warned. "Higher ratings than ours will make the final decision. But that plan seems reasonable."

He fumbled in a pocket of his coat. He pulled out the wooden box, opened it, and allowed the diamond to roll into the palm of his hand.

The diamond was a magnet that drew the attention of every man in the room. Mortimer looked at it with the eyes of a man alone in a smallboat who sees the smoke of a steamer vanish over the horizon. Lashton seemed outwardly indifferent. His lips were drawn down in just the trace of a sneer. Lightfort's glance was a combination of desire, anger, fear and defeat.

"What a rock!" The Canadian officer spoke with reverence. As he moved his hand, the diamond sparkled in the light like a living thing. "Rather nice if one were able to hang this bauble about the neck of the one and only." He examined the diamond critically. "But at that, it is a bit on the vulgar side—what?"

"Much too large for junior police officers to handle," Tiny David admitted. "But I guess the syndicate it belongs to won't object to its size."

Inspector Howard nodded.

"That reminds me, Leftenant: The press lads will be here any minute. We want to do this thing up brown. All these big diamonds have names. What do you call the blooming thing?"

Tiny David glanced at Theodore Lightfort. The little detective cringed.

Pity swept over Tiny David. It was downed by memories of the past: Men slain ruthlessly—policemen made pawns of, tricked and disgraced while they honestly tried to do their duty. This man had done all that. He had grown rich in the doing. And he had laughed at his victims.

Tiny David looked at Lightfort with contempt. He turned to the Canadian officer. There was a crooked grin on his face, and he spoke with a drawl:

"We call it the Willie Sneakshoes Diamond," he said.

REAL EX-

Truth may be fully as interesting as fiction even though it is not more strange. For this reason each month we print in this department the five best stories of Real Experience submitted by our readers. (For details of this contest, see page 3.)

Flying Over

As told to

Burt M. McConnell

AT the time Lieutenant Ben Eielson and I made our 2200-mile flight from Point Barrow, Alaska, to Spitzbergen, such well-known explorers as Stefansson, Amundsen and Byrd considered it the greatest voyage by airplane in history. But if Ben were here, I think he would agree with me that our first flight of 150 miles out over the Great White Desert in 1926 provided the greatest thrill, while our 550-mile flight to the northwest of Point Barrow in 1927 was the most valuable, from a scientific standpoint, also the most hazardous. But the flight to Spitzbergen was the most difficult from the standpoint of navigation.

I received my training in Arctic exploration, along with the chronicler of this tale, in the Stefansson school. We traveled hundreds of miles ahead of the dog-teams, breaking trail; we fed them and staked them out at night; harnessed them and broke camp in the morning; bucked blizzards that left our faces badly frostbitten; rose in the "wee sma'" hours to cook breakfast; went without a bath for weeks at a time, and slept in the fetid atmosphere of Eskimo igloos. This was good training, but it seemed to me that there ought to be an easier and more practical way of exploring the Arctic regions.

It was not, however, until 1926 that Eielson and I demonstrated the practicability of the airplane in winter exploration. After a series of accidents too numerous to mention, we made a nine-hundred-mile non-stop flight from Fairbanks, in the interior of Alaska, out over

PERIENCES

An Australian explorer and his American pilot make the first Trans-Polar flight to Spitzbergen from Point Barrow. (Our old friend Charles Brower comes into the story—as he has come into the news because of the recent airplane tragedy at Point Barrow.)



the Top of the World

By SIR HUBERT WILKINS

the ice of the Arctic Ocean, and back to Point Barrow. Here, in the front yard of Charles D. Brower, well known to readers of BLUE BOOK, we landed—and gave many Eskimos their first glimpse of an airplane. With our portable wireless set we sent out the first radio message ever to be dispatched from the village. On our return to Fairbanks, we flew over mountains shown on the maps to be five thousand feet high; we found them to be more than ten thousand feet in height. It was during these days that I came to appreciate the fine qualities of Ben Eielson, Alaska's pioneer air-mail pilot. Ben was not the daredevil type of flyer; he was quick to sense danger—and intelligent enough to avoid it.

The following March found us back again at Point Barrow, this time with two small Stinson biplanes. We were in search of that hypothetical continent which geographers predicted would be found between Alaska and the North Pole. At six o'clock one morning we took off in a temperature of thirty-five degrees below zero, with the barometer falling, climbed into the air, checked our compasses, and headed out into the unknown. We took emergency rations, camping equipment, rifles, a primus stove, and a portable wireless set. Every half-hour I sent a message to our operator at Point Barrow.

We passed over alternate patches of smooth and rough ice, interspersed with open water, and finally calculated that we had flown five hundred fifty miles to the northwest. No human being, so far

as we knew, had ever been in that part of the world before. For a time, it looked as if we might be obliged to remain there, for our single engine began to miss so badly that it was necessary to land on the ice and make repairs.

We came down on a dull, smooth, gray patch—the first landing ever to be made on the drifting ice of the Arctic Ocean. While Ben worked on the engine, I chipped two holes through the ice, which was three feet thick, and prepared to take a sounding with our sonic depth-finder. There was an interval of 7.3 seconds between the detonation and the echo, which we caught on the rebound, as it were, from the bottom of the sea. This indicated a depth of about three miles—the greatest yet recorded in the Arctic Ocean. It was an almost infallible indication that no land was to be found in that vicinity. We must return to our base.

THE engine proved balky, however. We worked on it for two hours, in a temperature of thirty degrees below zero. Even then it was not in first-class running order, but we took off and headed for Point Barrow. Meanwhile, the weather had thickened. The sun was obscured, and visibility very poor. To add to our difficulties and dangers, we had to land again and work for another hour on the magneto. In his haste to complete the job, Ben froze the tips of four fingers. By the time we got the engine running smoothly, a light snow was falling. Higher up, the air cleared, but we found that a moderate gale was blowing against us

and cutting down our speed by at least twenty miles an hour. Later the wind reached a velocity of forty miles an hour.

We went on, flying into the teeth of the wind. Late in the afternoon it became impossible for us to see the surface of the ice through the drifting snow. We had enough fuel to take us to Point Barrow, under ordinary circumstances, but this meager supply was rapidly being used up in our battle with the head wind.

By this time (seven P.M.), Ben was unable to see his instruments, so I kept my flashlight on the compass, and touched him on one shoulder or the other to keep him on our course. I wrote a note to him as follows: "*Shall we keep on going as long as the gas holds out, then land straight ahead?*" The pilot nodded his approval.

At nine-two P.M. the engine stopped; our fuel was exhausted. We could feel in the darkness the fall of the sagging plane.

Ben, with great coolness and skill, brought her to an even keel, and glided toward the hummocky ice-prairie below. As we neared the surface, the air became very rough. The plane slithered through the velvety blackness, swerving and pitching. Our altimeter showed that we were dangerously near the jagged tops of the pressure-ridges. We braced ourselves for the shock of landing. We knew that any moment might be our last. After what seemed an eternity, the lower left wing and the skis struck at the same instant. We bounced and immediately alighted as smoothly as we had ever done on a prepared landing-field. We were adrift on the floating ice-pack perhaps a hundred miles from shore, but unhurt!

I sent a wireless message, setting forth our predicament, but with little faith that it would be received; our set was not functioning very well. We were weak and tired, and soon Eielson was asleep on top of the empty gas-tank. I curled up in a corner of the cabin.

THE next day, March 30th, the weather was thick and stormy. But we could see that our landing the night before had been little short of miraculous. All about us were pressure ridges as high as the upper wing of our plane. We were on a patch of smooth ice less than forty-five by ninety feet. It was the sort of landing-field on which only a very skillful pilot could have "sat down" under the most favorable weather conditions—and Ben had landed in absolute darkness, with a blizzard in progress. The skis were bent, and the fabric on the lower

wing torn, but otherwise the plane was undamaged.

We drained our fuel-tanks, and collected half a gallon of gas from our primus stove. This we used later to melt ice for drinking-water. We also improvised a stove to burn lubricating oil, and two sleds from the now useless machine on which to pack our food and spare clothing. For it was now up to us to walk ashore over the rough ice as soon as the weather should clear. I chipped a hole through the ice, which was six feet thick, and by dropping a sounding lead ascertained that we were drifting to the northeast. The wind died down to thirty miles an hour, but later it rose again to forty, and the plane rocked and shook in the gale. Snowdrifts piled about us.

IT was not until April 3rd that the weather cleared sufficiently to warrant us in striking out for shore. For five hours we trudged through the snow and clambered over the rough ice. Then we called it a day. Eielson helped me to build a snow-house. It was not until then that I realized how severely his fingers were frozen. Eielson must have suffered excruciating pain, but he bore it without a murmur.

On the third day we threw away our superfluous clothing, and discarded one of the sleds. Our drift now changed to the eastward, parallel to the coast. Each night we built an igloo. Once, in trying to cross open water, in which loose cakes of ice drifted about, I fell into the water almost up to my armpits. The outside of my clothing froze almost instantly. I flopped out onto the ice, and Eielson hurried across and helped me to change into dry boots and socks. I had no spare pants or shirt, so I was obliged to dry my wet garments by the heat of my body. This required two days, during which time we traveled steadily to the southward.

As we neared the coast, we found the ice badly broken up and the ridges more frequent. Sometimes we were obliged to crawl over the pressure ridges on our hands and knees; no dog-team could have followed in our footsteps. The temperature hovered between ten and forty degrees below zero. On April 14th we reached the land-fast ice, and the next day landed upon the north shore of Alaska at Beechey Point. Fourteen years before, we had camped there with Stefan-son, after the *Karluk* had been frozen in the ice and carried off to her doom; now we were greeted by our former in-

terpreter, who hastened out on the ice to meet us with a dog-team. At the trading-station on shore we sat down to our first warm meal in eighteen days. An Eskimo was dispatched to Point Barrow with a dog-team to notify Graham of our safety. The trip required a week; Graham flew back in the other Stinson in two hours.

We bundled Ben and our equipment into the plane, and returned to the hospitable quarters of Charley Brower. The Government surgeon on duty at the native hospital found it necessary to amputate part of Ben's little finger, but saved the others.

We had established the approximate limit of the Continental Shelf north of Siberia; we had demonstrated that it is possible to land on the drifting ice-pack; that one can walk ashore after alighting, whereas on an open sea a forced landing would have fatal consequences. But our work was not finished; our next task was to learn whether or not there was land between Alaska and the North Pole, and demonstrate at the same time that the shortest commercial air routes of the Northern Hemisphere lay over the Arctic.

BACK in San Francisco a few months later, I caught from my hotel window a fleeting glimpse of the most efficient-looking airplane I had ever seen. To one who had been dreaming of the development of airplanes for eighteen years, the sight of this machine was the materialization of a vision. It was a Lockheed Vega—the first of that type.

With the name and address of the designer in my pocket, I set out for Los Angeles. They were turning out Plane No. 2. She was fast in the air, with extraordinary weight-carrying ability, and handled perfectly. I wired for Eielson to come to the coast and test out the plane, and I watched his confidence in her grow and grow. Once more he agreed to fly with me—this time over the top of the world. . . .

We shipped the plane to Fairbanks, assembled the machine in three days, carried out our test flights under Arctic conditions, and early in March hopped off for Point Barrow, 550 miles to the northwest; this was our fourteenth trip. As we landed, our Eskimo friends ran from all directions toward the plane, and struggled among themselves for the privilege of carrying our dunnage to the Brower trading-post. Our ultimate goal was Spitzbergen (now officially Svalbard.)

