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# Bluebook

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FOR MEN

35c Feb.

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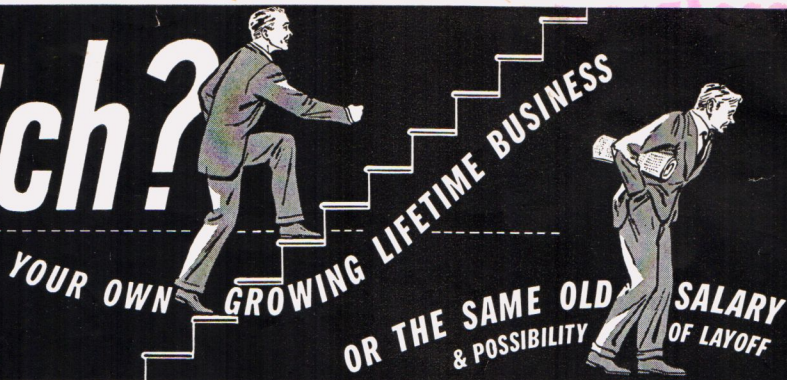
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# Bluebook FOR MEN

Contents for February 1961

Vol. 100

No. 3

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*Fabulous Milo March, secret agent, parachutes in Russia to rescue a captured U-2 pilot—with unexpected results*

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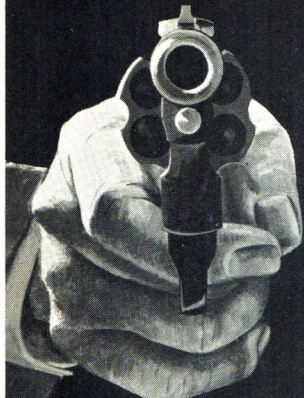
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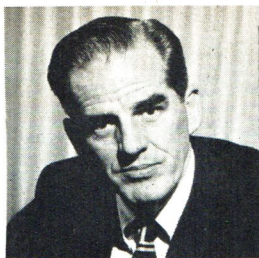
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**The Way We See It**

On page 14 of this issue you'll find the opening lines of what we consider to be the most important, and at the same time the most shocking, article to appear in any magazine in modern times. It is the true story, told for the first time, of the disastrous World War II battle for Iwo Jima.

Now, all right, we won't go into the reasons for the story's not having been written before; when you read it, you'll be able to understand why the facts always were suppressed. It isn't a very pretty or inspiring account. What's more, it violates our own premise of always trying to *entertain* you readers, rather than trying to make you uncomfortable. Our excuse is that *somebody* had to tell this story, and we got mighty tired of waiting for someone else to do it.

We do say this, however—we said in our first issue that we never would run a piece demanding that *you*, our readers, get off the bench and go in there and win the game for us, and we're not about to do that here. What we *are* doing is demanding that someone else carry this particular ball—specifically the Congress of the United States. So, if you want to get in on this fight, it's all right with us. You can do it by showing the piece to your Congressman.

Sure, we know—some joker's going to blast us for taking the Marines' side in this argument against the poor old Navy. Before you dip that pen in the acid, however, you might care to know that those of us on the BB staff who managed to find gainful employment in the armed forces during WW II *all* served their time with the Navy. In fact, one of us still is a weekend warrior in the Naval Reserve, and wondering how this little essay is going to sit with his skipper.

Still, he can't make trouble for us. (Can he!)

When Tom Bailey shipped us "Ordeal In Paradise," the little anecdote you'll find nestling on pages 32-33, we promptly bounced the thing back to Tom, along with some fine old Anglo-Saxon words, and some sugges-

tions of a biological nature as to what he could do with such an obviously phony yarn. Which is when Thomas showed us he knew a few swear words of his own; and along with his courtly remarks, he shot us affidavits, tape recordings, and similar evidence, proving beyond what is known as cavil that the tale is as true as tomorrow.

So who are we to argue with guys who are bigger than we are? Especially when they turn in a piece as fascinating as this one.

\* \* \*

All in all, we're pretty proud of this third issue. For one thing, we have the stories mentioned in the foregoing; for another, we have the names attached to some of the other compositions in this volume. Jesse Owens needs no introduction, of course, and we're not about to give him one. As for John D. MacDonald, Pat Frank, Hank Searls, M. E. Chaber, William Chamberlain—well, if you don't recognize these boys, you just haven't been reading much lately, have you? They are only just about the top fiction carpenters in the business, and we figure that's good enough for BB's readers.

Take this M. E. Chaber: Well, that isn't really his name. His real handle is Kendell Foster Crossen, no less. He took the name he's used to knock out no less than *eleven* Milo March adventures from the Hebrew word *me-chaber*, which Ken says means "writer," and that's all right, too. What isn't all right is that this Crossen wears a beard yet, and looks like an unfrocked monk, a compliment which we graciously paid him. So now he's doing a piece for our next issue on beards and the guys who sport them, and if we know Crossen, this should turn out to be the greatest thing since the safety razor. We'll be sure to pass it along to you.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, you hear about the guy whose wife looks like Marilyn Monroe, is a millionaire in her own right, lets him out five nights a week, brings him his breakfast in bed, and who thinks he's another Gable?

Neither have we. ●

Maxwell Hamilton

# "We're looking for people who like to draw"

By **ALBERT DORNE**  
Famous Magazine Illustrator

**D**o you like to draw or paint? If you do — America's 12 Most Famous Artists are looking for you. We'd like to help you find out if you have talent worth developing.

Here's why we make this offer. About ten years ago, my colleagues and I realized that too many people were missing wonderful careers in art . . . either because they hesitated to think they had talent . . . or because they couldn't get top-notch professional art training without leaving home or giving up their jobs.

## A Plan to Help Others

We decided to do something about this. First, we pooled the rich, practical experience; the professional know-how; and the precious trade secrets that helped us reach the top. Then — illustrating this knowledge with over 5,000 special drawings and paintings — we created a complete course of art training that folks all over the country could take right in their own homes and in their spare time.

Our training has helped thousands of men and women win the creative satisfactions and the cash rewards of part-time or full-time art careers. Here are just a few:

Don Smith lives in New Orleans. Three years ago Don knew nothing about art — even doubted he had talent. Today, he is an illustrator with a leading advertising agency — and has a future as big as he wants to make it.

## Helps Design New Cars

Halfway through our training, Don Golemba of Detroit landed a job in the styling department of a major automobile company. Now he helps design new car models.

"Your course has been the difference between failure and success for me," writes Robert Meecham of Ontario, Canada. "I've come from an \$18.00 a week apprentice to where I now own my own house, two cars, and hold stock in two companies."

John Whitaker of Memphis was an airline clerk when he began studying with us. Recently, a huge syndicate signed him to do a daily comic strip.

## Earns Seven Times as Much

Eric Ericson of Minneapolis was a clerk when he enrolled with us. Now, he heads an advertising art studio business and earns seven times his former salary.

Having taken our training, busy New York mother, Elizabeth Merriess, now adds to her family's income by designing greeting cards and illustrating children's books.

## Cowboy Starts Art Business

Donald Kern — a Montana cowboy — studied with us. Now he paints portraits, sells them for \$250 each. And he gets all the business he can handle.

Gertrude Vander Poel had never drawn a thing until she started studying with us. Now a swank New York gallery exhibits her paintings for sale.

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How about you? Wouldn't you like to find out if you have talent worth training for a full-time or part-time art career? Simply send for our revealing 12-page talent test. Thousands paid \$1 for this test, but we'll send it to you free. If you show promise, you'll be eligible for at-home training under the program we direct. No obligation. Mail the coupon today.

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To the Editor:

As an old Navy Joe from World War I days, I take violent exception to the story "Night Of The Navy's Biggest Binge," by Theodore Irwin, in your first issue. This was the most colossal hunk of hogwash ever put over on an unsuspecting editor, and I am betting now that (a) Irwin was in the Army and (b) made up this obscene piece of obscenity out of his own pointed head.

Any takers?

Joseph Kearns

Michigan City, Ind.

How big's the bet, Joe? Irwin's the odds-on favorite when it comes to facts. Save your money—Ed.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

I could hardly believe my eyes on seeing *Bluebook* on the stands again! It must be ten years since it was sold in Canada.

To me, it has always been one of the finest magazines ever published, containing many fine stories. Anyway, it's refreshing to see a clean magazine on sale again, in contrast to the trash that's peddled. Good luck!

W. S. Gamon

Vancouver, B. C.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

Having been a satisfied reader of the old *Bluebook*. I'm sorry to see you start out with inexcusable mistakes.

It was not a gunboat Hobson sank at Santiago Bay, but a collier. It did not block the harbor and bottle up the Spanish fleet. It did not free Dewey's fleet for the battle of Manila Bay.

If you're going to refer to history, please get your facts straight.

R. L. Wright

San Diego, Calif.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

How in the hell someone with even a slight knowledge of history could go so hopelessly wrong is beyond me.

Spanish-American War declared on April 25, 1898.

Dewey's victory at Manila, May 1, 1898.

Hobson sank the Merrimac (a collier, not a gunboat) in Santiago harbor on June 3, 1898.

I would suggest an occasional glance at a good encyclopedia.

John E. Venm

Milwaukee, Wis.

One thing you have to say, boys, we spelled Dooney correctly—Ed.

To the Editor:

Never knew it to fail.

No sooner does someone come up with a Grade-A idea like reviving *Bluebook* than he has to brush off a host of self-centered assistants who want him to add a record column, a fishing column, a hunting column, a pitch for bowling, a column by Harry Truman, and a monthly article on tating.

*Bluebook* foundered once because of pressure from these Fifth Columnists. Let's not let it happen again. Remember, one straddle-shanked skier can make more noise than a whole colony of contented readers.

Clarence Swanson

Antigo, Wis.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

As an old *Bluebook* fan, I eagerly bought your first issue. I am completely satisfied with your first efforts, and enclose my check for a subscription. I agree with you that there's a need for such a magazine, and for stories that provide relaxation and escapism without trying to analyze my neurotic tendencies or otherwise reminding me that I'm not the ravaging success I once hoped to be.

Charles Jordan

St. Simon's Island, Ga.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

Just finished your first issue, and it's good. Continue to keep out those damned so-called "pinup" pictures, and you'll be doing us all a great favor. I can see much better cheese-cake any day right here on Main Street.

Walt Thayer

Wenatchee, Wash.

Anybody for Wenatchee, boys?—Ed.

\* \* \*

To the Editor:

Thanks for coming back. I first picked up *Bluebook* some ten years ago when a guy named Maxwell Hamilton was editing the best damned magazine for men in the country. Then he left, and was replaced by a guy who figured men wanted to read how to repair faucets, and the magazine folded. Now it's back, and he's back, and I'm back.

Enclosed my check for a year's subscription.

Don Kanabay

Grayslake, Ill.

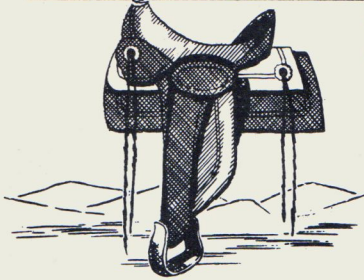
P.S. I haven't even opened this first issue yet. I know it'll be good. It's called *Bluebook*—D.K.