When the weather seemed propitious, I hired natives to shovel a runway in the snow covering the ice of the lagoon. This runway, in a test flight, proved to be too short, and we lengthened it to 3,500 feet. An attempt to take off with enough gasoline to carry us 2200 miles failed—and a still longer runway was found necessary. Feverishly we set about shoveling the snow. It required thirty Eskimos more than four days to complete the job. My hands were blistered from the unaccustomed toil, and I am sure the natives had never worked so hard before.

Utterly tired out, I slept for four hours. At three in the morning I was up again, sizing up the weather. At ten we had thoroughly heated the engine with a stove, filled the tank with warm lubricating oil, and loaded our equipment and emergency rations. When all was in readiness, I swung the propeller. The engine coughed once, kicked back, then emitted a steady purr. Good old engine!

With extraordinary skill, and not a little nerve—for the runway was only fourteen feet wide—Eielson guided the plane down the narrow groove, with the tail planes swaying from side to side and missing the banks by not more than a foot. Too much pressure on the rudder would mean a swing into one bank or the other—and disaster.

But Eielson kept his nerve—and I prayed. We skittered along at forty, fifty, sixty miles an hour. When we had reached seventy miles an hour, he pulled back gently on the stick—and we were in the air. An instant the machine swayed uncertainly, and the skis touched the ice; then we climbed steadily. Our greatest danger was past. I passed a note to Ben, congratulating him on the take-off; we could not communicate directly because of the fuel-tank.

By the time I could pick up and stow away the various articles that littered the cabin floor, we were thirty miles out over the sea ice. I put out my charts, tested the sextants, tried the gas-pumps, made sure that the dump-valves were free, set the wireless aerial and tested its note, and made sure that the drift-indicator was registering.

FOR the first eighty miles the ice was very rough; certainly a forced landing among the succession of pressure ridges would have been our last. We traveled this distance in less than an hour; with a dog team, it would have taken us two or three weeks.

For the next two hundred miles we flew over old-type floe ice; then came another two hundred miles of young pack-ice, with many open leads. This was followed by a wide strip of heavy, paleocrystic ice. We were now in the region of the so-called inaccessible pole—that remote region most difficult to penetrate by the old methods of exploration. In fact, the sturdy oaken sides of more than a hundred whaling vessels have been crushed in Arctic waters, and their crews compelled to walk ashore over the drifting floes. My great desire was to discover in this area a bit of land large enough for a meteorological station. But for more than a hundred miles there hung between the plane and the surface of the frozen sea a blanket of clouds.

BY this time we had been in the air about eleven hours. The steady hum of the engine was most reassuring. There was no clogging of fuel-pipes, no heating up of the power-plant caused by insufficient lubrication. It was past midnight, local time, but the sun had been well above the horizon all of the time.

We were averaging more than a hundred miles an hour over the ice, but the distance from Point Barrow to Spitzbergen was more than twenty-two hundred miles—halfway around the world at that latitude, in another hemisphere!

Far away in the eastern sky high storm-clouds hung like wraiths under the pale blue zenith. Beneath these vaporous pillars was a band of grayish white, darkening toward the horizon. From north and south, long, gray stratus clouds streaked toward the storm-center.

We might have swung northward to clear the clouds, but I wanted to get a glimpse of Grant Land and check our position. After this digression, we went back to the regular course. The storm over Greenland provided us with a following wind for many miles. Things were going well. With the halfway mark behind us, I reached for the thermos bottle, the hard-bread, and the pemmican.

While munching these delicacies and drinking my coffee, I set forth the situation in a note to my flying-companion: *"There are two courses open: We can land down there and wait until the storm is over. But could we take off? If we go on, we are sure to meet a storm over Spitzbergen, and perhaps never find the islands. Do you wish to land now?"*

The reply was characteristic of Ben Eielson: *"I'm willing to take a chance on*

getting down at Spitzbergen." I was willing to trust his skill as a pilot in bad weather, and he was certain my navigation would bring us to our goal, although looking for Spitzbergen was like searching for the proverbial needle in a haystack. So we went on.

North of Greenland we slipped into an extremely cold area; the thermometer outside the fuselage registered 48° below zero. As we swung to the southward, it became warmer. For a couple of hundred miles our way was clear; then we could see high, curling cumulus clouds rising to more than eight thousand feet. The sun, at that time, was about sixteen degrees above the horizon. By flying east, across the Arctic Ocean, we had met the sun halfway around the world.

We were now within two hundred miles of our goal. Eielson threaded his way among the feathery masses of clouds, through air that was turbulent and unstable. At intervals we could see the dark water eight thousand feet below; it was not a reassuring sight. All through the flight I had sent wireless messages hourly to Point Barrow, but had no assurance that they were being received; later I learned that they had faded entirely while we were north of Greenland.

AS we approached the land, our practically empty plane was tossed like a cork on an angry ocean. Salt spray, whipped from the gray-green sea, filled the air. It was impossible for Ben to see to land the plane, as the wind-shield was crusted with ice and the drifting snow completely hid the surface of the ground. At last we found a level spot near Green Harbor. Ben pointed the nose of the plane into the gale, and glided downward. We came smoothly to rest, slid forward perhaps thirty feet, and were brought to a dead stop by the wind. We had been in the air just twenty hours and twenty minutes.

There have been longer flights, and more hazardous ones, but perhaps none as difficult from the navigation standpoint. On the flights over the North Pole, for example, Amundsen and Byrd followed a known meridian, which is comparatively easy; on the flight from Alaska to Spitzbergen we charted a "great circle" course which required me to make a change, with reference to the meridians, no less than twenty times in as many hours, in some instances as much as twenty-five degrees. . . . But we made it; we hit Spitzbergen on the nose.

The Kid and the Killer

*The story of a boy who became a man
—and of the friend whom he fought.*

By F. ELINE-
JOHNSON



I HAD confidence in my college training and in myself. I decided to build my future in San Francisco. My optimism was high, my cash proportionately low that morning I first trod the Embarcadero.

Immediate employment was a necessity. From office to office, from store to store I went seeking work. I haunted the clerical employment offices. All were overcrowded with applicants of special training and experience.

I dropped to the manual labor employment bureaus. Thousands of men swarmed their sidewalks. Apparently all were experienced; and to my eyes most of them were villainous-looking. I was athletic, far stronger than even my appearance indicated. But I wore glasses. I felt outclassed as a labor applicant.

Here I saw Tom, a big-boned, broad-shouldered, loud-voiced, aggressive giant. Careless of what he said, and to whom he spoke, apparently fearless of consequences, showing on his face scars earned in personal combat, quick in repartee and gifted with an edgy sort of humor, he fascinated me as I watched him plow his way through the rough crowds, leaving in his wake sometimes laughter, sometimes growls and muttered curses.

There came the day I sold the last of my belongings. I was trudging along Market Street, making a last round of the employment offices, when a heavy hand fell on my shoulder and I heard the roaring voice I knew was Tom's:

"Well, kid, you're not a quitter, are you?"

An angry reply was on my lips as I glared at him. But I hesitated, for there was a friendly look in those steely eyes. On impulse I outlined my condition, stating I was at the end of my money, knew no place to get work, probably could not hold down a job if I got one.

His appraising glance swept over me.

"You can make it!" he abruptly barked. "Get out of this city! Hit the rails! Tramp it! Go any way you can. Work for an hour, or two, or for a day, wherever you can. Get to Redding; Keswick Smelter is seven miles north. You can get work there—hard work, small pay. It will do you good, toughen you, get you acquainted with men—rough men. Stay until they fire you! You'll have a stake. Start right now! My name's Tom! Good luck!"

He passed on. I started for Keswick. I could not afford the ferry across the Bay, so I walked the long distance down the Peninsula, to circle the south end of the water. The second night I was in Stockton. Here I earned forty-five cents and two meals.

THE balance of the three hundred miles to Keswick was a continuation of a tenderfoot's nightmare. Not knowing where the freight trains were going, nor the technique of catching them or dealing with the train-crews, it was walk, walk—footsore, leg-weary, body-tired, eyes half-seeing, hungry. Hundreds of men, looking for work, passing south—other hundreds moving north.

At Tehama I worked five days on a ranch. Here I slept under the stars at night, and ate three working-man's meals each day. This rested my tired legs, gave the sore feet a chance to recover, enabled my arms and shoulders to get some hard exercise.

I rode on cushioned seats to Redding and walked to Keswick. As I entered

this town of unpainted houses and irregularly outlined streets, the ground bare of vegetation, the sun dimmed by the sulphur-laden smelter smoke, I felt fit for work, and willing to fight for a job if necessary.

In the morning I reported at the smelter, where there was always a chance. It was that sort of place, even though the highways and railroad tracks were black with tramping men.

To the time-keeper I gave my name, F. Mariani Eline. He stared blankly at me a moment, then snapped out:

"Here's a brass tag, with your number on it. This number is the main thing. Your name don't matter. You won't last. Turn the tag into the office when you quit. I'll write you down as Johnson."

The quick blood heated my face. But I had come three hundred miles for this job.

"Write anything you like," I replied. "Give me the brass tag. The initials will be F. J.; I know a good man named that."

Those standing near laughed. On the books of the copper company I became F. J. Johnson. I have not yet entirely shaken off that name.

I was assigned to a wheelbarrow job, conveying to the brick mill the fine material air-blasts carried from the furnaces into great dust-collecting chambers. This was hot work and hard work, as the heated dust was heavy, the barrows large-bodied iron affairs, the floor uneven.

Still feeling the smart of the time-keeper's slurs, I went at the labor in a savage mood, making a hard task harder. My shoulders and elbows first felt the strain, aching muscles preventing the night's sound sleep when I needed it most. But I had sought this job. There was no other. I would remain until I was fired.

I WAS promoted to the charge-wheeling floor, heavier work but more pay. Here the steady stream of men hour after hour, day-shift following night-shift, filled and pulled two-wheeled, iron smelter buggies, loaded with quartz and coke and ore, to feed the great blast furnaces. Rough men they were, tough men, hardened men in every way. Men from Bisbee, Butte, every smelter town in the West—and some penitentiaries.

I liked them all, and was glad to work among them, and proud to keep up my end in the long twelve-hour shifts. The

men sensed my liking. They taught me how to shovel, gave me a world of instruction, making all my labors easier. They were experienced; I was a novice. But I learned. My strength grew until I could work with the best of them.

THEN came a night of low tones and whisperings on the floor. I was soon told by a serious, quiet-voiced, granite-faced veteran:

"Lad, Raker the killer has come. He is on the day-shift."

I had heard much of Raker during my Keswick stay. A good workman, always sure of a job, not an old man, but a veteran smelter "stiff"—could fill in anywhere, furnace-man, crane-man, converter-man. That day he was wheeling charges to the furnaces. He never fussed about the character of his work, and did all things exceptionally well. He was known in every Western smelter. He was a valuable man in any plant.

But he seemed to have the faculty of stirring up the sleeping angry passions of the smelter men, and sooner or later the storm broke. In the resulting fight Raker was merciless, and generally came out unhurt. A number of these brawls in different smelter towns had resulted in serious injuries. Raker became the "killer" throughout the copper towns.

Now, in his restless wandering swing around, he had returned to Keswick. Trouble was bound to start. I was truly curious to see this super-man who could dominate that smelter crew, themselves notorious throughout the West.