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### REAL ESTATE REPORT —

Arizona is one of the fastest growing states in the union. An ideal climate, vast natural resources and widespread natural recreational facilities have created an unprecedented interest in this *opportunity-studded* state. Every national survey has emphatically concluded that the population explosion in the next few years will spell PROSPERITY for our more desirable frontiers. *ARIZONA heads the list* — and those that recognize the trend may soon realize fantastic profits on what are NOW relatively small investments.

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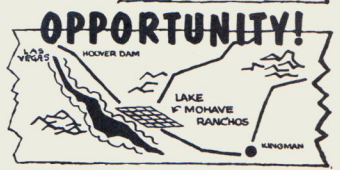
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2	20	20
3	30	30
4	40	40

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City..... State.....



# Now You Tell One



Got a favorite sports anecdote? Bluebook will pay \$5 for each one used. Send to Sports Editor, Bluebook Magazine.

**R**udy York, the former American League slugger, was not the most graceful infielder the game has known, his hitting making up for his deficiencies with the glove. It remained for Tom Meany, however, the ex-sportswriter now with the Yankees, to utter the most caustic criticism of York's style around the bag. Overhearing a press-box comment that Rudy was part Indian, Meany grunted sourly.

"Yeah," he said. "Part Indian and part first-baseman."

**T**he late Max Baer, who many thought clowned his way to the heavyweight crown, didn't exactly waltz his way to the top; he took his lickings in his younger days just as all fighters have to do. Once, as a youngster, he was matched with a wily veteran who gave him a real boxing lesson, and after every round Baer returned to his corner more battered than before. Each time his manager would joyfully assure him that "He ain't laid a glove on you yet."

Finally, late in the fight, his fighter's eyes beginning to close and the bruises getting more and more painful, the manager still assured Maxie that his rival wasn't landing a punch.

"No?" Maxie grimaced. "Well, look, keep an eye on that ref then, will ya? Someone in there's beating hell outa me."

*Paul Sabol, Binghamton, N.Y.*

**J**oe Pignatano, the Dodger catcher, tells the story of his minor league days on the same team with Yogi Berra. They had simple signals, and the players weren't called upon to take even the ones they had very seriously. For example, the manager told them that if he gave them a bunt signal, and they saw the opposing players creeping in on them, they were free to hit away.

Sure enough, next time Berra was up with men on first and second, he got the bunt signal, and promptly laced a triple into centerfield.

"Didn't you see my bunt signal?" the manager asked Berra when he

returned to the bench.

"Sure, I saw it."

"Then why didn't you bunt?"

"They were creeping in on me," Yogi said.

The manager was pop-eyed. "Who was creeping in on you?"

"The centerfielder," Yogi answered. *Stephen R. Wenzel, Long Beach, Calif.*

**G**eorge ("Specs") Toporcer, for many years a star with the St. Louis Cardinals, tells the story of his arrival as a raw rookie at the Cards' training camp in Texas. He'd never been away from his native New York before, he was gangling and ill-at-ease, and, unaware that big league clubs supplied bats to their players, he carried a tremendous war club which he'd strapped to his suitcase.

Naturally, the Cardinal veterans razed Toporcer to a crisp when he stepped off the train, especially since they knew he'd come to camp as a second-baseman bent on taking over the keystone spot held by the great Rogers Hornsby. For a minute, Toporcer was so flustered and embarrassed, however, he thought of creeping back on the train and never playing baseball again. Then one member of the Cardinal team stepped forward, held out his hand, and heartily welcomed the dazed rookie to the camp.

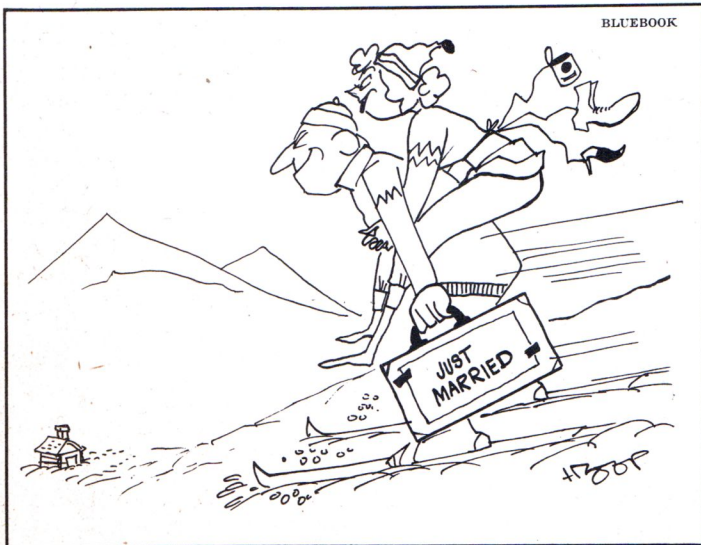
It was Rogers Hornsby.

**B**allplayers have lit fires in dugouts to let umpires know they think it's too cold to continue play, they've come on the field carrying umbrellas to point out the fact that it's raining, and Lefty Gomez, the former Yankee ace, once came to bat against fireballing Bob Feller in the late innings of a close game, and lit a match as he stood at home plate.

"Are you trying to tell me," the umpire growled, "that it's so dark Feller doesn't know where the plate is?"

"No, sir," Gomez said, respectfully, "I just want him to know where I am."

*James H. McGoldrick, Levittown, Pa.*



# How to 'take charge' of a highly-paid job

in

## AIR CONDITIONING & REFRIGERATION

Are you interested in a better job, big money and a secure future? Do you prefer work that is interesting, a challenge to your imagination, and loaded with opportunities to go in business for yourself? Then why not consider a career as mechanic or technician in the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration industry!

You see, Air Conditioning is now America's finest opportunity field. The government reports that during the past 12 years, production increased 400%. *No other industry did better!* The fact is, 8,200,000 domestic and industrial units are produced annually. Already 150,000,000 are in use. Experts say that 20,000 technicians must be trained each year to match industry growth! You can qualify for a top-pay job. How? *Train at home in spare time.* The CTI method is easy, practical and resultful. Quick, too. For full information, mail coupon below.

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It is relatively easy to start a repair business in the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration field. Armed with up-to-date knowledge, seasoned with skill acquired through practice on kits, and equipped with tools and gauges, many graduates start out on their own. Some expand into retail stores. Others have contracts to service taverns, restaurants, food stores and commercial buildings. The more resourceful become contractors. Conditions for success are excellent.

### Many students earn cash as they train

The average CTI student is eager to put his skill to profitable work, on a part-time basis. Though most students prefer to tie up with local dealers and repair establishments, a surprising number are independents. The extra cash helps meet training cost. Often there's enough to bank, or invest in more equipment.

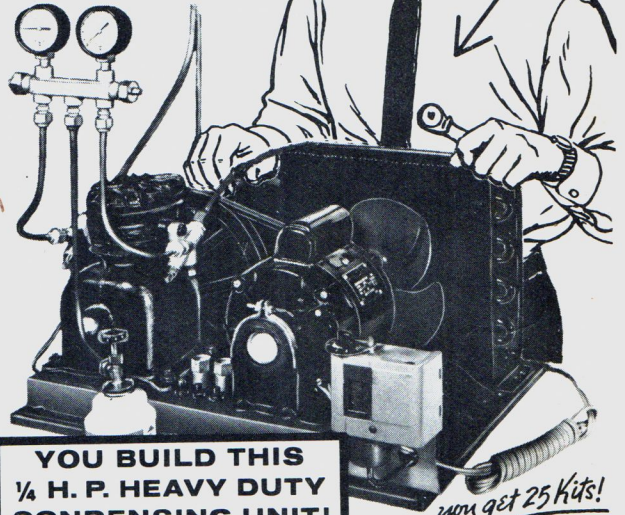


### Letters prove efficiency of training



"I have a business of my own servicing domestic and commercial refrigerators."—*Paul Humphrey, Colo.* "I made \$1,000 while training, and am now a refrigeration man for a dairy."—*Giles Minton, N. C.* "I opened a little shop and am swamped with work."—*Charles Corley, Kan.* "Doing service work on a part-time basis the past 10 months, I earned \$2,400. Have a nice business."—*Renos Johnson, Ind.* "My firm advanced me to field superintendent."—*Milburn Dougan, Ark.* You can do as well as these graduates!

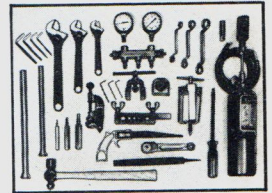
You train at home with real equipment



**YOU BUILD THIS  
1/4 H. P. HEAVY DUTY  
CONDENSING UNIT!**

*you get 25 Kits!*

An exclusive feature of CTI training is that you get parts to build a 1/4 h.p. commercial-type condensing unit (above). You also receive mechanic's tools and gauges (right). After unit is assembled, you can build an air conditioner, freezer, refrigerator or milk cooler. Only CTI sends working kits.



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An illustration in shades of blue and grey. In the foreground, the conning tower and deck of a submarine are visible, with a crew member looking out. In the background, the deck of an aircraft carrier is shown with a star insignia and the number '27'. The sky is filled with clouds.

# Last Flight

By HANK SEARLS

**H**EVY with her missile, the great dark shape slid southeastward, sixty feet beneath the Pacific chop. Her navigator glanced at the bulkhead chronometer: 1330 Greenwich Civil Time.

Dawn had broken above. Soon she would burst from the deep to hurl her missile eastward toward land; from surfacing to launch to dive must not exceed seven minutes. In a few hours she would try herself against her enemy, the second hand jerking implacably on the bulkhead.

Already her pangs were beginning in the accelerating frenzy of her crew. . . .

Chris Lassiter sat with his daughter at breakfast, and the only difference between this Saturday and most others was that he was in uniform, and as always Julie treated him with the awe that she saved for his monthly appearances as a naval aviator rather than as a mild and unwarlike English teacher.

"You look yummy, Daddy," she said, flirting over her glass of milk. "Simply the most. . . ."

"Thanks, honey," he said. To hide his pleasure, he picked up the paper. He was, he permitted himself to think, in pretty good shape at that. His aviation greens were just a little snug over the midriff, but his brown curly hair was as thick as it had been in carrier days, fifteen years before; and at 38, his hazel eyes were as clear as ever.

And yet the Navy was dropping (Continued on page 50)

**They needed his billet for one of the new, young pilots—the "tigers." But Chris hadn't bargained for a fade-out like this one. A terrific suspense story by the author of "The Crowded Sky."**

# The Shame of IWO JIMA

*At last, the shocking facts behind the bloodiest battle in Marine Corps history, the one single engagement that produced 28,640 casualties—or almost one third of all Marine dead in World War II! Yet the truth is told here for the first time—that it resulted from the war's costliest blunder!*



## By Ladislav Farago

**O**n the night before February 19, 1945, Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, a salty, tough, two-fisted Marine Corps officer whose men long before had christened "Old Howlin' Mad," stared at a small piece of paper in his cabin on board the *USS Eldorado*, and slowly bowed his head.

"Lord," he read, repeating the prayer of a bygone British general, "I shall be verie busy this day. I may forget Thee, but do not Thou forget me."