The next night he was transferred to our shift. From the start there was a feeling of expectancy, even uneasiness, throughout the charging floor. Raker was reported in a fighting mood. Apparently the night was not to pass without a mix-up with the killer.

I may have imagined it, but even I, who had no real interest—only hearsay knowledge of the man—seemed to take over a bundle of nerves. There was no reason for it. I was on Number 2 Furnace, wheeling charges. The killer was taking the metal product of Low Grade Furnace No. 1 to High Grade No. 5 for further refining. The work offered no opportunity of our meeting, as we were not carrying the same stuff, and were serving widely separated furnaces.

At ten o'clock the man working on the side opposite to the killer, but drawing the same material to No. 5 Furnace, reported himself too ill to work. The

news electrified the charging floor. The killer had been riding him.

The furnace boss ordered me to take the place of the sick man. . . .

To the charge-wheelers and the furnace-feeders, the furnace is a tyrant with moods demanding prompt attention. Number 5 Furnace was a high-grade furnace, a slow furnace generally, taking only five or six charges an hour; but sometimes because of conditions of material, air-blast, heat, or its own innate deviltry, the high-grade demon would speed up to twice its normal work, and run steadily for a shift or two at the increased rate. This night Number 5 was hurrying along in one of its speed spasms. It was necessary in maintaining the efficiency of the furnace to have the material on hand and ready for the charge when the feeders called for it.

My predecessor had lagged behind, and the next charge was about due with none of my material on the upper, or charging, floor. I rushed the two-wheeled buggy to the elevator, then down to the ground floor, where the output from the low-grader's settling-pot had been cooled and broken up. I shoveled up my estimated eight hundred pounds of this hard and heavy composite from the shallow molds, hurried back up the elevator, along the dimly lighted runway, checking at the scales, to Furnace No. 5, just in time to drop my load on the plate for the charge. The furnace was not delayed.

ON the fourth trip down, I was still working at top speed; the furnace seemed functioning faster than ever. With aching back and pounding chest, I was shoveling that hard, heavy matte from its floor when one of the ground men mockingly asked why I allowed the killer to "hog the conveyor."

"What conveyor?" I demanded.

"They installed one yesterday, carrying this stuff, cooling it with running water, from Number 1's settling pots direct to the buggies of the wheelers. It's being tested out tonight at low speed."

"How fast?"

"Plenty fast for both sides of your furnace. He's taking all of it now. Has three filled buggies buried in the dark of the flue-dust chambers." Then he tauntingly laughed.

"Pretty soft for Raker later on toward morning. You're behind now. Why don't you use them?"

I do not know even yet, just what prompted my subsequent action. The unaccustomed hard work, with the heat of climate and furnaces by day and night, the dirt and dust and noise endured constantly for months with no time off, twelve hours to the shift, Sundays and week-days, must have affected me. Then too, this speed and sweating anxiety to meet the furnace demands had not driven the killer from my seething thoughts.

The injustice of it all! This big, dangerous maniac, terrorizing the plant, had taken advantage of the cowardice of my predecessor on this night's work. I, and all the floor, knew the supposedly sick man had quit through fear. Now it was my turn to be run out of the smelter by this bully I had never seen—and be battered up if I opposed him. A sudden weakness came over me.

WAS I a quitter? Tom thought I was, then changed his opinion. He told me I could make this job, and ordered me to stay until I was fired. Had Tom foreseen anything like this? Hot anger flooded me. I would stay on the job until they carried me out!

These were crazy thoughts. I knew it when I entertained them. I knew my actions were crazier still when I dropped my shovel, abandoned my partly filled buggy and strode over to the darkness of the flue-dust chamber. I pulled one of the killer's full buggies out into the light past my startled informant, and made the run back to Number 5's charging plate.

As I returned to the lower floor for the next charge, I was alert, expecting the appearance of the killer. My eyes searched the runway for a weapon and a favorable spot for defense when he started the inevitable attack, resenting my open defiance.

I had noted earlier in the night a short-handled shovel, with rounded blade sharpened to a knife edge, lying in one of the sample bins alongside the runway. Out of curiosity I had examined the tool. Now I looked to see if it was where I had placed it, and gladly noted it sticking out of its bin. When he attacked me, I intended using that knife-edged deadly weapon on him—if I could; I had no intention of living a maimed martyr to fighting ethics because of this brute.

At the foot of the elevator one of the men excitedly seized my arm.

"For God's sake, kid, he knows you're taking his stuff. He's a raging wild man.

You haven't a chance with him. Beat it out of here! *Now!*"

I did not answer. I did not stop until I had again reached the shadows of the dust-chamber. There I left my empty, again took one of the killer's loads, and pulled straight for the elevator, consciously seeing and hearing nothing, although half the crew on the ground had quit work, quiet men, silently watching me go by.

I reached the charging-floor and started down the runway. There was a stillness in the place—no shovels sounding, no bars ringing, no loud calling, no laughter, no curses, only the thunder of the furnaces. Here and there groups of men stood silently. On the runway not a buggy, not a man. Even the floor and furnace bosses were back in the shadows waiting, watching the killer claim another victim.

Over and over through my mind ran the thought: "I *will* make it here! If I go out, they must carry me out!"

I stepped along, pulling that eight-hundred-pound load. I looked first for the short-handled shovel. There it was, just where I left it, its handle reaching out to me!

Then I saw the great form of the killer coming along that level runway. He was not hurrying. I was glad of that. I could reach the shovel. I pulled near to it and stopped. I moved away from the buggy.

He snarled a vicious oath and rushed at me. I could not see his face. I do not know that I clearly saw his great bulk. I felt his fast approach.

I caught up that knife-edged shovel and jumped to the meeting, cutting at him with all my strength and speed, trying to slice him open. I do not know how I failed. The blade slit his shirt, but only grazed his body. He had leaped to one side. The full light now fell on him, disclosing that enraged fighting face.

Startled, I stared, unbelieving. I hurled my deadly weapon at its bin. Above the furnace roar, the walls and roof rang with my joyous shout:

"*Tom!*"

The quick eyes darted at me, held mine for a moment. He threw himself upon me, caught one of my shoulders, spinning me around, helpless against his strength. My hand was seized and numbed in his giant paw as the most welcome-toned voice in the world boomed from his massive chest:

"*You damn' little city runt!*"

Go Back!

*A fight and flight
for life in Tibet.*

By HARRISON
FORMAN

AFTER our rescue of Simpson from the *too-fay*,* we returned to Sian-fu, where we laid our complaints for damages before Yang Hu-chen, ex-bandit governor of Shensi Province in northwestern China. He promised us full restitution for all our losses, and invited us to a big banquet in our honor.

I must say that the banquet was a sumptuous affair. We were treated like visiting royalty. All his staff and the merchant princes of the city were present. Course after course of dishes were brought forth, each so delicious to the taste that we soon forgot our misgivings as to the possibility of being poisoned or drugged—an "old Chinese custom" when one wishes to be rid of one to whom a debt is owed. There were dishes of birds'-nest soup, sharks' fins, hundred-year-old eggs, fish from the tropics, rare mushrooms, snails and shrimps, shellacked duck—where he got all those dishes at such short notice I could not even guess. No doubt he kept his larder stocked with these for just such an occasion. And of course, there were plenty of sing-song girls; they near drove me wild with their shrill, screeching songs.

Still, we collected not a copper "cash" in reparation for the robbery. Yang Hu-chen did, however, give us a truck-load of soldiers to accompany us on our journey through Shensi to Kansu Province beyond. But they were a cowardly and troublesome lot. Reaching the foot of Liu Pan Shan, a ten-thousand-foot mountain pass of which Marco Polo speaks at length, they refused to continue farther, upon hearing reports that only the day before a large force of *too-fay* had been seen in the vicinity.

* (See "TOO-FAY" in August issue of Blue Book.)

They'll Kill You!



It was here we met Leonid Horvath (son of a former Russian general), and Gustave Tornvall (a Swede, who a few weeks later was murdered by some of Yang Hu-chen's men). These two were engineers employed by the China Famine Relief, which was building a road over the historic Liu Pan Shan with philanthropic American dollars. The thousand or more famine refugees who had been working for them on the road had fled before the approach of the bandits. We learned there were over six hundred of the bandits—apparently deserter troops out on a spell of marauding before they made overtures to some war-lord of another district to join his army. Horvath and Tornvall were of the opinion, however, that it was safe to continue, since the bandits had gone off toward the east, in a direction almost opposite to ours.

While a team of twelve oxen were being secured to each of our cars to help us over the rough mountain road to the two-mile-high pass, young Horvath eagerly asked what my plans were as to entering Tibet. He had long cherished an ambition to penetrate its forbidden fastnesses, and had done a great deal of reading on the subject of Tibet.

"You must take me with you," he insisted. He seemed determined, and was a husky fellow, of many years' residence in the Orient, and of a pleasing personality—a distinct asset to an expedition. I consented.

Firmly overriding objections and hesitancy on the part of the scared soldiers, we finally got the party started up the mountain. It was a long hard struggle up the tortuous, zigzag road to the pass, with the ox-teams pulling and straining patiently, urged along by the long whips in the hands of the *ma-foos*. Reaching

the top, I paid them off with a sack of rice, which they preferred to currency, and we started down the other side. The road-bed was soft and loose from the work of the grading, and we had a number of narrow escapes from skidding at the hairpin turns.

We had a magnificent view over the rolling countryside for many miles about. There was no visible sign of the bandits, which seemed to cheer the soldiers somewhat, and their spirits rose.

At Chingning I turned our "guard" of soldiers over to the garrison commander and was given another escort of about twenty men, who looked no better than the previous batch. Leaving Chingning, we climbed steadily again until we reached the razor-back of a range of mountains which we followed for almost seventy-five miles—most of the time over seven thousand feet above sea-level—until we reached Anting, near Lanchow (capital of Kansu). Here we were met by William E. Simpson, thirty-year-old son of the elder Simpson.

Young Simpson had been the guide for Dr. Rock of the National Geographic Expedition to the Amnyi Machin, a mountain in northeastern Tibet which was reported to be higher than Mt. Everest—the highest known peak in the world. Dr. Rock and Simpson had failed to reach their objective. It was my hope to accomplish successfully what they had failed to achieve. Simpson had agreed to come with me.

WE were to push the truck through to Minchow, near the border of Kansu and Tibet—or as far as we could go. There were no roads down that way, other than an old unused cart road. Since we had passed through the worst of the bandit territory, I allowed the

soldier escort to return to the post at Chingning; we started for Minchow.

After three horrible days of heat, precipitous grades and muddy-bottomed rivers, we arrived at Kungshang—a distance of fifty miles from Anting. As we turned a sharp corner and the massive gate of the city wall appeared before us, we were confronted by a ragged squad of about a dozen coolie soldiers, and a sergeant. Though visibly almost petrified with fear of the never-before-seen iron monster, they nevertheless stood their ground bravely, with bayonets fixed and ready for action.

I called upon them to open the gate; but they merely continued to stare in speechless amazement.

"*Kai men! Kai men!*" I shouted in a still louder voice. Then a thought struck me: I turned on the lights and blew the siren. Instantly pandemonium broke loose. There was a mad scramble for the gate. Two of them stumbled, their rifles discharging, while they yelled wildly to their companions not to shut the gate before they got through.