The Marine officer showed rare foresight. He was more than "verie busy" the next day. He was up to his ears in one of the grimmest and costliest battles, in the number of its casualties, of World War II.

He and his men on that day began the battle for Iwo Jima.

Thirty-six days later, on March 26, the Stars and Stripes were raised as planned on Iwo, and the bloody campaign was ended.

It took weeks to bury the Iwo dead and months to organize the cemeteries. On October 2, 1945, a memorial flagstaff was erected on Mt. Suribachi, but by then no live Marine was left on the island to witness the ceremony on battered, old Hotrocks.

It fell to an Army officer, Brig. Gen. Frederick M. Hopkins, Jr., to dedicate the flagstaff and pronounce

history's verdict. "There are no words," Gen. Hopkins now said, actually choking up, "that can adequately describe the suffering on Iwo."

"War is cruel," General William Tecumseh Sherman told the citizens of ravaged Atlanta, "and it cannot be refined." The Battle for Iwo Jima showed, however, that it could be made more cruel.


"It was the most savage and costly battle in the history of the Marine Corps," said General Smith later. "Indeed, it has few parallels in military annals."

Actually it has none. For all its glory, the Battle for Iwo was a freak and a unique folly of man.

For thirty-six days, more than 90,000 troops—American and Japanese—fought on less than eight square miles of island—some 12,500 men per square mile. Every yard of terrain was the front line. It was troglodyte war on a primitive level. It burned men into ashes, blasted through concrete masses, split the earth with seismic violence. It entombed thousands alive.

Only the casualties of Iwo Jima can give a true measure of this battle. When the smoke lifted, *Iwo was a smoldering morgue of 26,797 dead!* Of the 21,060 Japanese defending it, only one thousand survived!

*(Continued on next page)*



Pinned down in unexpected volcanic ash from Mt. Suribachi, withered by a monstrous hail of deadly Jap gunfire supposedly "silenced" by the Navy, the first Marine Corps wave to hit Iwo Jima never had a chance. Before the island was secured, more than 6,000 died, and many thousands more were maimed for life.

# IWO JIMA continued

It was—far and away—the worst disaster in Marine Corps history.

When the Iwo operation was planned on paper, even the worst pessimist failed to anticipate more than 15,000 casualties to result from the capture of Iwo, and this was a staggering estimate to begin with. Many thought it was far too high. Nobody thought it was too low.

Afterwards, it took years to add up all the dead and the wounded, and the combat fatigue cases, of Iwo Jima. Even in 1955, ten years after the operation, 44 officers and men still were carried in a vague category, listed as "missing."

Our casualty figures that were bandied about were notoriously inexact. Frequently they were so computed as to mask the true magnitude of the losses and a juggling of Iwo's toll persists to this day.

But here is the final score, the incredible figure under the last line—the grand total of the price Americans paid for Iwo Jima:

*The final figure of all casualties—Marines, Navy and Army—came to 28,640. Our dead totaled 6,821.*

The total casualties of the Marine Corps in all of the Second World War amounted to 91,718. Their 25,811 dead and wounded on Iwo alone represented well over a quarter of all their casualties in World II. Iwo's contribution to the grand total of their dead was still worse. Of the 19,733 battle deaths of the Marine Corps in World War II, Iwo was responsible for almost 6,000.

In plain English, *Iwo produced more than one-fourth of all Marine casualties, and about one-third of all Marine dead in World War II.*

What happened to cause such unprecedented casualties?

While Pearl Harbor was subjected to a spectacular scrutiny after the war, nobody in Congress or in the Pentagon ever has bothered to seek an explanation for Iwo Jima. The overwhelming fact of victory in history's toughest battle was shrewdly balanced against the price we had to pay for it. No effort ever was made to raise the issue of responsibilities, or to establish the true causes of the heavy casualties.

However, a frightful casualty list like this cannot be justified with rhetorics, or explained away with

rationalizations. It poses moot questions that clamor for conclusive answers.

- Is it possible to review the Battle for Iwo from this angle?

- Is it possible to pinpoint the man or men whose commission or omission was primarily responsible for the Marines' cruel losses?

I believe it *is* possible.

Something did go very wrong on Iwo, as the first men to hit the beaches properly surmised. They could not know it, of course, but the whole operation was badly jeopardized even before it started.

In actual fact, there were *two* battles for Iwo Jima, not just the one you remember, mostly from Joe Rosenthal's pretty picture of raising the Stars and Stripes on Mt. Suribachi.

In the little-known *Second* Battle for Iwo Jima, our admirals and generals did the fighting. They fought over plans and schedules; over the size of the expeditionary force; over the equipment and fire support the Marines needed; over the meaning of intelligence reports and the interpretation of Washington directives.

"We had to haggle like horse traders," old Howlin' Mad told me, "balancing irreplaceable lives against replaceable ammunition. I was never so depressed in my life."

This was to be the Marines' big show, but stiff-necked and tradition-bound, and claiming their statutory birthright, the admirals of the Navy insisted on running it. To them—gallant men of doubtless integrity—the Marines' war was what they could see from the bridges of their ships, at the far end of their binoculars.

But to the generals of the Marine Corps, war was the close-up of bloody lagoons and beaches. They were haunted by the ghosts of Marines killed by Jap defenses that should have been taken out by naval gunfire but were not. Now they dreaded the price they expected to pay for Iwo because of what General Smith





bitterly called "the mental arteriosclerosis of the Navy."

They begged and bargained! They shouted obscenities and pounded the conference tables! They pulled rank and strings!

But it was of no avail. Iwo was the pay-off and the acid test. As usual, the Marines triumphed in the field, against simply incredible odds. But those odds had to be so much greater because, as usual, they lost at the conference table—or rather on the playing fields of Annapolis.

Here, now, is the never-before-told, the detailed story of that strange and disturbing *Second Battle for Iwo Jima*, that raged from the moment the island first became a gleam in our eyes to the split second of the first Marine's landing on its volcanic ash.

**W**hen a Japanese staff officer, Major Y. Horie, visited Iwo some time in 1944, he made an entry in his diary: "Only an island of sulphur spring," he wrote, "no water, no sparrow, no swallow."

It was indeed a desolate speck in a watery waste, extending westward less than five miles from Mt. Suribachi, an extinct volcano at its narrow southern tip. The island is a mute memorial to Suribachi's bygone violence. It is covered with a deep layer of coarse, volcanic ash. Cross-ventilated by the brisk Pacific winds, the air on Iwo is usually filled with particles of grit.

Even during the greediest years of colonial scramble, no nation was foolish enough to stake out a claim to Iwo. All it had was that sulphur spring and nothing else. There was hardly a drop of drinking water indigenous to the island. *(Continued on page 66)*



**The author of this shocking story, a high-ranking Naval Intelligence officer of World War II, names names and pulls no punches in fixing the blame for the debacle of Iwo**

# Epitaph For A

By Andrew Robin

**S**LIM Maxwell slipped the sheepskin coat over his shoulders without buttoning it. In the two months since he had begun moving slowly southward from Montana's Yellowstone country, the days had been getting noticeably warmer. His frostbitten fingers still burned, and he had not as yet attained the speed he wanted in drawing a six-gun, but he noted improvement with each passing day.

Yet he knew he still was not ready for the meeting with Curly Bart.

As he sat his black mare now and felt the warming rays of the spring sun penetrate to his cheekbones, Maxwell, despite his aching fingers, whipped again and again to the .45 at his thigh, in repeated tests of his ability to cut the draw down to the fastest possible split-second. And still he knew it wasn't quite fast enough.

Curly Bart was faster, maybe even the fastest fighter, with the greatest degree of accuracy, in the entire west. He would not be a man who'd be taken by anyone with frostbitten fingers.

Maxwell paused now and made a cigarette, as for the thousandth time in the past three months he turned over in his mind the weird chain of events that again saw him bearing arms against an enemy.

He'd sworn, that day at Colfax Courthouse—when he'd been saluted for the last time as Major Henry Maxwell, Confederate States of America, that never again would he fight with his fellowman, no matter the incentive. My God, hadn't he had enough of killing, of rapine, of the smell of death!

It was not enough that he had come out of the war an old man at the age of 24, a man whose hair was now almost milk-white from experiences no one ventured to ask him about, and about which he knew he never could talk. As though that weren't enough, he had come back to find that chaos at Meadville, with the last remaining members of his family dead or scattered, the only home he'd ever known a charred hulk, and not even a whisper of sympathy from those who, before the war, had carried his favor for no other reason than because he was a Maxwell.

He grunted now as he sat in the saddle and turned his leathery face toward the warming sun. It had been this he had sought when he'd come west: a chance to be alone in this vast new country of Wyoming, to start again in a land where men were not master and slave, but human beings, equal in the sight of Almighty God,

and free to live their lives according to His plan.

Again Maxwell snorted, and viciously flung away his cigarette. Free? He'd had less than a year of freedom, less than a year of freedom, less than a year to do nothing but hunt, and fish, and loaf in the sun . . . and convince himself again and again of the futility of bloodshed. He'd met few individuals during that time. The other whites like himself preferred the activity of the trading posts rather than the solitude of the forests, and the occasional Cheyenne or Piute who'd crossed his trail had seemed to sense in the white-haired stranger a desire for privacy, a yearning to be left alone with whatever bitter thoughts had brought that look of wary suspicion to his steel-gray eyes.

He'd known, of course, that the peace he'd sought was not to be found easily. So long as the white men came, and took what they wanted from the Indian, there could be no peace. Maxwell acknowledged that, and solved his own personal problem the easy way—by staying far away from frontier battle lines.

Even the tales of the vicious Curly Bart, told to Maxwell by the occasional wanderer who drifted into his camp, stirred the white-haired man not a bit. He'd known other Curly Barts—sadists, bullies, wanton killers—during his few adult years, and to Slim Maxwell they were vermin whom one avoided as easily as one avoided a known nest of rattlesnakes.

There had been no question in Maxwell's mind from what he heard that Bart was a man seemingly without a soul, an animal who walked and talked and breathed like a human being but who was, withal, a jackal. Even if only a tenth of the stories told about Bart were true, Maxwell knew, the man would stand as one of the most ruthless and savage killers who ever drew a breath.

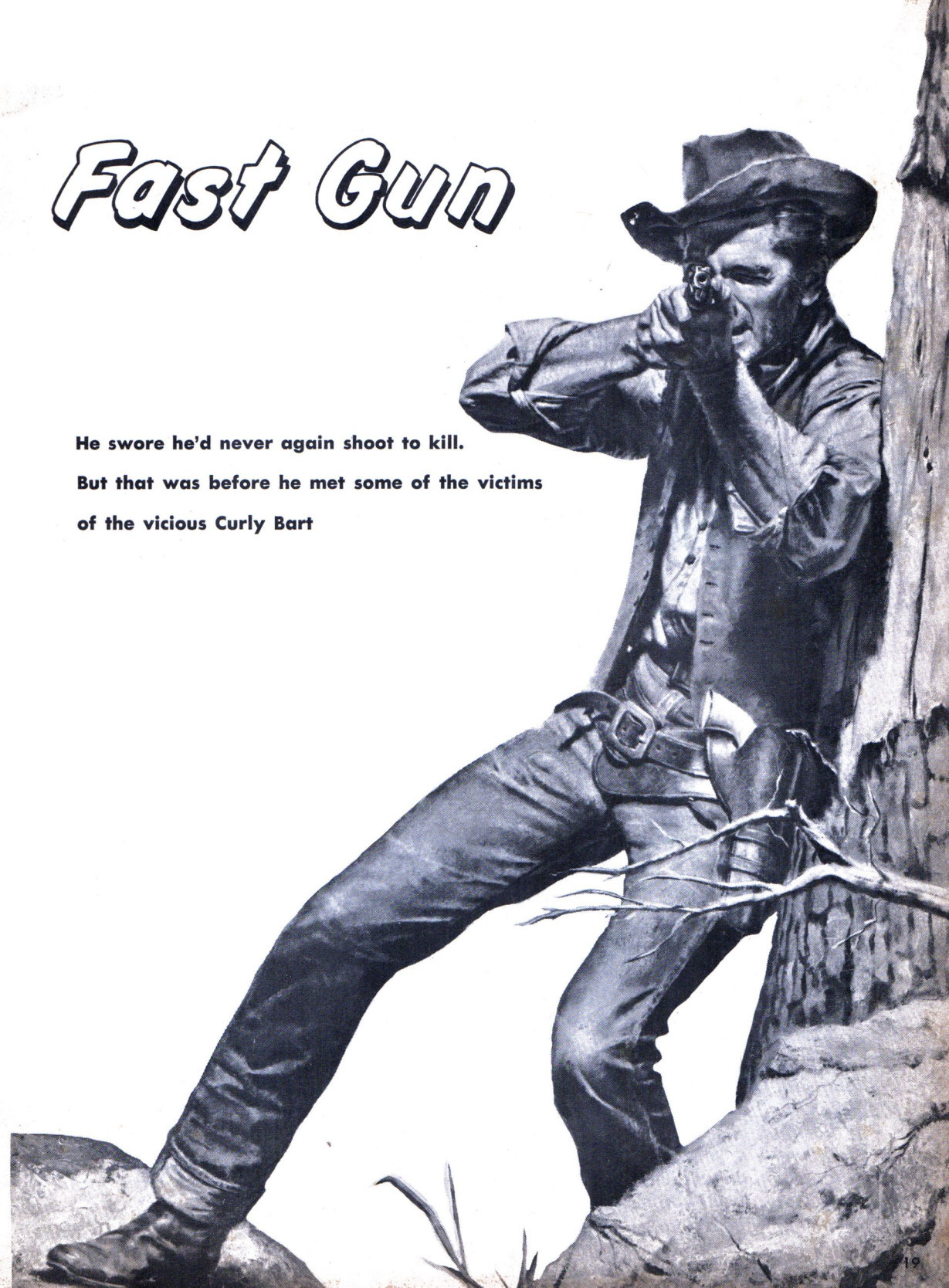
Yet Slim Maxwell had remained unmoved. What did it matter that townspeople, sheriff's deputies—even other gunfighters—lowered their eyes in terror at the very name of Curly Bart? Maxwell had had his fill of Curly Barts, and all the horrible and frightening carnage their kind seemed to spawn. He preferred to avoid them, to live the life he had chosen for himself, where the Curly Barts of the world were nothing more than legends told by passing strangers.

Yet there had come that one stranger to his camp, a heavy-set rancher in his mid-forties, who had been able to change Slim Maxwell's life as he'd sworn no man ever would change it again. The newcomer had ridden in at sunset, accompanied by two

*(Continued on page 44)*

# *Fast Gun*

**He swore he'd never again shoot to kill.  
But that was before he met some of the victims  
of the vicious Curly Bart**



# I'm Through With Fund

By William Pendleton

**R**ecently I volunteered to help raise funds to build a new wing on the hospital in our town. It was a typical civic gesture familiar to everyone. Yet, as a result of it, I came close to breaking up my home, my business was seriously endangered, and I almost lost my sanity.

Far-fetched? Maybe. Although I don't think so. I have a feeling my experience is similar to that of most Americans who have been called upon for similar projects, and I suspect we are coming to a time very soon when raising funds—no matter how worthy the cause—will be as difficult as splitting the atom.

My own experience began in a typical way. As president of one of our city's biggest industrial firms, I was invited to a meeting of leading citizens to discuss the proposed hospital project. I later learned by chance that the reason I was invited was that the men running the show knew I was anxious to get financing to carry out our company's expansion program, and that I was having trouble recruiting personnel. They had me pegged as a small-time operator who would have to work every angle to succeed.

They were right. I wanted publicity and I wanted to get close to the president of the bank.

I went there with the understanding, as expressed in the invitation, that I would "contribute to a discussion" and participate in a decision as to whether or not the wing should be built, and what should go into it. But

I found that the meeting had been rigged, and just as much so as certain TV quiz shows have been rehearsed.

The director of the hospital described dramatically and in detail how the people of the town were suffering from lack of adequate facilities. He cited overcrowding, the numerous patients who were turned away or released early because of the lack of room. He quoted statistics on the size of hospitals in comparative cities, and he produced compelling figures showing a curve in population growth which would double the problem in the next ten years.

When he finished his presentation, he pushed his glasses back high on the bridge of his pointed nose, clasped his hands, and said in summation: "Gentlemen, the decision as to whether or not we can build this wing is up to you. I am only the director of the hospital, and it is my job to make do with what you give me. But I do feel that it is my duty to inform you of the situation we are in now, and to focus attention on this problem which will be increasingly aggravated each year.

"Gentlemen, I would like to know if any of you know of any reason why we should not explore the possibility of going ahead with this project at this point."

I looked at the other twenty or so persons in the mayor's office, and we exchanged blank stares or negative shakes of the head. Anyone who objected would have been considered

*(Continued on page 57)*



# Raising!

**A top corporation executive,  
his identity hidden  
under a pseudonym, puts the blast  
on one of America's worst  
modern evils, the crimes  
that are committed in the  
name of charity**





# DEATH

## on the LOOSE

**We guarantee you'll break out in a cold, chilling sweat before you finish this amazing true story—which should be kept from the hands of women and children**

**By Jack Duncan**

*as told to Bob Bristow*

*We are editorially opposed to stories about deadly snakes, and we have turned down dozens of them in the past, even though they were well-written. This one, however, we literally had to buy; it was that good, that compelling, and with a climax that's a dilly. How do you readers feel about such yarns? Do you like them? Want more? Let's hear from you. But don't write till you've read this one through to the end.—Ed.*

I STOOD, motionless, a cold fear inching from my shoulders along my spine as I looked at the empty cage. The night before, six western diamond-back rattlesnakes had been in the screened-box cage. But now there was a large rip in the fine screen. The snakes were gone. Across the street I heard the neighbors' children laughing and playing noisily in the yard. Was one of those deadly rattlers lying hidden from their eyes, poised, ready to strike?

Six. Six big ones I'd caught only three days before in the jagged rocks of Southwest Oklahoma. I had put them in the box and stretched it across two saw horses, out of reach of any curious child. Over the top I'd pulled a blanket, just in case someone happened to get too close. I had planned to deliver the snakes to a dealer for shipment to a carnival. The night before, tornado winds had struck, and as I huddled in a storm shelter, I did not give a thought to the snakes. Somehow I felt certain that they were safe. But the winds had tossed the blanket away like a scrap of paper. The box had been tumbled from the saw horses, bouncing and rolling, and striking a sharp stake.

The snakes had escaped.

Here in the middle of a small

*(Continued on page 53)*

ILLUSTRATED BY IRVING ZUSMAN

*J. Zusman*

# WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR ATHLETES?



**America's greatest living Olympian puts the nation's muscle boys under the microscope . . . and comes up with some hints for reclaiming our past glories**



Germany's Armin Hary, left, winning the 100-yard dash in the 1960 Olympics over America's Dave Sime, right, proved something to Jesse Owens, above, author of this probing article. For one thing, it proved we have to start now, the famed Owens says, if we hope to do even this well in the 1964 Games



## By Jesse Owens

A few weeks after the 1960 Olympic Games rather sadly ended—and the Olympic banquet circuit began—I was sitting around one night chewing the roast beef fat with Calhoun, our star hurdler in Rome.

“Did you hear about this 9-year-old that Percy Cerutti is training, Jesse?” Lee said. “Says he’s going to make a three-minute-miler out of him in ten years.”

“Are you kidding?” I asked.

“Nope,” another one of our gold-medalers chimed in. “I heard it, too, Jesse. His name is Ivor or something. Cerutti’s already got him sleeping in John Landy’s old bunk and wearing Herb Elliot’s old supporter!”

We had a good laugh then, but the next day when I checked it out with the wire services I couldn’t even grin. Percy Cerutti, the fanatical Australian coach who launched Landy to a miracle 3:58 mile, and helped Herb Elliot to make Landy’s mark look like kid stuff, was now picking up 9-year-old boys for training.

Somehow, I was reminded of another headline I’d seen two days before, about an older man who’d picked up a 9-year-old boy.

Not that Cerutti doesn’t get results. He can say, “That’s how champions are made.” And he’ll be right—about *some* champions, anyway. It doesn’t account for Babe Ruth or Jack Dempsey (or, dropping down a notch, Jesse Owens), but it is how Herb Elliot became what he was. And Man O’ War. And, I have a hunch, a helluva lot of ruined young men, too, who never make the headlines but whose psychological backs are broken by too much training, too soon—no matter what the field.

It’s a good way to break in racehorses, or police dogs. It’s a helluva bad way to train men.

The editor of BLUEBOOK tells me his readers are

all dry behind the ears. Then I won’t pull any punches. I’ll assume that even if you haven’t owned one of your own, you still know a kid of 9 is no more ready to take that kind of discipline than I am any more. I’m gently pushing 50 right now, and these middle-aged ex-athletes who’re still going down the Amazon in glass-bottomed boats make as much sense to me as a one-legged hurdler.

And here’s a connection: these same 30, 40 and 50-plus-year-olds, who can’t call it quits and just be men, are the same guys who, ten-twenty-thirty-odd years back, were being trained by the Ceruttys, having it drummed into them that everything in life revolved around running a mile in 4 minutes or hitting a baseball 400 feet.

Yeah, some of them are the boys who broke the records at Rome, too. I’ll grant that. But we don’t want this kind of brain-washed automaton competing for us in the Olympics. Just as we don’t want the Soviet state sports plan, or the professional “amateurs” who get lifetime pensions for winning an Olympic medal. We don’t want them because we’d be losing just the thing we’re fighting for—our free system, a system where, if we want to make silly asses of ourselves, then it’s *our* business, just as much as if we produce champs.

Which brings me to the heart of this thing. We don’t want state-directed robots for athletes, but we have to own up and admit that, somewhere along the line, we’ve dropped the baton on this “free will” thing lately.

No matter what I think about Cerutti or the Russian system, one cold fact still sticks in my craw.

*We lost the Olympics to the Russians.*

And we lost by a lot more than we did in 1956 or 1952. Most important: our (Continued on next page)





Shav Lakadze, center, and Valeri Brumel, right, both of Russia, acted as though awe-stricken of our John Thomas, left, before the Olympic high jump. Then they went out and mousetrapped us—but good!