The sergeant, made of somewhat sterner stuff, stood his ground at first, ashen-faced; then retreated slowly, slashing his curved sword sweepingly before him, for all the world like a knight of old in an encounter with a dragon.

It was some time before matters were straightened out. An official from the *Yamen* appeared. He had traveled somewhat, and the *chih cha* (automobile) was nothing new to him. We exchanged *pien-sze* (the *pien-sze*, or one's printed calling-card, is the universal passport in the interior of China), and he invited us all to tea.

THE whole population of the city turned out to see the fearsome "iron horse" as it stood before the mandarin's *Yamen*. They were mystified by the rumble of its motor, the shiny polished metal body, rubber tires and burnished "silver" (chromium-plate) fittings.

The headlights held a particular fascination for them; and they stood around discussing the how-comes and wherefores of this "light-without-heat," which shone so brilliantly yet was capable of not only disappearing more quickly than a fire doused by a bucket of water, but apparently had the faculty of reappearing again as suddenly as it went out! I got some good movie footage of pig-tailed natives nearly jumping out of their skins when the horn was suddenly blown

as their heads were poked under the hood looking for what made it "pant."

We unloaded at Kungshang, which was as far as we could go with the truck. Horvath, Simpson and myself started back with the car to Pingliang for another load of supplies. Hoping to find a better route back than the one over which we had come, we swung off to the westward and then northward over another long-unused cart-road. It led us up boulder-strewn river-beds, across irrigation ditches and over tortuous mountain roads.

Just before we reached Lanchow, I turned my ankle. It was a bad sprain and swelled very quickly. I decided it would be best that I rest it for a few days while the boys continued down the road, to pick me up on their return.

They never returned!

Both were instantly killed that night—literally riddled with bullets when attacked by a band of mounted bandits.

IT was a week before the news of the murder reached me at Lanchow. I notified the elder Simpson at Kungshang. Picking up Henry Eckvall and Mr. Keeble, a Lanchow missionary, we started down the road with a military truck and two teakwood Chinese coffins to fetch the bodies and bring them back for decent burial.

All along the road the natives frantically waved us to stop. "Go back! Go back! You will be killed! It is suicide to continue! The bandits are all about. Over there, just beyond that hill. They will kill you!"

But the boys had been lying out there a week, and the anguished father insisted he would go on alone if we turned back.

I was driving. Simpson and Keeble rode on the back with the two coffins. Eckvall sat beside me.

We were scared stiff, for we had no way of knowing but what we would be momentarily met with a volley of rifle-shots from ambush. (Eckvall was murdered only a few weeks later on this very same road!)

The murder had been committed on the sky-road running along the dragon-back of the seventy-five-mile-long mountain range. From some of the higher points along the way one could see for many miles in all directions. The road-way stretched off to the horizon like a scrawled pencil-line through the barren undulating loess stretches.

It was easy for a truck to be spotted many miles away as it puffed along over the hills like a roller-coaster in slow-motion. And if one were mounted, it was simple indeed to ride cross-country to the road and wait in ambush.

So that was how they got Simpson and Horvath! Perhaps we too had already been spotted; maybe, just around that next turn—

Well, a fight is one thing—even if you are hopelessly outnumbered. But ambushed, without even a chance to hit back— It gives you a queer feeling in the pit of your stomach, something like—well, just imagine what your sensations would be if the elevator-boy should turn to you just after you'd passed the eightieth floor in a New York skyscraper office building, and told you he couldn't stop the car and you were falling!

At long length we reached the scene of the murder. The natives were extremely sympathetic. In fact, the simple Chinese is by nature very hospitable. It is only when he is driven to outlawry by hunger or oppression that he becomes a ruthless destroyer.

We learned from them that the bandits—hundreds of them, apparently the band we'd missed by a few hours at Wu Sheng Pu at the foot of the Lui Pan Shan pass—were camped barely four miles distant. A dozen or more of the natives spread to the neighboring hilltops, watching the bandits from afar, ready to flash the word to us the moment they should start in our direction.

WE worked feverishly to dig up the bodies and place them in the coffins we had ready. The boys had been given temporary burial by the side of the road, in Mohammedan fashion. (The natives of this thinly settled district are Moslems, descendants of a migration of Turks and Arabs who traversed the old Marco Polo trail across Persia and Turkestan to northwestern China a thousand years ago. There are over ten million of them in Shensi, Kansu and Turkestan today. In dress, speech and ordinary habits they are Chinese, though fanatical in the matter of religion.)

Two trenches had been dug, about six feet long, six feet deep and about three feet wide. At right angles from the bases, horizontal tunnels about six feet long and two feet in diameter had been dug. Therein the bodies lay, heads pointed to the westward—to Holy Mecca. The entrances to the tunnels had

been sealed and the trenches filled in with earth.

We counted at least twenty-five holes in each body—literally riddled with bullets! Mercifully, death had been instantaneous, for the Chinese bandit is notorious for his devising of fiendish tortures. Only the day before, the natives told us, a family of peasants had been buried alive by the bandits when an objection was raised against the taking of their stores and horses.

A SHOUT came from one of the watchers on the hilltops:
"Ta-men lai-la! Ta-men lai-la! Chee! Chee-la! Quai-tee-a!"

We'd been discovered! They were coming! All hands fell to; the coffins were hurriedly loaded onto the truck.

"Hop on!" I shouted. "Hold tight!"

I stepped on the starter, threw her into gear, and started madly toward Lan-chow.

Suddenly a group of about thirty horsemen appeared on the right, lashing their mounts to cut us off on the road ahead. spurts of dust spattered all around as they fired from the saddle. I knew there would be no mercy for us if they caught us.

"Down behind those coffins," I yelled to Simpson and Keeble at the back. And the grim irony of the situation flashed through my mind—the elder Simpson forced to use the bullet-riddled body of his son for protection from further bullets! But—

"Give 'em hell," shouted Eckvall, clicking back the hammers on his double-barreled shotgun.

With accelerator floored, siren screeching, and Eckvall spewing buckshot through the windshield opening, I fairly hurled that truck at them. Horses reared and screamed. Men pitched from their saddles, to be trampled underfoot.

Then, suddenly, I felt the impact of steel against flesh. The wheel seemed fairly jerked out of my hands. The horizon swam. Some one shrilled:

"Look out! Look out! We're headed off the road!"

I struggled desperately for control, forgetting the turmoil about me. And the fates were with us. We had crashed through the line; and though for a moment I thought surely we would overturn and roll down the steep slope that fell away from the road, by some miracle I got the car back under control and we roared on to safety.



The Voyage

By CAPTAIN
GEORGE GRANT

DURING the early weeks of the homeward voyage the *Monarch*, her underwater hull trim as a fish, made excellent headway. Under fair, white-tufted skies she climbed the latitudes of the Florida Straits, and off Cape Hatteras, swerved to the eastward with the Gulf Stream, a brisk west wind carrying a fine veil of spindrift over the poop as she rolled to her scuppers before the lift of the steep following seas. Every day all hands painted and varnished, making of her a dandy lady to delight the eye of the owner on our arrival at London, the discharging port.

Luck seemed to be favoring us with a pleasant winter's passage, when one noon the wind came away from the east with its boot against the land. Before an hour had passed it was blowing a snorting gale.

When I went on watch at eight bells in the afternoon Captain McFarlane was standing on the starboard wing of the bridge, gazing over the weather-cloth at the combers which leaped from the murk-smothered sea. Spray drove down the piping wind into his face, but he didn't seem to mind it. He turned toward Mr. Boxley, who was half-bent to escape the brunt of the weather.

"She's daein' fine, Mister," he remarked. "She's light on her feet as a fairy. I was a wee bit afraid o' her—afraid o' the logs, I mean. They're ticklish things tae carry in the winter wi' the seas clawin' at the lashin's. But she's daein' fine."

Mr. Boxley squinted over the weather-cloth at the round logs lying snugly in their lashings on the deck below.

"I'm not so sure that she's acting fine, sir," he returned in a disgruntled voice. "And even if she is acting fine she shouldn't be. If we should arrive without damage, it will encourage the owners

to ask the Board of Trade to ease up on the timber-carrying regulations. They'll plead a war-time exigency, and you know what that will mean, sir. We'll have a whole deck-load next trip—right up to the bridge instead of only level with the hatches. The ships are being loaded so deeply these days that we're lucky to make a passage without some broken bones!"

"Carefu'ness does it, Mister," Captain McFarlane advised. "Be carefu', Mister, an' keep the lashin's tight. The logs canna break adrift if the lashin's are tight!"

I was aroused at midnight with cold water dashing onto my face. Terrified, I sprang bolt upright in my bunk, and looked into the face of Hoskins, who had come to call me. In one hand he held the sou'wester from which he had been shaking the water onto my face; in the other he carried a small bull's-eye lantern.

"Get out before I knock you out!" I shouted, moving toward him belligerently.

He held up the lantern for protection. "Ere, 'old on!" he begged, backing toward the door. "Y' can't 'it a man when 'is 'ands is full!" He stepped over the sill onto the deck. "Scared! That's wot y' was!" He grinned, and banged the door in my face.

Donning my clothes and oilskins, I blew out the light, opened the half-deck door, and passed out into the night. The darkness was like a black cat springing from the shelter of a tree with a terrifying screech in its throat. It pressed me against the wet deck-house, and I clung to the storm-rail until the breath steadied in my throat. When my eyes became accustomed to the gloom I saw that the night was in the ferocious grip of a living gale that smothered the heavens in a welter of driving scud, and carried an ice-cold spray over all. The howling of the wind, and the crash of the sea, was deafening.

of the *Monarch*

VII—Consigned to Davy Jones

Once on the flying-bridge, though, it did not seem so bad. The weather-cloth broke the full force of the wind, and the spray which rose incessantly in a beautiful filigree of mad water drove high over our heads. I saw the glow of Captain McFarlane's cigar on the weather wing, and I knew that he was on duty, watching the play of the storm upon his charge. Mr. Selkirk went over beside him and I eased myself along the rail into the lee cab where the lookout man stood, peering ahead into the driving murkiness.

"It's a bad night all right," I remarked, moving closer to Bowser, the lookout man, under cover of the darkness.

"Not so bad, sonny, as nights go," he answered stolidly. "Now if we was on a wind-bag wi' sails t' mind an' yards to haul, it would be what we calls Liverpool weather, but just standin' here, a-lookin' on, as it were—"

But the sentence was never completed. Out of the darkness there leaped a brute of a sea. It towered like a cliff, broke, and raced upon the bow, curling into a brilliant burst of white foam when the glow from the foremast steaming light caught its crest. The *Monarch* staggered, bruised herself against the solid mass and smothered herself in spray as she spilled it green on board.

Mr. Selkirk swung across the flying-bridge.

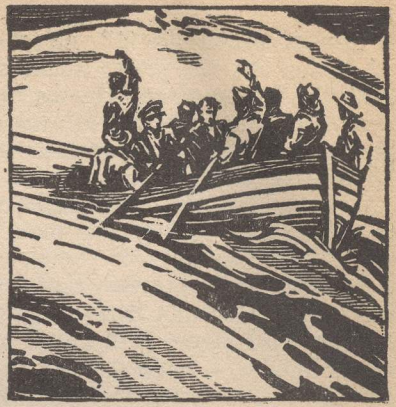
"Hi, there!" he bellowed. "Get doon below an' tak' a squint at the deck-cargo an' the hatches!"

Bowser answered, "Aye, aye, sir!" and without hesitation lurched away to obey.