The great Rafer Johnson won at Rome this year, Owens says, because he started four years ago to get himself in shape to take on top competitors

### JESSE OWENS continued

ironclad dominance of the sprints and relays was smashed more solidly than Ingo's jaw, the last time he went against Floyd Patterson. At the same time, we didn't bother the Russians at all in their specialties: gymnastics, Greco-Roman wrestling, and that stuff.

There were outstanding performances by American performers. There were good excuses when some of our athletes lost. I'll get to those in a minute. But the theme of the Games for America wasn't victory in the good old Gas House Gang style. The theme wasn't even victory.

Now, I'm not getting panicky about our setbacks. I realized a long time ago that a lot of countries are getting better in sports, now that they have a few good meals under their belts.

You can't overlook the fact that God gave every man two arms, two legs, one heart and five quarts of blood—and didn't play favorites according to race, creed or country. Hitler learned that about the Negroes in 1936. So we've got to admit that we can't just go over there anymore and dominate the Olympics by walking on the field and taking off our sweatshirts.

I was with John Thomas pretty often before he went against those two Russians in the high jump on 'Black Thursday', over in Rome. I watched him being hounded by crowds of autograph-seekers every waking hour of every day. It didn't go to his head. It did go to his nerves a little. Then, the day of the event, he walked on the track, and the two Soviet jumpers neatly mousetrapped him. Until that final hour, they'd played the part of awe-struck second-stringers. But when the big blue chips were down, the Russian duet acted as cold and pro-like as Sammy Snead with a putter—or Clyde Beatty with a whip.

They took their jumps fast, and rushed Johnny. He

countered by passing at 6'11". Maybe he could've used the unlimbering tonic of that jump. Maybe not. But the fact is, he missed three times in a row at better than three inches below his best height, whereas the Russians jumped their best and came in ahead of him—though far below his world record. But can I blame this fine 19-year-old boy for jumping over seven feet and losing? Of course I can't.

I watched Ray Norton, our most highly-touted sprinter, place last in both the 100 and 200 Meters. The U.S. had been winning the dashes since before Norton and his rivals were even born. My idol, Eddie Tolan, took the 100 for the U.S. in 1932, and we made a monopoly of it after that—'til now.

I couldn't understand how Ray could place last. I borrowed some movies of the race, and took them to my room back at the Continental Hotel in Rome. I didn't watch the men in front, as most people do. I watched the man in back—Norton. He was running up too straight, getting out of the blocks in too many steps. He was running just like a man with a real sore, or a pulled muscle in his lower back. I went over to his room right away, and asked him about it. He kept saying, "I've got no excuses, Jess."

I'm sure Ray was in pain while running, but didn't want to own up because he knew he was our best chance in the dashes. Two days later he was so tied up in knots that he made a bad pass reception in the 400-Meter relay that lost America a gold medal. Can I blame this guy for the terrific courage he showed? Can I even blame his buddy, Dave Sime, for losing out to Germany's Armin Hary in the 100 by six inches? For that matter, can I blame any of our boys in lots of sports (and there were more than you can count on the fingers of both hands) who came in second to new



In Jesse Owens view, Babe Ruth and other great athletes of his type became immortals for a reason that today's Olympic candidates can't even begin to understand fully



Today, twenty-five years after his own triumphs before Hitler, at Berlin, Owens, now an Illinois state athletic official, proves to the photographer that he's in top shape

records?

No, I can't. They all had the best excuses in the world.

But I can't write it off right there, either. Because I'm stuck with an old-fashioned American trait. *I like to be first.* I like my country to grow the biggest, strongest, best of everything, starting with athletes. I want champions—guys who never have to make excuses. When that doesn't happen, I want to know the reason why, just as I think you do.

Of course, there are some people who don't think the reasons why are important. They've got their own neat little reasons.

Some of them will twist what I said about all men being created equal, and make it a *carte blanche* excuse for any U.S. deterioration, from track and field to missiles.

Others play on the loaded word totalitarianism. "Russia's going all out to make a showing, putting terrific emphasis on the Games for propaganda value," they say, "so with our lack of government supervision here, how can we expect to beat them?" There's some truth in this, just as there is in any half-answer. But the guys who say this spout it as if they were almost proud to lose. One gushing woman came up to me after I got back from the Games and spoke on this, and she adamantly told me, "I'd rather lose miserably with America than win with Russia!" Well, so would I. But I'd rather win with America, instead. Or at least not lose by more and more every four years.

Then there're those rescrumbled eggheads who always turn up, and effeminately tell us that athletics are "brute stuff" and "uncivilized," and the softer we get physically, the better we get mentally. Something like "a sound mind in an unsound body". This putrid

idea isn't even worthy of comment. Anyone who doesn't see that mind and body go together, and who hasn't learned from examples like Teddy Roosevelt's rough riding, Abe Lincoln's railsplitting, Barry Goldwater's jet-flying, or even Robert Frost's walking in the woods, isn't all there.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: I don't want to sacrifice our free system just to "beat the Russians". I don't even expect to "win" the trumped-up "total points" Olympic championship in my lifetime.

But not only did we lose our specialties this time, not only did the Reds beat us by more than before, but what bothered me most of all was the *way* we lost.

First, we protested decisions. In itself, that's not so bad. I've got nothing against the old American practice of cussing out the umpire. But I don't like anyone saying that the umps are crooked. That's what some of our performers, and some of our officials, said in the Games. They started yelling about an "anti-American" attitude over there. I couldn't go along with it, and I let them know.

Another thing: as a famous man once said about a lady of dubious virtue—I fear we "doth protest too much." There were something like a dozen different official complaints on yachting alone!

Once the track and field started, though, I figured the troubles would end. "There aren't any anti-American stopwatches," I said to myself.

I was wrong. Our troubles had just begun. We dropped the 100 and the high jump on Thursday, the 1st of September. That hurt—but what hurt more was when a few of our performers started saying they were overtrained, and badly-coached, and so on. It wasn't true.

It turned out, though, that (Continued on page 78) 27

# *the Grasshopper*

# COMMANDOS

**Tom Swift was kid stuff compared to Sergeants Lederer and McCall and their jumping suits . . . a story which should not be read by retired Army officers with tendencies toward apoplexy**

**By William Chamberlain**

**T**HE day had dawned bright and fair. So far, no portent had appeared in the heavens to warn Jughead Simpson, first sergeant of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battle Group, that disaster lay ahead. There had been a few irritations, of course, but they had been the normal ones, and Jughead had taken them in stride.

At the kitchen, where he'd gone for his pre-reveille cup of coffee, he'd found the second cook in a sulk because one of his kitchen police hadn't showed up; eschewing fanfare, Jughead had entered the culprit's name in his black book, reflecting that a weekend restriction to barracks ought to teach *that* goldbrick that crime didn't pay. The coffee had tasted as if old socks had been steeped in it, but that was the way it usually tasted.

Headquarters Company had turned out for reveille as bright-eyed and bushy-tailed as a bunch of hopheads emerging from an opium den; but the company habitually turned out for reveille that way. Private Opie McCall was late. Private Opie McCall was *always* late. Without rancor, Jughead detailed him to substitute in the kitchen for the missing K.P. Yes, the situation had been normal.

So Jughead was thinking now as he entered the orderly room after inspecting the company area. That, too, had been normal—lousy. Jughead mentioned that fact to Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz, the company clerk.

"The company area," he said conversationally, "looks as if a second-rate reform school had been holdin' its annual picnic there. Tell Sergeant Lederer to take his squad an' police the place over again before I jump right smack down his throat."

"Right, Sarge," Schwartz said briskly.

He departed and, a moment later, Jughead heard his voice beneath the open window. "Hey, you seen Sergeant Lederer around?" Schwartz was asking Opie McCall.

Opie, on his way to the kitchen, was brooding about the K.P. tour he'd just inherited; he'd been mulling over a scheme for getting rat poison into Jughead Simpson's noon-day chow when the company clerk's question had interrupted his train of thought. Opie was tow-headed, and his face usually showed an angelic innocence which fronted for a disposition as brash as a two-dollar trumpet. He had a talent for getting into trouble that could be awesome at times.

"Naw, I ain't seen Lederer around," he retorted crossly. "Why should I see him around—you think I'm his keeper?"

Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz looked annoyed. "Because you're in his squad, is why. Sergeant Simpson says the company area looks as if (Continued on page 79)



The writer who has been called "the John O'Hara of the suspense story" spins a weird and frightening tale of modern voodoo in the Congo that'll raise the hair on your scalp.

# "A Dark People Thing"

By John D. Macdonald

**B**ECAUSE the tub-thumpers are now trying to turn Kirk Morgan into some kind of a folk hero, I have decided to tell the world what happened to him. I can't tell you *exactly* what happened to him, but he certainly didn't die of some jungle bug contracted under heroic conditions, like it said in the newspapers.

When Kirk Morgan died, so did El-Bar Productions, that small California corporation roneered with, excuse the expression, packaging television serials. Nobody will ever see the 40 half-hour tapes we put in the can when we were on location last year in the Belgian Congo.

But, because of all the previous television work he did, there must be a hundred million people in this country who, at one time or another, have looked at that stern, handsome, manly face, and felt a little glow of delight when it broke into that wonderfully boyish grin from which he made, and kept, upwards of one million bucks.

I don't want to malign the deceased. But you can't get the whole picture unless you understand I despised him. In that I do not stand alone. I stand shoulder to shoulder with everybody in the movie and television industry who ever had to work with him. Also in this group you can find a couple of hundred beautiful women who got too close to him.