It was too dark to see him at first, but peering through an opening in the weather-cloth, I saw the dark outline of his figure clambering over the logs, the dangerous water all about him; and I envied him his courage.

Suddenly from him came a shout, startlingly clear above the furious noises of the gale.

"The lashings are adrift, sir!"



A strange fear possessed me. I thought the *Monarch* was about to go down.

"Here, son!" Mr. Selkirk's voice in my ear made me jump. "Ca' oot the mate an' a' hands. Get a move on! There's work tae be done!"

I ran from the bridge without answering him, and I forgot the tumbling of the vessel beneath my feet. Mr. Boxley sprang from his bunk to the deck in response to my call. The stand-by man had roused the sailor-men of the watch, and they were mustering to leeward of the fiddley when I hastened back toward the bridge.

"The watch is out, sir!" I reported to Mr. Selkirk.

Captain McFarlane asked: "Did ye tell the mate the trouble?"

"Yes sir!"

"Guid! He'll fix it in a jiffy. Ye'd better stay up here wi' me. Keep a lookout frae the lee wing."

Captain McFarlane spoke as though nothing much were the matter. Yet gazing through the sodden darkness, I could see the logs swishing about in the white water of the forward well and the sailor-men dodging here and there like devils prancing at some fiendish orgy. But order came from the chaos. The sheaves of the tackles shrieked on their pins as weight was laid on the rope falls. Mr. Boxley hilly-hollied, encouraging his men to superhuman effort with his lusty voice. The logs surged, grunted against each other, held—and broke away again as the *Monarch*, riding the slope of a precipitous sea, heeled dangerously over, spewing water from her scuppers and wash-ports.

"We'll need more men down here!" bellowed Mr. Boxley, leaping to safety beneath the derrick table of the mast.

Captain McFarlane held the weather-cloth down and leaned over.

"Get everybody oot!" he shouted.

A sailor left the group mustered beneath the foremast, and clambering like a cat over the surging logs, went aft; another made his way forward through the agitated water.

As I watched them a thought struck me. Why not join the sailor-men on the well? Hoskins and Mr. Selkirk were both under the impression that I was a timid soul. Why not prove my mettle? Captain McFarlane had issued a call for all hands. I could protest, if reprimanded for deserting my post on the bridge, that I thought it included me!

When the sailor returned from aft, followed by Lord Percy and the carpenter, I peered around to make certain that neither the Captain nor Mr. Selkirk were observing me; then, sneaking from the flying-bridge, I joined those on the deck below. When they leaped down on to the forward well I was with them, my heart pounding, and the water up to my thighs. The *Monarch* heeled over. The logs creaked and strained; I clung to a lifeline and wished that I had not come. But held fast in a vise of my own making, I tailed onto a rope fall.

Lying hove-to in the sea-way, the *Monarch* rolled heavily from side to side, occasionally hanging over on one beam end or the other as if too weary to come back to an even keel. At those times Mr. Boxley, fearing the logs would take charge like a stampede of wild elephants, ordered us into the comparative security of the winches clustered around the heel of the mast, as gray-beard seas, breaking on board, burst upon us with a fury beyond imagination.

But the work progressed with amazing rapidity—until, when it was about done, there came the terrifying murmur of a towering sea about to break.

"Haud on, everybody!" warned Captain McFarlane in a voice stern and calm. "Haud on!"

THE *Monarch* heaved up—rolled over to leeward. The sailors sought cover, or lay flat on their stomachs, clutching what was nearest to hand. Being on top of the logs, I fell down, grasping frantically at the wire which stretched across them.

Pitch-black against the gray-darkness of the nimbus-laden sky, I saw the wave reach up until it dwarfed the *Monarch* with its enormity. As she rolled over to windward, I hid my face down on my arms to shut it out. But I heard it

break, and roar, and rush. The *Monarch* trembled beneath me, and I trembled too. The wave slapped against the hull with shattering force. The *Monarch* staggered—heeled over. The logs sagged, creaked against each other. The wire tauted in my hands, twanged! I felt myself slipping, and I held my breath, and pressed my knees against the slimy round surface of a log; then the wave was upon me, and I was being smothered and drowned.

The weight of water passed over into the sea to leeward with a sullen flop, and the logs eased in their lashings as the *Monarch* came back to an even keel in the slow period of her roll. I wiped my eyes and ears and staggered to my feet.

"Look out there! Hold on!" I heard Mr. Boxley yell.

I didn't know if the warning was for me. Startled, I glanced around. There seemed no immediate danger. But as the *Monarch* labored over to windward, I felt the logs move in a mass, and I knew what it meant. They had broken adrift, and were about to take charge!

Frantically I leaped toward the safety of the winches, but my feet slipped on the slithery ooze which covered the logs, and I fell flat on my face. I groped around for a wire on which to cling, but there was none within reach. A cry for help hovered on my tongue, but I gritted my teeth, and scrambling to my knees, I dug my nails into a log as a rush of water struck me when the *Monarch* steadied to an even keel before falling over to leeward.

In that brief moment of steadiness, with Death lurking in the tumultuous sea, a rope fell across my back, and a heavy body sprawled over me.

"Hold on! Take hold!" Mr. Boxley barked in my ear.

Instinctively I clutched the rope.

Mr. Boxley's arms clutched me.

"Lay back on it, lads!" he shouted.

An answer came through the blanketting water. The rope tautened, jerked. Locked together, we were pulled like a sack of potatoes under the shelter of the foremast in the nick of time. The *Monarch* rolled over to leeward. The deck-load took charge. There was a crashing of giant timbers, a rending of iron, and the bulwarks ripped like sheets of tin as the logs burst free to float away.

The wind was howling in a white squall, but clear through the noise came the warning shout:

"Haud on! We're gaun roon'."

Captain McFarlane had seen the devastation on the well, and thinking perhaps that the bulwarks had torn the deck into a gaping hole through which the water would pour into the hold, he was taking the one chance of saving his vessel: He was putting her before the storm until repairs could be made.

For the moment there was nothing for us to do. Some of the logs still crashed across the deck on the live water, but it would have been suicide to try to secure them. I think I shall always remember the feeling of helplessness as we waited, clinging to the winches, while the seas broke over us in quick succession when the *Monarch*, rolling to her beam ends, hesitated in the trough as she swung fitfully on her rudder. Suddenly there was a lessening of the wind, a longer period of the roll. She was running away from the gale.

"All right, men!" bellowed Mr. Boxley.

He left the winches and swung toward the damaged side, followed by us all.

A quick inspection was made. The deck was intact, and the hull; but the bulwarks were flattened for more than forty feet of their length.

"It'll keep her free from heavy water," said Mr. Boxley, and he ordered life-lines stretched fore-and-aft across the ragged hole.

When that was done, he mustered all hands.

"Everyone here?" he asked.

The sailor-men peered through the darkness at each other. "Aye-aye, sir!" they answered.

"Good!" snapped Mr. Boxley. "The watch below can go below." He swung toward me. "Get back on the bridge and report what you've seen."

The sailor-men drifted away. I followed Lord Percy and the carpenter aft, but at the bridge ladder I left them, to go up to the flying-bridge. My clothing was wet and I was cold, but I did not care. I was supremely happy. Mr. Boxley, at the moment of my rescue, had not ordered me to a place of safety. He had accepted me as a competent member of the crew. I knew that on the morrow, or at any time, there would be no disdain in the eyes of the sailor-men. I had proven that I was one of them.

Captain McFarlane listened while I made my report. When I was done, he turned to Mr. Selkirk.

"Put her back on her course again," he ordered, and he said: "We've got tae be

pushin' on. A win' like this'll mak' safe water."

He was referring to the waters adjacent to the British Isles, where the German submarines had begun an aggressive campaign, and through which the *Monarch* must go to reach port.

BOOM!

I wakened with a start. Twisting around on the bunk, I leaned on my elbow and listened. Then Hoskins opened the door and entered.

"Show a leg!" he said. "One bell 'as gone, an' it's as cold as a blarsted garret wot 'as lost its roof."

Boom!

I leaped over the bunk-board to the deck.

"What was that?" I cried, while I fumbled for my clothes.

"A submarine!" he answered, his voice harsh with resentment. . . .

The *Monarch* was on soundings, and the green-blue sea had the freshness of a rain-washed day in early spring, and it met the cloudless sky in a firm, dark line. High over the stern swooped and volplaned two "Channel pilots"—herring gulls, so named by sailor-men because they meet vessels in the proximity of land and follow them to port, and close above the bubbling white wake a number of stormy petrels, smallest of web-footed birds, dark brown in color with a broad white band above the tail, flew hither and yon like swallows, seeking the tidbits from the galley chute. And away beyond them still, no larger than a biscuit-box, it seemed, was the gray conning-tower of a submarine!

A group of firemen and sailor-men was on the poop. I went aft and joined them.

"We saw her first at daylight, Tommy," Spifkins told me when I was settled on the rail by his side and gazing astern along the wake. "She popped one at us, meaning for us to heave to, I think, but Boxley only swore, and hooked the old tub up before calling Captain McFarlane. She's doing almost eleven knots now—feel her shake?" He took his eyes from the submarine and looked at me. "We're heading for Ireland, Tommy—should make it before dark. The Old Man thinks we have a chance. You ought to see him. He's as cool as a cucumber. He just walks up and down and smokes, and smiles when anyone speaks to him. He has the third mate taking sextant angles of the submarine. She's gaining on us—but not much. She

has only fired three shells at us, and they've all fallen a long way short."

He walked forward along the poop, and I moved over beside the sailor-men who were discussing the prospects of escape in the matter-of-fact tones of men deliberating the outcome of a football match. The general opinion was that a destroyer would hear the detonation of the submarine's gun and come over the horizon like a streak of lightning to investigate. The *Monarch* was in home waters and there should be many in the vicinity. Cummings, though, was skeptical. He had served in that branch of the navy and he declared that the destroyers would be in under the land, where it was safe. They didn't like deep water, he said cynically.

Mr. Boxley came onto the poop and broke up what portended to be a heated argument.

"What d'you think this is?" he demanded. "A holiday and you're all at a country fair? Get on with your work."

I went along toward the bridge. As I ascended the lower ladder, Lord Percy shouted down at me:

"Get some rockets from the box in the chart-room. The Old Man wants you to set them off."

IN a jiffy I was in the chart-room, and from the leaded container under the chronometer-box, I took three rockets. With them I climbed to "monkey-island," and inserting one in the brass socket, I attached the lanyard to the firing-pin and moved back ten feet or more.

"Ready!" I shouted.

Lord Percy looked toward Captain McFarlane, who stood on the starboard wing muffled up in the greatcoat that was too big for him; he raised his right hand as a signal to carry on.

"Let her go!" ordered Lord Percy.

I tugged the lanyard, and the rocket ripped the day apart as it soared toward the cloudless sky with an eerie screeching. It burst with a loud detonation, but the brilliance of its green stars was devoured by the greater brilliance of the sun, making it all seem a futile gesture.

As I inserted a second rocket in the socket, I saw Captain McFarlane shake his head as his gaze fell from the heavens with the drifting fragments of burnt paper. But he motioned for me to proceed—hoping, perhaps, that some whim of the elements would reveal our signals to the destroyers. I fired the second, and the third rocket; then, in challenge

to our call for help, the submarine fired her gun. The shell struck the water well off the port quarter, but it ricocheted much too close to the stern for comfort.