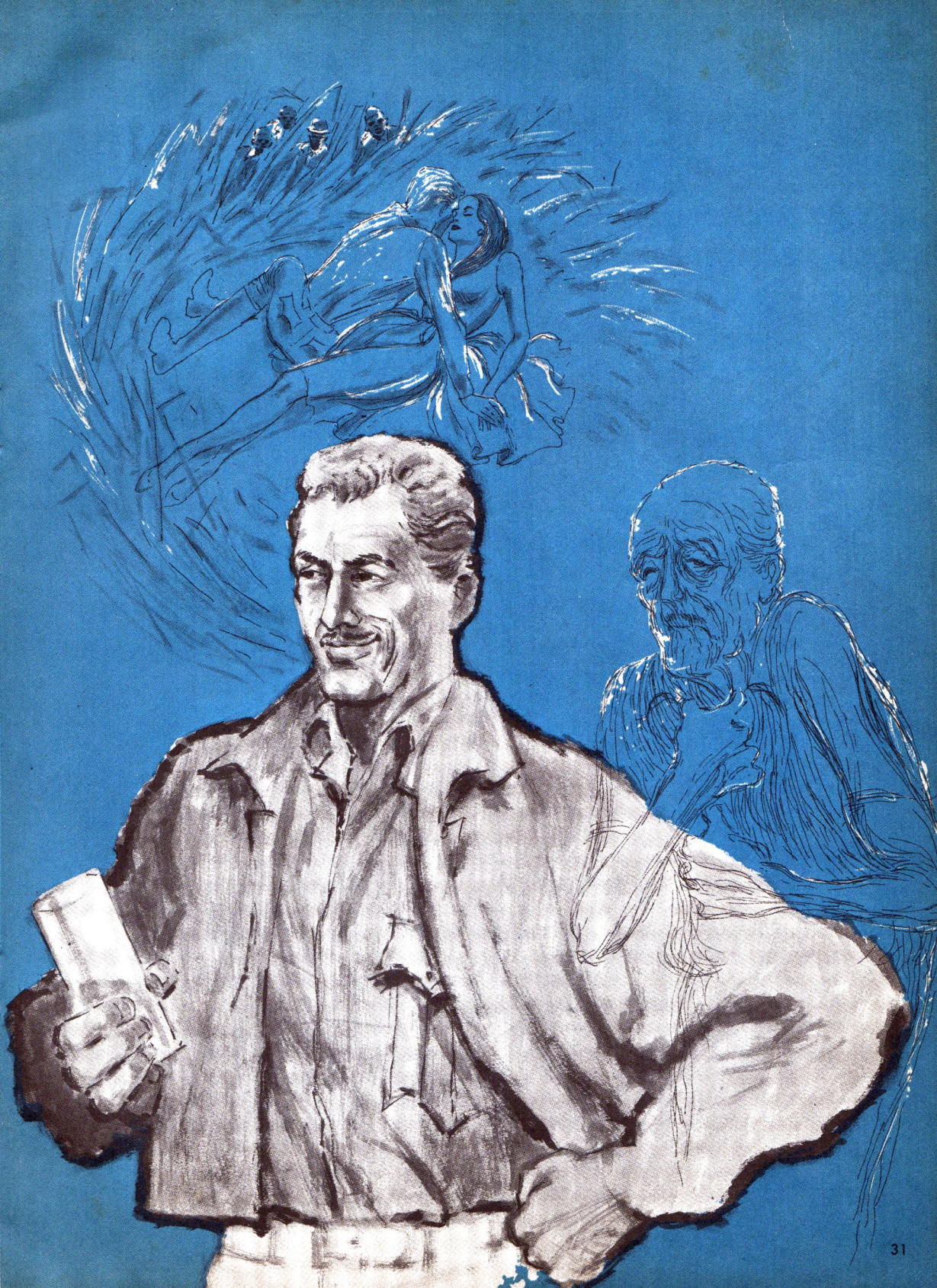
When he was 19 he made up that name, Kirk Morgan, hitch-hiked out the Coast, and spent twelve thin years before he finally hit it big in that first packaged series. I have heard some of the stories of those lean years from people who knew him then, and they are not tales to tell the kiddies. Some people explain him by saying that it took so long to hit it big, he got very hungry, but I think that even if he had hit it big the first month he got out here, he would have been the same monster, only younger.

Here is the way this Africa series, that'll never be shown, came about. It was to have been called SAFARI, by the way. Morgan could have continued in GUNNER'S MATE another couple of seasons anyway, but the ratings had slipped just a little, and he got restless and said he was going stale and he wanted a new vehicle for his quote talent unquote.

I was working as a Unit Manager with El-Bar, mostly on those items where Barry Driscoll was the producer-director. Morgan was able to bite off a pretty good stock interest, of course. While Barry, who is a nervous little guy with better taste than he's able to use, was looking for a new series suitable for Kirk Morgan, an old pro named Mark Weese hit us with this safari idea, and some sample scripts. It was a first look, and it hung together, and it had some pazzazz; so Barry sold the idea to Kirk Morgan, who said fine, maybe because he liked the way he looked in one of those white-hunter helmets. El-Bar blew over seventy thousand making two pilot films with a faked background, and the agency loved them and the sponsor adored them, so we were in business.

For a lot of tax reasons too complicated to go into, it was decided we'd shoot all the scripts in the Congo. Barry Driscoll has that rare knack of getting a lot of good work out of pickup talent, so the only cast we had to transport was Our Hero, Kirk Morgan, his True Love, Nancy Rome—who is a shrewd, tough, talented broad, and a joy to work with, the Comedy Relief—Sam Corren, a fat whiner who is scared of germs and heart trouble, and the Other Woman, Luara (no, that is not a typo) Walden, a new, slinky type, and a devout reader of the scriptures.

Aside from Barry, Mark Weese and me, we cut the rest of the production crew down to eight guys, eight top guys, (Continued on page 73)



**VERIFIED  
AUTHENTIC**

Tucson, Arizona

To Whom It May Concern:

We, Johan Ernst Nordensen, and Evelyn Carolyn Nordensen, of Sydney, Australia, do hereby convey to Tom Bailey of Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A., the right to write and publish in any magazine of his choice an account of our experience of being shipwrecked and marooned for weeks on an island of the Philippine Archipelago. The account we have given him is true and accurate to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Signed:

*Johan Ernst Nordensen*  
*Evelyn Carolyn Nordensen*

Witness:

*Henry H. ...*

**Every man who's ever dreamed of being on a desert island with a beautiful girl owes himself a reading of this one, the story of man to whom it really happened!**

# ORDEAL

## *in Paradise*

By Tom Bailey

**H**E swam back toward the explosion, calling out to his companions and groping for anything that would help him stay afloat. He could see nothing in the pitch darkness, could feel nothing except shattered boards and other debris that littered the surface. He knew from the force of the explosion that it had blown his 22-foot boat into kindling wood.

The first thing that came to his mind was, *how is it going to feel to drown?* For drown he must. Twenty miles through choppy waters was too great a distance to swim for any man not in top physical condition. An hour or so and it would all be over.

"Help me, somebody! Help!"

It was a woman's voice, that of his girl passenger! He thought she had perished with the others.

He saw no chance of saving her; he couldn't even save himself. . . .

For Johan Ernst Nordensen, a 29-year-old research chemist, it was the beginning of one of the most fantastic adventures any man ever had, one that for hundreds of years has haunted the idle dreams of more young men the world over than any other—that of finding oneself shipwrecked and cast upon a tropical island with a strange and exciting female.

Nordensen's story, of course, will be disputed, ridiculed as the wild imaginings of a writer bent on hoking up an incident that never really happened. Yet I have

the man's sworn affidavit, verified and witnessed and authenticated. It happened just the way it's written here, just the way it was told to me and recorded, just the way it actually happened. . . .

Doing research for a manufacturer of insecticides, Nordensen was stationed at Zamboanga from late June, 1946, until August, 1947, when the events that make up this story took place.

One morning he set out with three companions, in a 21-year-old motor launch, to cross the North Celebes Sea, their destination Sarangani Bay, a 15-hour run from Zamboanga, to deliver mail and supplies to another testing station, and to bring back several drums of gasoline.

Nordensen's companions were three university students who went along for the ride. Their names were Mel Overholzer, 21; Andy Christensen, 20, and Evelyn Frazier, 19, all of Sydney, Australia. Miss Frazier had been visiting relatives in Zamboanga. Christensen and Overholzer were spending a brief holiday there before going back to school in September.

For the trip across the Celebes Sea and back, Miss Frazier, a striking brunette, 5-feet-6, with blue eyes and a willowy figure, had come aboard that morning wearing only a bikini and a beach jacket. Expecting to stay all night at Sarangani Bay with a former school chum, then married and living

(Continued on page 62)





# *The Red, Red Flowers*



**By M. E. Chaber**

**I**t was one of those mornings when nothing was going right. I reached the office early because I was expecting a phone call. It still hadn't come. The mail hadn't been delivered, so I was reading the morning paper. The Giants had lost the day before. The Yankees had won a doubleheader from Boston. When it's that kind of day everything goes wrong. In disgust, I turned to the front pages. Things weren't any better there. The Russians had caught a second U-2 pilot and his plane, and were promising a quick trial for the pilot. I put the paper down and stared malignantly at the phone that didn't ring.

The name is March. Milo March. I'm an insurance investigator. At least that's what it says on my license and on the door of my Madison Avenue office. Which means that if you kill your wife, hoping to collect her insurance to spend on that blonde you met the other night, I'll probably be around looking for you. That's the general idea anyway. But everyone must have been on a temporary goodness jag. I hadn't had a job in two weeks.

The mail arrived. All bills. So it was still the same kind of day. Then the door opened and there was another mailman, this one with a registered letter. I

signed for it, and he went away. I opened the letter and the day was complete. It said that Major Milo March, U.S. Army Reserve, was recalled to active duty. I was to report to an address in Washington. The date was that same day. The time was sixteen hundred, or four o'clock. Which meant that I had about six hours in which to make it.

I thought of ignoring the whole thing, pretending I had never gotten the letter. But it had been registered, and when the Army wants you they only give you two choices. You can walk in or be dragged in. So I made arrangements with another investigator to handle anything that came in for me, and notified my answering service to route the calls to him. Then I went downtown to my apartment in Greenwich Village. I dug out my uniform and discovered it didn't need anything but a pressing. I took it into the tailor, and went to the Blue Mill for a couple of martinis while it was being pressed.

At two o'clock that afternoon, looking every inch the well-dressed Army officer, I was at LaGuardia Field boarding a plane for Washington. An hour later I was telling a Washington cab driver where to take me. I didn't give him the address in the orders, but a street



**Milo March, America's top secret agent, is sent to Moscow on an almost impossible assignment—to bring back a U-2 pilot. A spy yarn right off tomorrow's front pages!**

corner nearby. When I got out of the cab I still had about a half hour to spare. I spent it in the nearest gin mill over another martini. I believe that Regulations state that an officer shouldn't drink while on duty, but then I wouldn't really be on duty until after I reported. Finally I walked down the street, looking for the address. There were three vacant lots in the middle of the block where builders had just begun to excavate. Beyond them were several old brownstone houses of the type which in recent years have been taken over by government bureaus. I walked past the vacant lots and reached the first building. I looked at the number. It was too high. I turned and retraced my steps. But after a few steps I realized that the number in my orders, if it had ever existed, had been where one of the vacant lots was now. I cursed to myself. If I'd had any doubts before about who was responsible for my return to active duty, they were gone.

I heard steps on the sidewalk while I was still standing there with the orders in my hand. I looked around. A pleasant-faced young man was strolling toward me. I almost ignored him, but then I took another look. There was something a little too studied about his casualness, and I knew I was right. I turned back to

the vacant lot and stared at it innocently.

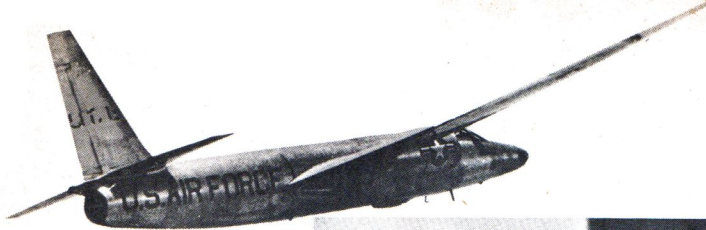
"Pardon me, Major," the young man said as he reached me, "is there anything wrong?"

I turned my innocence on him. "Why," I said, "I seem to have been given the wrong address."

"Perhaps I can help you," he said. "I know the neighborhood rather well. What address are you looking for?" He moved in slightly behind me as though to look over my shoulder. Out of the corner of my eye, I caught a slight movement of his right arm and I heard the scrape of something against cloth.

"This one," I said, holding up the paper.