"See if she's gainin' much, Mister," Captain McFarlane ordered Lord Percy.

As Lord Percy went into the wheel-house for his sextant, I took the long glass from its box under the wind-break, steadied it against a stanchion, and focused it on the distant horizon.

The submarine was small. She was, I estimated, four to five miles away, and holding steadily to a course directly in our wake. Four men stood forward of her conning-tower, attending a small gun which looked like a twelve-pounder, though it was difficult to judge accurately at such a distance. On a light mast beside the periscope she flew a two-flag signal which trailed down the wind.

"She's gaining, sir," Lord Percy reported. "Though not much, sir."

At that moment the flags sheered out on an eddying wind, and I read the signal. I turned to Captain McFarlane, who was gazing aft with brooding eyes.

"She's flying *M N*, sir," I reported.

"What does it mean?" he asked.

Lord Percy went into the chart-room to consult the International Code Book, and Captain McFarlane looked round toward me with only the glimmer of his gracious smile flitting across his face.

"The war has caught us up wi' a vengeance, laddie," he said. "We didna bargain for this when we were sailin' sae blithely for hame, did we? It'll be touch an' go, but mebbe we'll mak' it. If only we had a set o' that newfangled wireless! But mebbe we'll get in without it—mebbe we will!"

He fell silent, and only roused from the maze of his thoughts when Lord Percy, his entire bearing one of bristling indignation, came out onto the wing, and reported:

"They have a cheek, sir! They want us to stop instantly!"

"Aye—they dae? An' mebbe we will, but no the noo. Nip doon an' tell the Chief tae shake her up a wee mite mair. He may be haudin' back some steam tae save a pickle o' coal an' thereby gain a guid name for himsel' wi' the owners. It's a trick he has. But just tell him frae me that if he doesna let her oot tae the limit, he might no ha'e a name for the owners tae ca' guid. Mebbe that'll stir him up."

Lord Percy said, "Very good, sir!" and went away.

Captain McFarlane said then to me: "Gang awa' doon an' tell the mate, lad-die, tae provision the boats when he's had his breakfast. It would be just as weel, tae, if he slipped in some cabin blankets. We'd better be ready for the emergency should it catch up wi' us."

"Aye, aye, sir," I answered, and I went off in search of Mr. Boxley.

Throughout the morning the everyday work went on as if nothing unusual was taking place. We all felt sure that the *Monarch* could hold her own, and that under cover of darkness, she would make her escape. But shortly after noon our confidence was shaken. With an alarming crash a shell carried away the port wing of the bridge near which no one had been standing.

Immediately Mr. Boxley fetched the carpenter to repair the damage. He had an inordinate pride in the appearance of his ship, and it would never have done to enter port scarred by the enemy. To confound the submarine's gunners, Captain McFarlane put the *Monarch* on a zig-zag course, and sent word down to the Chief to shake the engines up a bit more.

Frosty Jones felt his responsibility. He came to the engine-room door, perspiring and grouchy, with a sweat-rag tied around his forehead like a crown; he looked over the stern at the submarine which held, like a bloodhound, to our trail; he shook his fist at it and, mournfully shaking his head, he muttered, "The engines! It's ruinin' them!"—and dived down below to urge his men to even greater efforts.

FOR a time the *Monarch*, vibrating impulsively, more than held her own. But toward six bells a sextant angle revealed that the submarine was gaining in the race. The sailor-men were ordered into the stokehold. But they were of little use. The *Monarch* was being driven to the limit!

Captain McFarlane turned to Mr. Selkirk, who stood by his side.

"A rocket, Mister!" he ordered sharply. "Try another rocket!"

A rocket was fired—a second—and a third. Our spirits rose when smoke was seen on the horizon away to the northward, but they fell again when no ship came out of it. It seemed that the English Channel was deserted and that we were doomed. If only we could have fought back!

When the evening sun became a piercing ball of gold low in the west, the sub-

marine began firing in deadly earnest. A shell struck the poop; another hit the funnel; a third landed in the water close on the port beam, the splash from it drifting on board like spray.

The firing ceased, and through the long glass, I saw the German gun-crew swabbing out their gun while the commander leaned down from the conning-tower as if adjuring them to be more accurate.

The gun was reloaded; the commander picked up the binoculars which hung around his neck on a strap; the gun-layer bent over the sights. . . .

"Look out!" I shouted excitedly, unable to tear my eye away from the long glass. "They're going to get us this time!"

They did! The shell tore through the mess-room alleyway and landed in the engine-room with a fearful detonation. There was a clatter hiss of damaged machinery, a scalding hiss of steam, frantic cries of trapped men—and then a dreadful silence, that was like no other silence I had ever experienced.

"Dinna staun' there like stookies!" Captain McFarlane shouted at us, who stood near him bewildered by the catastrophe that had so swiftly befallen. "Get doon below an' see what ye can dae!"

With Lord Percy in the lead, Ernie, Spifkins and I raced along the deck toward the engine-room. What was to become of us?

The engineers, firemen and trimmers were streaming from the alleyway when we reached it. Some had burns, some had bruises, but no one was seriously injured. Frosty Jones came up last of all.

"She's done for!" he raved, wiping the tears of rage and sorrow from his face with a piece of oily waste. "Tell the Old Man she's done for—broken up! And I've tended her for twenty years!"

Something of his rage and sorrow was with each of us. The *Monarch* had stopped in her wake; all the vibrations of her superstructure were stilled, and she was like a great dead hulk, lying on a lifeless sea on which the sun had set. We ran back to the bridge as silently as we had come.

"She's done for, sir!" Lord Percy reported.

"Aye!" Captain McFarlane answered. That was all. He stood gazing over the stern at the submarine that was approaching swiftly, her crew mustered on deck with rifles at the "ready." When the *M N* was hauled down from her

small mast and the signal *A B* hoisted, he asked: "What does she want?"

Lord Percy ran into the chart-room. In a few seconds he was out again on the bridge.

"'Abandon ship immediately,' he says, sir," he reported.

Captain McFarlane stood for a minute as though in a trance. The twilight touched his face and beard with silver, but his eyes were in shadow.

Without moving, he ordered: "Pass word tae Mr. Boxley tae clear awa' the boats. There's no a way oot o' it!" When Lord Percy went away, he continued: "Gi'e them a haun', laddies. The experience will be worth while. Ye'll be needin' it often afore the war is done, I'm thinkin'."

Ernie and Spifkins climbed up on to the boat-deck, and I ran around the houses, shouting, "All hands abandon ship! *All hands abandon ship!*"

THE sailor-men came from below, some lugging sea-bags that had been hastily stuffed with clothing; some singing jauntily, believing the voyage had ended in a burst of glory; some silently, wondering what would happen once they were in the boats. The lifeboats were swung out and lowered to the level of the margin-plank. Sailor-men stood by the tackle-falls ready to lower away at the word of command. Mr. Boxley mustered the crew, calling each man by name. When he was assured that all hands were present, he motioned me to his side.

"Tell Captain McFarlane that we're ready—that we're waiting for him," he said.

I ran away to obey, but when I ascended the lower-bridge ladder, my foot-steps lagged, for I perceived a weight that was tugging at my heels: Captain McFarlane would not come in answer to the summons—he would go down with his vessel, following a tradition which I believed as outworn as an old shoe. But as I approached where he stood on the starboard wing watching the submarine that had stopped close to, I could see something of his point of view. He was an old man, and the *Monarch* had been his life. To leave her would be like deserting everything he held dear. He could not do it.

Walking quickly, for the anguish of the moment was like a knife thrust into my side, I halted behind him, and reported:

"The lifeboats are out, sir, and ready to be lowered away. Mr. Boxley is waiting for you, sir!"

He turned around very slowly, and his care-worn face lighted up into a smile.

"Aye, laddie," he said; and he nodded and said: "Tell Mr. Boxley tae carry on. I'll be bidin' here a while."

It was what I had expected him to say, but all the affection in my heart flew out to him, and I cried:

"But—but, sir, you can't stay here! You mustn't stay here. You'll be throwing your life away!"

For a second I thought he would give in, and come with me. His gaze moved away, wandering aimlessly over the *Monarch* like a thought seeking to be born from the cluttered caverns of a mind; but when it came back to me, the pale blue eyes were hard as steel.

"Carry on, laddie!" he said, with a snap that made me jump.

Involuntarily I stepped back. I forgot our friendship—the long talks we had had together. He was on duty, the master; and I was the cadet!

I saluted smartly. "Yes sir—aye-aye, sir!" I answered, but I fled toward the boat-deck with a terrible ache gnawing at my heart.

Mr. Boxley waited for me at the top of the iron ladder. He knew, I could see, that Captain McFarlane was not coming, but he listened while I passed along the order to abandon ship, and when I had finished, he nodded his head with a calm finality. "Get into Mr. Selkirk's boat," he said. He waited until I was seated; then he ordered, "Lower away!" and walking quickly across the deck, he stepped into the port lifeboat and took his place in the stern-sheets. The shriek of the tackle-blocks piped the boats to the water.

The sea was calm and like a misty mirror in the twilight, and all the pale colors of the evening sky were reflected on it and moving up and down to the gentle undulations of the swell; and it seemed to me, as the sailor-men who had attended the falls slid down into their places and the oars were shipped, and the lifeboat pushed off from the black hull, that the catastrophe was all a dream. But the submarine came around the *Monarch's* stern, and I came back to reality when a friendly voice, in perfect English, shouted:

"Come alongside, please!"

The submarine stopped. We joined Mr. Boxley's boat and rowed alongside.

The commander, who had spoken, scanned us all from his position in the conning-tower; then, apparently satisfied that we were unarmed, he issued an order, in German, to his men, who immediately grounded their rifles. One of them threw us each a line.

The commander leaned over the rail of the conning-tower. He was a young man with a pale face, and pleasant eyes.

"I thought you were going to get away," he told us, "but I was determined to get you, though I didn't want to injure anyone. I didn't, by the way?" When he was assured that he hadn't, he continued: "I had to get you, for I had a grudge to settle with your owner. I was second mate in your company once, and he sacked me because of my nationality. I served under Captain McRae." He scanned us all again. "Who is the captain?" he asked.

"McFarlane," Mr. Boxley answered.

"Are you he?"

Mr. Boxley shook his head. "No sir. He is on board."

"Ach!" ejaculated the commander angrily. He spoke rapidly to his men. Two of them stepped into Mr. Boxley's boat, one carrying a metal cylinder that looked like a twelve-pound shell.

The commander faced Mr. Boxley and spoke again: "You will row alongside your vessel. One of my men will remain with you on guard; the other will climb on board, accompanied by an engineer who will show him where the sea-cocks are located, and open them to flood the vessel under his direction. To expedite the sinking, a bomb will be set in the bilge with a time fuse. While this is being done, you may try to persuade your captain to leave; but should he persist in remaining, do not send after him. Darkness will soon be here, and there is no time to lose; and anyway, he is the master until his vessel has gone down. When the men return to the lifeboat, you will come back here. You must understand that I will not tolerate any nonsense. At the slightest suspicion of treachery, I shall fire a torpedo and blow you all to smithereens. The lives of the men are in your hands. You may go!"

The lifeboat rowed away into the gathering dusk, and we sat slumped on the thwarts and watched it with heavy hearts. For a long, long while no one spoke, but when the *Monarch* began to list slightly to starboard, and a muffled

explosion shook the air, Hoskins said in a hollow voice: "Consigned to Davy Jones, that's wot she is." No one else spoke. Our thoughts were too sad for utterance.

Like a gray shadow drifting from the deepening twilight the lifeboat returned. I scanned the faces eagerly, hopefully, and I felt let down when I heard Mr. Boxley report:

"He would not come!"

"So!" acknowledged the commander; and when his men had stepped onto the submarine and made their reports, he turned again to us, and he said: "You have sails. There is a southerly wind coming up, and it will carry you to the Irish coast. It is not more than twenty miles away. I would tow you, but this is war, and I must remain here until your ship sinks. She will go quickly. I am going to put some shells into her below the water-line. You will go now!" He waved us away, and when the lifeboats had pushed clear, he shouted: "May you have a safe passage. Good luck!"

He had been a decent chap, and we answered:

"The same to you, sir. Good-by!"

OUR mast was stepped, the sail was hoisted and set to the wind, which had freshened with the night; and soon the lifeboat was clipping along with a weight upon her rudder and an exhilarating surge of white water along her bilge. But though I knew the Irish coast would be sighted within an hour and that we would be saved, all my thoughts were with Captain McFarlane, standing alone on the bridge of the *Monarch*, on duty to the last. He would be erect, I knew, fearlessly facing the death that he had chosen; and though I understood his point of view and admired his courage, I could not help thinking how stupid it was to die for a tradition that belonged to the days of the old wooden-walls, when a vessel might float for weeks after being damaged beyond repair. . . .

Four shots rang out in quick succession. Each pierced me like a knife, and I checked the tears that came into my eyes and looked toward the south, where a blur appeared upon the vast serenity of the night. Suddenly, as I watched, the horizon became one unbroken line; the sea dark and hard, the star-filled sky gray and soft. The *Monarch* had rolled over and gone down.

A Son of the Frontier

Catch-'Em-Alive Jack handles some tough customers as U. S. Marshal—but finds time for some wolf-hunts too.

ROUGH RIDERS who had seen service under Colonel Roosevelt on the front in Cuba during the Spanish-American war, were naturally favored by his administration in making appointments. I was not a Rough Rider, though I tried to enlist at the time Roosevelt was organizing the cavalry regiment for service in Cuba. I had appeared before the recruiting officer at Dallas; and upon examination, the physician told me that I was afflicted with an organic heart difficulty.

"You are an organic liar!" I shouted in anger. "I have broken bucking horses, have caught wild wolves and have been in many fights; but my heart never has bothered me."

However, as I have related, with the strong personal friendship of the President, I did not have to be a Rough Rider to secure my appointment as U. S. Marshal of Oklahoma Territory. Upon returning to Oklahoma from Washington, I took the oath of office.

My biggest job during the first term of office was to go to Washington every few months and answer charges filed against me by hostile politicians. While so many trips strained my purse, I always was glad to appear in the capital city to make answer, for it gave me a chance to visit the best friend I ever had—the President.

Among the charges filed against me was one that I had appointed more Democrats than Republicans, as my deputies. President Roosevelt asked me concerning the charges of favoring the Democrats, and I replied:

"Mr. President, when you appointed me, you did not ask about my politics, though I have been a Republican ever since I cast my first ballot. When I went to vote the first time, in Hill County, Texas, at a little schoolhouse, I walked off and sat down on a rock, making out my ballot.

"One of my neighbors looked over my shoulder, and said: 'I am awful sorry to know that I live so close to a black-hearted Republican.' I was voting for William McKinley, for President.

"I replied to my neighbor, saying: 'That's all right; I will take care of myself.' I handed in my ticket and started for my horse, to return home, but just as I went to put my foot in the stirrup, my neighbor caught me by the collar.

"When his hand touched my neck, it made my blood boil. I whirled, and we went to fighting. I got him down when his son ran up, catching me by the foot and pulling me over end-ways. At that instant my half-brother came up and tied into this man. His other son ran up to enter the fight, when my other half-brother ran up, pulling his pistol, saying; 'Fair play here, gentlemen!' And this ended the fight."

I told the President that charges of raising a riot had been filed against me as result of my fight at the polls. Not being able to hire a lawyer, I had pleaded my own case on the day of the trial. The case was taken from the jury, and the court ordered an acquittal.

"I believe you are a good Republican," remarked the President.

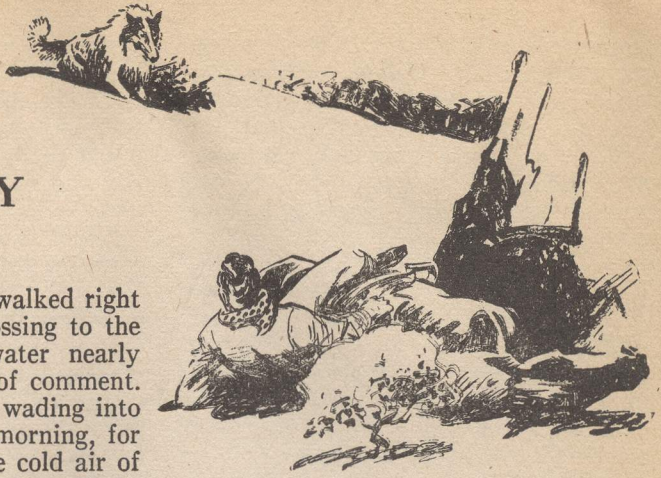
"Haven't I the right to appoint my own deputies without asking their politics—the same right you had in appointing me, without asking my politics?" I asked the President.

"No sir!" replied the President emphatically. "I am elected by the party, and you are a special appointee. I want all of your deputies to be Republicans, if you can find good men; but if you cannot find good men—you will have to appoint good men whom you know will do their duty," continued the President.

I WENT with the President nearly every morning, while a guest at the White House, for the usual early morning walk. He was such a rapid walker that I was always tired out after one of our tramps in and around the city of Washington. He did not take Secret Service guards with him when we were out together.

One cold crisp morning as I was walking with the President along Rock Creek, when we reached the water, he did not

By
**JOHN
ABERNATHY**



seem to notice it—and just walked right on into the cold stream, crossing to the other bank. He waded water nearly waist-deep without a word of comment.

I did not like the idea of wading into that water on such a cold morning, for I was not accustomed to the cold air of the North. When I hit the water, I was chilled till my teeth almost rattled; but I followed the President, wading the stream, regardless of the chill. I wasn't going to be outdone!

President Roosevelt and I often put on the gloves for sparring bouts. Once after we'd boxed a round he exclaimed: "Jack, are you doing your best?"

"Yes," I replied, though I really did not feel like doing my best that morning.

"I would not like you so well, if I thought you were not boxing your best."

"Do you really mean that?"

"I surely do."

A crowd of the President's friends were watching us. About the third time we came together after the gong sounded, I knocked him into the ropes. He came back at me with several hard punches. It was with no little difficulty I managed to protect myself.

The President practiced the psychology of his life in boxing. When he hit—he hit hard. . . .

I had been called to Washington so many times in order to answer charges, that when I received another message to appear before the President I naturally felt sure it was for the purpose of defending myself against further accusations. I walked into the Executive Offices a day ahead of time. When I shook hands with the President, I said, "I did not expect more charges so soon," and he replied: "Did you come all the way from Oklahoma, thinking you were to answer more charges?"

"Yes," was my reply.

"I do not think there will be any more charges for a while," asserted the President. "I am going to entertain my classmates who finished with me at Harvard, Wednesday night, and I could not think of a man better able to en-

ertain them than you—so I wired for you to come."

I thought of my having had only eleven days in a country school.

"Don't you think you have made a mistake, Mr. President?" I asked.

"No sir! No sir!" he replied.

"I had much rather you had said, 'I have thirteen outlaws out here near the city; I want you to go single-handed and get them,' than to have you ask me to entertain your college classmates," I said.

THAT night I slept very little, for I was dreading that entertainment. But I appeared before the assembled classmates and I want to say that I never met a finer crowd of fellows. As I recall them, there were thirty-two present. I entertained those gentlemen for an hour and a half, telling stories to them about catching wolves with my hands, and other incidents of life on the frontier. When they shook hands as we parted, they all invited me to their homes, insisting on entertaining me. An ordeal which I had dreaded greatly turned out to be a most pleasant incident. . . .

It was at about this time that I met "Bat" Masterson, famous former peace officer at Dodge City in the palmy days of the cattle trail. Though long a voluntary exile from the plains, Bat's spirit seemed to hark back to the days of his young manhood while I was with him.

Another friend of my life under the limelight of publicity was Frank James, once dreaded as a Missouri bandit, who had made his peace with law and order and had traveled only in the highway of peace for more than a quarter of a century. Of course, I met him only in the West, as he seldom if ever went East. In those days he had a horse-ranch in

southwestern Oklahoma. Though no one ever offered to molest him, the long years when he was an outlaw, scouting and in hiding, had left their indelible mark upon him. He was a brave man, yet he was ever nervous and apprehensive. I shall never forget the night that Frank James spent with me.

HE told me how, during the Civil War, soldiers had fired on his mother, shattering her arm; how his little half-brother had been killed, their homestead burned and all their livestock driven away, while he and Jesse had been with Quantrell's band of guerrillas. When Frank and Jesse returned home, they learned of the tragedy, and when their mother told her story, he said that he and Jesse exchanged glances, kissed her and then started for the door. "Mother placed her uninjured arm around Jesse's neck, leaning against me as we walked toward the front door," Frank said. "On reaching the door, Mother exclaimed: 'Boys! Boys! Don't do what you have made up your minds to do!'" Frank said they did not answer her, but kissed her again, and left. Within forty-eight hours, Frank said, they had captured at least one-half of the soldiers who took part in the wounding of their mother and burning of the family home.

Before we went to bed that night, Frank asked: "Marshal, what kind of guns are those you carry?" I told him that the gun which I carried on the right hip was a German-made automatic, with nine high-powered cartridges in the magazine and one in the barrel. This pistol had power enough to shoot through a railroad rail. Then I exhibited the .38-caliber pistol of the cowboy type, which I carried in a holster under the left arm.

"That's a regular outlaw type," remarked Frank, as he noticed how easy it was to make a draw quickly from this leather scabbard. I said in reply: "I have to compete with outlaws; why shouldn't I have an outlaw outfit?" Frank seemed surprised as I demonstrated to him how quickly I could make a draw with this six-shooter. This pistol was held in place by a wire spring which fastened around the barrel. Only a slight touch was necessary in drawing this gun.

"Can you take that gun to pieces?" asked Frank. He began to inspect the automatic. I took the magazine out, throwing the cartridge out of the barrel, then handed the pistol to him. "I mean,

can you take that gun all to pieces?" continued Frank.

I went ahead and dismantled it.

"Now, just leave it that way; you might be dreaming tonight that you are sleeping with me, and get up and kill me!"

"Well, Frank," I said, "that corroborates the story I often have heard of you—you are like a wild turkey, always with your head up and looking for something."

When I first began riding the range, I quickly learned from older cowboys how to fire a six-shooter by fanning the hammer. In those early days, most of the officers and cowboys carried their guns on the right side, with the weapon seemingly backward. In making the draw, the right hand would go down with the wrist twisted, the palm of the hand being outward in grasping the pistol handle. In pulling the weapon from the scabbard upward, the right hand turned the weapon, the thumb cocking the pistol as the "drop" was being taken on the man. Many of the old-time cowboys, in order to shoot their pistols rapidly, would file off the trigger entirely, using only the hammer, which they fanned either with the right thumb or the left hand, while holding the pistol in the right.