I knew that the movement would catch his eyes for at least a couple of seconds. I lifted my left foot and brought it down hard on his right instep. There was a gasp of pain from him. I dropped the paper and pivoted, sending a right to his stomach just hard enough to bend him over. I chopped across his neck with the edge of my left hand and he dropped. He was unconscious—which was the way I wanted him. A slender blackjack was lying on the sidewalk next to him. I left him and the blackjack where they had fallen. I picked up my orders, folded the paper and put it back in my pocket. *(Continued on next page)*



Khrushchev is shown holding up a photo of the U-2 plane flown by Francis Powers. Milo March, in M.E. Chaber's thriller, was sent to Moscow to bring back a similar pilot—plus a map that could have been dynamite in the wrong hands. Far right, Moscow's Hall of Columns and the state prosecutor, both of whom figure in the accompanying thriller by an old master



### RED, RED FLOWERS continued

Fortunately the street was still empty, so there was no one to raise a cry about the man on the street. I walked back to the first house beyond the lots. It seemed like the logical place.

This time I looked in. There was a tiny vestibule with an inner door, but there were no mailboxes, nameplates or bells in it. Beyond the second door, I could see a long corridor with doors on either side. About half way down the corridor there was a soldier, obviously standing guard. I could have just gone in and presented my orders and he probably would have escorted me into the office. But I was sore and I didn't want it that way.

I stepped back out on the street. The young man was still lying on the sidewalk. I skirted around the side of the brownstone and went to the back. There was a parking area there with four cars in it. One was an Army car with three stars on it. That proved I was right.

I hunted around the back until I found a greasy cloth that had been used on one of the cars. I slipped up to the rear door and tried it. It was locked, but it took me only a moment to pick it. I opened the door just enough to slip the rag, bunched up, in between it and the sill at the bottom. I struck a match and held it to the cloth. As soon as it began to smolder, I hurried back to the front of the house. I slipped into the vestibule, against the wall, and watched the soldier on guard. After a few seconds he began to sniff and look around. He caught a glimpse of smoke trickling in through the back door and hurried toward it.

The minute he moved I had the second door open and was going quietly down the hall behind him. He was bending over the burning rag as I reached the door he'd been guarding. I opened the door silently and stepped inside. I was in a small, empty office. There was an open door leading into another larger office. There were voices coming from that other office.

"I don't see why you had to do it this way," a man was saying. "We know March's work well enough. Why didn't you just have him come straight here and get it over with?"

"I like to test men before I give them assignments," said another voice. It was one I knew all too well. He chuckled. "O'Connor should be here with him any minute. It'll be worth a lot to see March's face when he comes here in the office."

I lit a cigarette and went to stand in the doorway. "You don't have to wait that long," I said. "Take a good look now."

The three men in the room whirled to look at me. I knew all three of them. One of them was George Hillyer, the civilian head of the Central Intelligence Agency. The other civilian was Philip Emerson, his assistant. And the third man was a big red-faced Army officer with three bright shining stars on his collar. Lieutenant General Sam Roberts. The two civilians were quickly over their surprise, and I noticed they were both grinning but being careful to hide the fact from the general. He was still staring at me with his mouth open, but his face was beginning to get redder.

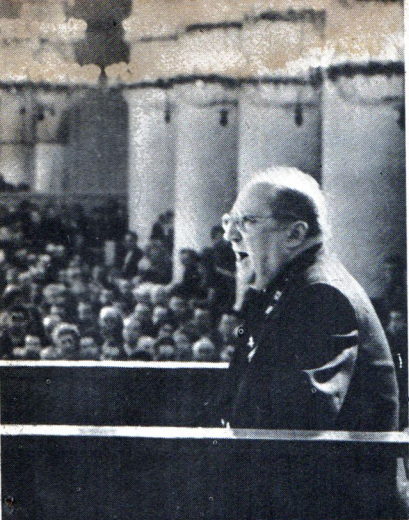
"Old Tricky Roberts," I said. "You haven't changed since the days when you couldn't steal a chicken without being caught." During the fracas that was known as World War II, General Roberts and I had been in OSS together, working behind the German lines. But he'd been a colonel then.

"You're talking to a superior officer, Major March," the general said. His voice was as stiff as an overstarched collar. "I could break you for that."

"Anyone who'll talk to a superior officer ought to be broken," I retorted. "Don't give me that malarkey, General. I know you since you were a chicken colonel, polishing those eagles until they screamed. You're in trouble, or I wouldn't have been recalled to active duty. You break me and who'll pull your chestnuts from the fire?"

His face was a deep purple. "Silence," he roared. "How the hell did you get in here? O'Connor—" He broke off. "Anyway, Sanders was just outside the door with orders not to let anyone in," he finished.

There was an interruption. The outer door opened and two men came into the office. The first one was the



# Gentle GIANT

soldier who had been on guard. He was followed by the young man I'd met in the street. He was limping and rubbing his neck.

"I beg your pardon, General," the soldier said, "but the back door was unlocked and somebody had stuffed an oily rag in it and set it on fire. But I didn't see anybody around."

The general glared at me and I gave him a sweet smile. He swung back to the two men. "What kind of an outfit is this?" he said angrily. "Can't anyone carry out a simple order without fouling it up?"

"The only one who's goofed around here," I said, "is a certain three star general. First you send me orders with a phony address on them. Then you send a pet bird dog out to point me into a trap. Just so you can get a belly laugh when I'm dragged in by the heels."

"Well," the general said lamely, "I just wanted to see if civilian life had softened you up." He glanced at the two men in the doorway. "How about it, O'Connor?"

It was the young man who answered. "I'd say it hadn't, sir. I was in back of him but I never had a chance."

"All right, go home, O'Connor. Take a couple of days off. Sanders, go back and wait in the car for me." The general swung his gaze back to me. "So right away you come in and beat up one of my best men, then you pick the lock on the (Continued on page 32)

The bartender watched in amazement as his saloon filled up. There was something odd here; it was the wrong time of day for so many thirsty customers. Furthermore, the men lined up at the bar kept glancing toward the door.

"We're waiting for MacAskill," one of them explained. "He's going to show his strength."

Presently the saloon doors swung open and a huge figure entered. The floor shook with his steps. Glasses tinkled on the shelves. Three men stepped aside to give the giant room at the bar. In a hollow, echoing voice, the huge man ordered drinks for the house. Then he stepped back and examined the saloon carefully.

At the end of the bar stood a 140-gallon keg of rum. MacAskill walked over and picked it up casually. Holding it before him with one hand, he gave the head a sharp slap. The bung flew out as if shot from a cannon. As easily as a woman lifts a cocktail glass, MacAskill tilted the keg and drank. "Satisfied?" he asked his companions.

They were satisfied. But they had seen only one of Angus MacAskill's prodigious feats. In the light of his other performances, it is safe to assume that Angus would have given Samson a run for his money.

When Angus was born in 1825, he was so tiny his parents thought he would die. By the time he had reached adulthood, he was more than seven feet tall. The palm of his hand was a foot long and six inches wide. His shoulders measured three feet, eight inches across. Information regarding his weight is vague, but it is known that he tipped the scales at more than 500 pounds. Oddly, perhaps, he was strikingly handsome and well-proportioned.

When he smoked, he filled his pipe with one-sixth of a pound of tobacco at a time. When he drank, he used a tankard holding three full glasses of whiskey. He required shoes a foot and a half long; his vest was large enough to circle two big men.

Many of MacAskill's feats took place on Cape Breton Island, where he lived during his youth. While in his teens, he hitched himself with a horse and plowed for two hours, tiring the animal. When a friend wearied on a 60-mile stroll, he carried the man almost 30 miles. The friend weighed 190 pounds. To win a wager, Angus once hurled six barrels of

flour from a ship's hold into the sea. The hold was 12 feet below deck level.

Angus could lift 100 pounds with two fingers as easily as most men lift a pencil. For the amusement of his friends—and to assist the storekeepers in his home village of St. Ann—he would tuck two barrels of salt pork under his arms. A powerful man had trouble handling one.

Fortunately, Angus MacAskill was a gentle and kindly man. He could be aroused, however, and his anger was frightful to behold. Because of his great size, he was frequently challenged by the bullies of his day. Usually he managed to laugh off the would-be suicides, but once or twice he was obliged to fight.

One such incident reveals the tremendous strength of his hands. A renowned rowdy, failing to promote a fight, accused Angus of cowardice.

"Very well," said the giant. "Let's shake on that."

Foolishly, the man agreed. Angus, smiling gently, crushed the rowdy's hand until blood spurted from the fingers. At that, the man got off more easily than a 300-pound sea captain who wanted to pit himself against Angus. The giant lost his temper and tossed the captain over a woodpile ten feet high. In another fit of anger, he ripped a large fishing boat in two.

At the age of 24, Angus went to New York, where he became part of P. T. Barnum's show. Tom Thumb, the fabulous midget of the 19th century, danced on the palm of his hand. Queen Victoria invited him to Windsor Castle during Barnum's English tour. According to legend, Angus cut the royal carpets with his heels to prove his strength.

Angus MacAskill's last great feat took place on a New York pier. Heekled by sailors for a demonstration of his strength, he shouldered a 2,200-pound anchor, trotted to the edge of the dock and tossed it into the Hudson River. One of the flukes raked his shoulder, tearing the great muscles. Angus went home to Cape Breton.

The giant spent his last years as a miller and storekeeper. Although the shoulder injury kept him from throwing his fellow villagers over woodpiles, he was still strong enough to operate his mill machinery by hand when the mill-pond went dry. He died in August of 1863; his coffin, according to old-timers, was large enough to serve as a small sailboat.

William B. Hartley



**3,060 B.C.**

"Chester! Don't you think you've had enough?"

# Hic...The Same Old

# New Year's Eve...

**260 B.C.**

"Chester! Et tu, too?"





**1660 A.D.**

"Ugh, Chester! These art being watched!"

**Herb Goldberg, who's been to many a New Year's Eve party, has come to one conclusion—they don't change very much**



**1890 A.D.**

"Egad, Chester, I am your wife!"



**1961 A.D.**

"Chester! You've caught me at last!"

*Herb Goldberg*

**"I killed her," he said. "It was like pulling a knife across her throat." But the cops just laughed at him; another nut. Sure—but that was before the facts came out**

# the **MAN** who **TOLD** the **TRUTH**

By Pat Frank

Nothing in nature is so mysterious, complex, and formidable as the human brain, and no adventure more daring than its exploration. Some of these adventures the psychiatrist publishes as case histories, thereby enhancing his reputation. Others he keeps to himself, lest he be thought crazier than any of his patients, and his practice suffer. It is not always wise to be first into an untrodden corridor of the mind's labyrinth, which is why you will not find this story in the medical journals.

For many years I have been a consultant to the Miami Police Department. Every resort attracts odd people, from flying-saucer fans to compulsive gamblers, and in the winter season I am overworked. Knowing this, the police call me only in emergencies. At one o'clock one Saturday morning, Lieutenant Roper, of the Homicide Squad, phoned. "Doctor," he said, "can you come down to headquarters? We've got a rough one."

"What's the trouble?" I asked. I didn't want to fight the traffic downtown. I had been sitting in the Florida room, absorbing tranquilizers called moonlight, night-blooming jasmine, and frangipani.

"We've got a nut—a real nut. He walked in and gave himself up two hours ago. Said he'd just run down and killed a little girl on Twentieth Street."