I also soon discovered, however, that the most accurate way to fire a pistol is by holding the weapon with both hands. In so doing, pulling the trigger will not throw the gun out of line after aim is taken.

Frank James agreed with me in discussing this feature of accurate shooting.

GUTHRIE'S historic Federal jail of stone, erected in pioneer days, was the scene of a very spectacular attempted jail-break soon after I first became Marshal. Sam Bass, the famous wolf-chase horse, made a fast run for its master when I received a telephone-call, as I entered the office in the post-office building immediately after noonday lunch.

"Hole in the wall! Going to hell!" was the only message I heard, as I took down the receiver. I recognized the voice of John Lankford, jailer. I did not wait to untie the reins which held Sam Bass. The horse had been tied to a post in front of the Federal Building. I slashed the reins, leaped into the saddle, and Sam Bass was off in an instant, reaching the rear of the jail in a few moments.

R. A. Wright, convicted and under death sentence for murder of Wm. Slattery, a farmer near Hobart, was about

to liberate a total of one hundred and thirty-four prisoners, many of them being murderers and bandits. Wright was the leader. He was about halfway out of a hole dug in the rock wall.

"Get back! Get back!" I shouted as I took the drop with my six-shooter leveled upon the convict's head.

"Don't shoot!" pleaded Wright. "I can't get back."

Wright was unable to work his way back, but some of the prisoners inside pulled him back by the legs. . . .

I had moved to a rural home, a mile and a half south of Guthrie. One night Catch, my shepherd dog, acted as if trying to stop somebody at the front gate of the farmhouse. I opened the front door, and as I did so, a pistol bullet whizzed by my head. Three men were at the front gate. They broke and ran west, after firing the shot. A double hog-wire fence was around the yard. The trio ran along the outside of the fence, then fired a second shot.

I WAS barefooted, but I ran out into the snow, emptying my six-shooter at the fleeing men. I returned inside, where I hurriedly put on my boots, grabbed a flashlight and a rifle. I followed the three for nearly a mile. There was a trail of blood in the snow. I knew that one of the men was wounded.

The dog disappeared during the fight and did not return home for three days. When it did return, and saw me, it began howling as if trying to tell something.

I was called to Harrah three weeks later. I went there in order to prevent a double bank-robbery, also robbery of the post-office. I had befriended a woman whose husband was in the Federal jail.

"You have been so courteous, that I am going to tell you something," she said. "Thursday night they are going to rob both banks and the post-office at Harrah. This is what I want to tell you."

Chris Madsen, chief deputy marshal, accompanied me on the trip to Harrah. George Struble, claim agent for the street-car company at Oklahoma City, took a posse with him to aid my force. Struble's posse was at one bank, while with Madsen, we were stationed at the other bank.

About twelve-thirty A.M., three men appeared to rob the bank where Madsen and I were stationed. I called on them to surrender, but they opened fire on the officers. One man by the name of Quigg, a former baseball umpire at Oklahoma

City, was the first to fall when fired upon. Carpenter, another of the gang also from Oklahoma City, fell mortally wounded. He lived about twelve hours. The third member was believed to be fatally shot, but he finally recovered. He served a prison term and later became an evangelist, quitting the life of crime.

Carpenter said he knew the jig was up, when I questioned him. "I want to tell you that you have the smartest dog on earth," Carpenter told me, as he admitted that he and two other men had tried to assassinate me, near Guthrie.

THIS same dog Catch once saved my life on another occasion. I had shot three squirrels under the tree that I was camped under. After building a fire I started to prepare my supper of squirrel stew, black coffee and cold biscuits.

After eating, and seeing the horses and dogs were properly cared for, I crawled in my wagon and lay down to sleep.

About eleven o'clock I was awakened by my good horse Sam Bass, which I had tied to the front wheel of my wagon so he would be safe from any outlaws who were envious of possessing him, as undoubtedly he was the fastest horse I had ever been on. Sam was lunging against the rope, snorting, and I realized that he saw something out of the ordinary. I got up in a jiffy, picking my six-shooter, and dropping to my knees in front of the wagon, tried to sky-light around the camp. I noticed Sam was looking straight east across the creek, and to my surprise, I heard wolves snapping, growling and jawing, which was music to my soul, for I knew it was wolves instead of outlaws that were frightening Sam Bass. I patted Sam, got back in the wagon and went to sleep.

I could not have been asleep more than an hour and a half when I was awakened by human voices, as I thought. I seized my gun a second time and as I got out of the front of the wagon the voices became louder, and found to my surprise it was the owls in the trees above talking to each other—that too made my heart beat with joy, for I had always heard that owls talking to each other was a sign of good luck.

Once again I retired to the wagon, sleeping through till five o'clock when I was awakened by the rain that was spattering against the canvas coverings. Much as I disliked getting out in it, I realized that this kind of weather the wolves would be prowling and I felt sure that I

would get a loafer. I dressed hurriedly, prepared my coffee, saddled Sam Bass and unsnapping two of my little greyhounds, crossed the creek and was on my way, peering in every direction for a wolf.

Besides the four greyhounds left tied to the tree, I had chained to the wagon my Scotch shepherd Catch, one of the greatest fighters that I had ever seen. I had ridden about four hundred yards when I came to a small stream which was banked full, and I noticed my greyhounds whining and staying close to my horse's heels and looking straight ahead.

I could not see anything because of the trees and brush along the bank of the stream, so I rolled off my horse, stooped down and looking directly across the stream not over a hundred yards, I saw two large loafer wolves. Evidently they had not sighted the dogs, so I leaped into the saddle again, spoke to the dogs and started to cross the stream. I did not know how deep it was, and didn't care, for it had been about a month since I had caught a lobo wolf and I knew to get one meant fifty dollars for me.

My horse plunged into the water, which was about ten to fifteen feet deep, and the splash attracted the lobos' attention, but they had not yet sighted the dogs. When I reached solid ground my two little dogs were right by me; seeing the dogs, the wolves broke, and the race was on.

A steep hill, very difficult for my horse to climb, impeded my progress, and my dogs were now within twenty feet of the wolves. After we reached the top of the hill the wolves made a certain turn to the right, heading south and down this hill, so the dogs did not gain much.

UPON reaching the flat in the valley the dogs and the wolves turned right back toward the camp. They had separated and I no longer could see Abe, the old greyhound; but the big wolf, which the blue was after, was running almost neck and neck with the dog, and I was fairly begging the blue to take hold. Soon they leaped off a little bank where the ground was about two feet lower nearly all around for about an acre, and as I went over this bank I did not observe whether the wolf nipped the dog, or the dog the wolf, but I know that I hit the ground and, having on my slicker, I felt a bit awkward.

The wolf at once leaped at my throat and his mouth was within three inches of

my stomach when I caught him. We wrestled, we scuffled, and finally went down together, with the wolf desperately trying to free himself. I was on top, but wondering what I would do, as the horse had gone with the wire that I needed to wire the mouth of the wolf.

Just then I noticed the second wolf crouched in a catlike position, ready to spring upon me. I could see blood on his mouth and nose and thought perhaps he had killed Abe. I knew the wolf would make his spring very quickly and, unless aid came at once, I was doomed.

SUDDENLY there was a rush at my left and I saw a dark object dart off the bank and attack the wolf which was about to spring at me.

"It's Catch! It's Catch!" The dog had broken his chain and come to join in the fight. "Get him, Catch! Get him, Catch!" I shouted. "Take a throat hold—get up again, old-timer—the chain on your throat is helping you! You can't help but win! Fight over this way where I can get a kick at him!"

I kicked once, allowing myself to get off the wolf's body on which I was lying, but the kick failed to reach.

"Work for his throat, Catch! Work for his throat—never mind his feet! You're gaining! Oh, my God, he's got him by the throat— Hold on, Catch! Go deeper! Crush him! You've got him, Catch, if you don't turn loose."

I kept shouting while the dogs worked, Catch, with a gameness I have never seen excelled by a dog, kept his hold and, aided by Abe, soon had the wolf on the ground dead, to my relief and delight.

However, I was not yet out of danger, for I was still struggling to conquer my own wolf. Presently I heard a shout:

"Hello, Jack! What in the h— are you doing there? Gad! You've hubbed a big one this time. That's the scoundrel that's been killing our cattle."

Looking up, I saw Cal, a line rider for Waggoner.

"Shut up, Cal, and bring me some wire right quick or I'll be cut down! This wolf's chewing on me right now!"

"I have nothing but some barb wire about two feet long that I was aiming to splice a fence with."

"Well, unwrap it right quick and get the barbs out and give it to me!"

Cal gave me the wire and in a few minutes I had Mr. Wolf where he could do no more harm.

Next Month!

PROUD RIDER,* by Harvey Fergusson

A fascinating long novelette of old days and wild ways in his native New Mexico, by the distinguished author of "Blood of the Conquerors," "Wolf Call" and other noted books.

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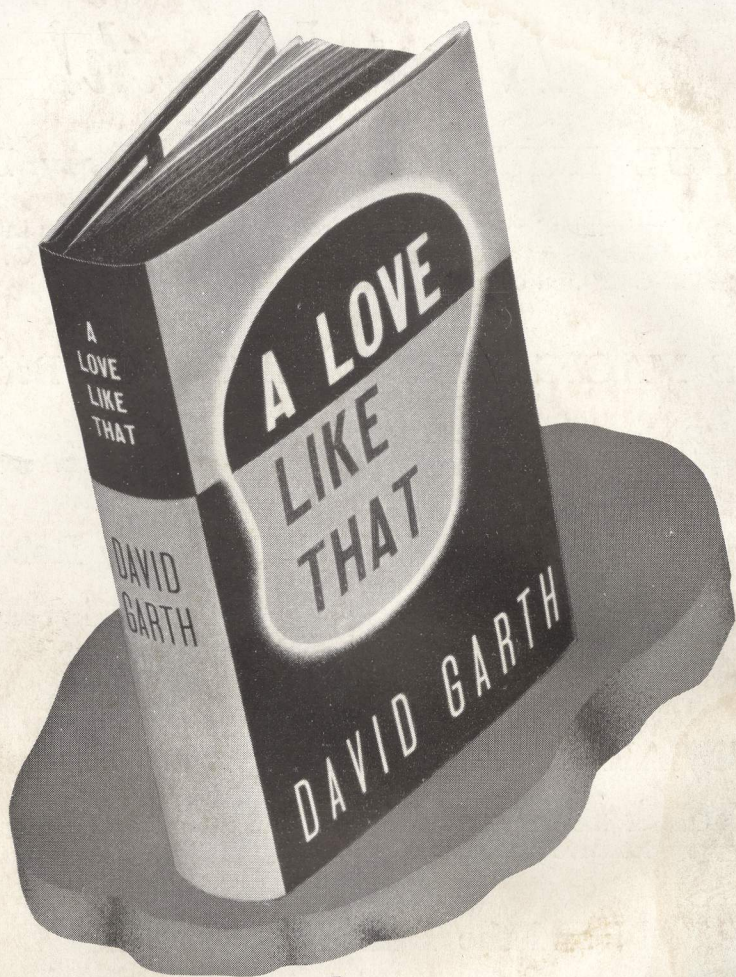
**Planned for publication in this issue, but deferred owing to the illness of the illustrator.*

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