"Isn't that a job for the coroner and the State's Attorney?"

"I don't think so," Roper said. "I think it's a job for you. You see, he didn't kill her at all. I don't think he killed anybody. As far as we can find out, he didn't even hit anybody."

"Put him in the tank," I told Roger. "He'll be sober by morning."

"This fellow isn't drunk," the lieutenant said. "We've

already given him alcohol and narcotic tests. Both negative. And that isn't all—" Roper's voice was muffled, as if he had cupped the phone mouthpiece. "His bride is here in the squad room. They're honeymooners. Mr. and Mrs. Alan Woodroffe, from Rochester. I think *she* may blow her stack too. You'd better bring something for her, Doc!"

I live in Coral Gables. I said I'd be over in twenty minutes.

When I walked into the squad room, I saw a young woman who at any other time doubtless would have appeared poised and radiant. At that moment she was not only close to hysteria, but her hair was awry, she was painfully sunburned, and weeping miserably. She was a slight blonde, in her twenties. The tip of her nose was fiery red, matching her shoulders. I persuaded her to swallow a sedative, and then, as a diversion, suggested that she go out with a policewoman and find some sunburn lotion. Ordinarily, a woman's first thought is for her own appearance. Not Virginia Woodroffe.

"All I want is my husband!" she wailed, as if I personally had stolen him. A new shower of tears spattered down on the flowered, strapless Hawaiian gown that still showed suitcase wrinkles, and was so obviously part of a trousseau.

Roper drew me aside. "I've got him in the interrogation room across the hall," he said quietly. "Didn't want to slap him into a cell. Except that he's flipped, he looks like a respectable gent." Lieutenant Roper has been on the Homicide Squad fifteen years. He is solid of build and character, and I had always thought him beyond surprise. Now, he appeared a bit shaken.

We stepped across the (Continued on page 42)







### THE MAN WHO TOLD THE TRUTH *continued*

hallway and into the interrogation room. The Miami police are hospitable to guests, and solicitous to tourists, even those encountering the law. The room was clean and spacious, its decor modern and tropical. Rattan furniture was arranged in a semi-circle to form a pleasant conversation corner. The lighting was unorthodox. All the lights concentrated on one chair. Slumped in this chair, face buried in thin hands and dark hair hanging down, was a slender man. There was a detective behind the curved, free-form desk, and another standing, chewing on a cigar. The detective at the desk shrugged, and held up his palms in a gesture of defeat. Roper said, "Mr. Woodroffe!"

The young man raised his head. His eyes were red, but his face was not sunburned as badly as his wife's. "This is Doctor Saxe," Roper said. "He wants to talk to you."

I can identify terror and shock when I see it. I saw it then. Woodroffe glanced at my little black bag. I find that a psychiatrist inspires confidence by carrying this insignia of the medical profession, even when there is nothing in it except a box of aspirin, a wet swim suit, and last week's past performance charts at the track. "I guess you examined her," Woodroffe said, his voice flat and listless. "She is dead, isn't she?"

"She isn't dead," I said. "Didn't Lieutenant Roper tell you that so far as the police can find out, you didn't hit anybody?"

"I get it," Woodroffe said. "You're not a regular doctor. You're a psychiatrist. You all think I'm crazy! Well, I'm *not* crazy!" He looked around, angry and challenging. I glanced at Roper and he understood what I wanted. He motioned to his two detectives. They left. The lieutenant took the chair behind the desk.

I sat down next to Woodroffe and offered him a cigarette. "I'm here to help you," I told him. "That's

my only business. We all want to get this mess sorted out, don't we? I don't know whether you killed a child tonight or not, but I do know that you think you did. So we'll start from there."

I had made an impression. Woodroffe looked up, grateful, and pushed the hair back from his eyes. His face was unusually sensitive, grave, and intelligent. "Believe me, doctor, I killed her. She screamed, just once, and her scream was cut off right in the middle, like—like I'd pulled a knife across her throat." His eyes dropped. I could see that the memory was vivid, and awful.

I touched his shoulder. "You stopped immediately, of course?"

He shook his head. "No. That's the strange thing. I didn't stop until I got to the Seaboard station. That was two blocks west of where I hit her. Then I turned around and went back. The body was gone."

"You seem to know the town pretty well," I said.

"That's another strange thing. I *did* seem to know it well, but I've never been here before."

I said, "Alan, you'd better start from the beginning." I was beginning to be worried for him.

They had been married on Thursday—a high noon, high church wedding, I gathered, with bridesmaids, cutaways and striped trousers, all the trimmings. They had been engaged ever since Cornell. Her father was vice-president of a camera company. Alan Woodroffe was a research chemist for the same concern. They had flown to Miami Thursday evening, as the first stop on a three-week honeymoon that would extend to Trinidad. They had a suite in a Miami Beach hotel.

They'd spent all Friday swimming and sopping up the sun. "I guess we both got too much," Woodroffe said.

"A common error that wrecks a lot of vacations, and even honeymoons," I told him. "Go ahead."

"Everything went along fine until about 10 o'clock tonight," Woodroffe said. "Then I had to go to the airport. There was some sort of a mixup about our tickets, and I thought I'd better straighten it out, personally, instead of trying to do it on the phone. We had a hired car. I made Virginia stay at the hotel, and I drove across from the beach alone. I was driving across the causeway—" He frowned, and hesitated.

"Yes," I prompted him.

"It was on the causeway that I noticed that the wind was rising. It was so strong that the gusts made the car sway."

I concealed my surprise. It was a clear and balmy winter night, with only the slightest breeze from the south. I was afraid that Roper's first estimate had been right. This was clean-cut hallucination.

"The wind got worse," Woodroffe went on. "The palm trees were bent right over. I figured it was some sort of a squall. I stepped on it until I got to the mainland. Actually, I guess I was pretty scared. I turned right on Biscayne."

"You didn't have to ask directions?"

Woodroffe looked bewildered. "It's funny, but I didn't. I remember that the gear shift on the car bothered me. I couldn't get used to it. And I remember that I had to swerve, near the park, to miss hitting the sloop."

"Say that again," I said.

"I swerved to miss hitting the sloop. There was a dismantled sloop with its bowsprit poked out into the middle of the road. It was crazy—I guess I shouldn't use that word—it was like a nightmare. And then there was that big building. It was twisted and coming apart."

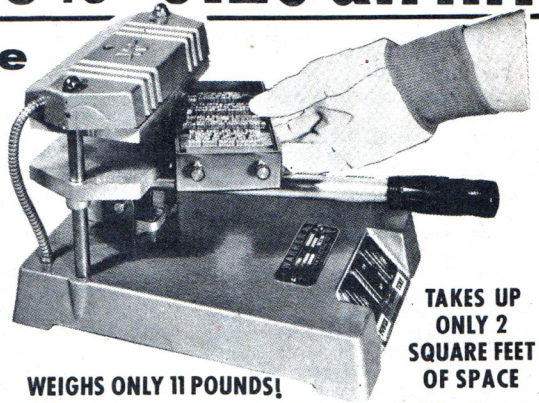
"Wait a minute," I said. I leaned back in my chair and closed my eyes and

*(Continued on page 77)*

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## Fast Gun

Continued from page 19

other riders whom he introduced as his hands.

"Been trailing a pack of mad dogs," the rancher, who said his name was Caleb Saunders, told Maxwell over a tincup of hot coffee. "They been killing sheep and cattle all through here. Don't s'pose you've seen anything of them?"

"I've heard plenty of howling," Maxwell answered. "I figured it was coyotes."

Saunders sighed heavily. "I wish they was, but they just plumb ain't. They're wild dogs, all right. Came out of the Shoshone area; either Hoodoo Peak—that's the mountain there on the south—or Papoose Peak, the one on the right."

Maxwell let his eyes roam toward the distant mountain range, and shivered involuntarily; there was a coldness and an air of sinister foreboding to the mountains which he hadn't noticed before. At the same time, he acknowledged the havoc that could be spread among any settlement by an onslaught of rabid dogs.

"I'd be mighty obliged," he heard himself telling Saunders, "if you'd let me join your hunt. I'm just wandering, and . . . well, it may be I can help you out."

Saunders showed by the faintest trace of a smile at the corner of his mouth that he welcomed the slim, broad-shouldered camper's offer, and, without another word, Maxwell took from his saddle bag the rifle he'd kept wrapped in oiled rags, and which he'd convinced himself he'd never fire again.

They set out early the following morning. Slim Maxwell took the lead as they rode out of camp, and held it until they'd topped a rise stretching back from the long floor of the valley to the east. Then Saunders spurred his horse alongside Maxwell's black mare.

"Funny," he said. "You're younger'n I thought you were last night. I—well, the hair, I guess. But . . . well, I'll wager you're not even thirty yet?"

Maxwell smiled and said nothing, and instead offered the rancher his tobacco. It was almost the only conversation between them during the course of two full days in the saddle. Then, on the third day, one of Saunders' hands let out a shout—he'd come across a freshly-killed deer, froth still flecked on its tongue and the obvious look of an animal that had been dead but a very few minutes.

"Come on!" Saunders shouted, and spurred his horse. "They've got to be close by now."

Maxwell was at his side instantly. "Wait! We've got to bury this deer first. If we don't, the rats will be at it in no time, and you'll soon have the whole countryside sick with maddened animals."

Saunders stared at him in disbelief.

"Where'd you get that notion?" he asked.

"From an army doctor, a friend of mine. As he explained it, *any* animal—fox, bobcat, rat, or anything else—that touches meat killed by a mad dog will get the same madness. They call it hydrophobia. So why stop ten dogs, and let hundreds of others spread the same sickness?"

For a moment Saunders hesitated, then quickly dismounted.

"You're right," he said. "Come on, boys, let's start digging."

Two hours later the dead animal had been pushed into a broad hole, and its remains covered with dirt and heavy boulders, enough to keep even the hungriest packrat from getting to it. They'd lost valuable time, Maxwell admitted when they finished, but he assured them it had been worthwhile. His words, his every move, bespoke the authority ingrained in him, and the others seemed to sense it and automatically acknowledge his leadership.

"How you figger to take it from here?" Saunders asked.

Maxwell mounted and pulled his mare around. "We can't just go after these brutes without a plan," he said. "If they catch our scent, they'll attack us, and though we may get half of them, the others'll get us. We've got to work out some way to trap them."

The others nodded, and indicated their willingness to follow Maxwell in whatever plan he devised.

"Let's stick to the timberline," he told them. "That way, if we can lure the dogs to us—say with fresh-killed meat—we can pick them off from high ground before they can get to us."

It was the best plan, and the others knew it; and so simple was it that it worked without a hitch. Using a doe which was shot by one of Saunders' cowhands, Maxwell dragged the animal's carcass from a line tied to his saddle-horn, creating a wide circle whose outer edge was tainted with the doe's scent. He then strung the doe to a tree limb in the center of the circle, and they all climbed into the branches of surrounding trees to sit and wait. When the maddened dogs eventually found their way to the bait, it was an easy matter to pick them off one by one.

It was a maneuver that plainly impressed Saunders, and he was lavish in his praise of Maxwell for devising it. "Mister Maxwell," he said, wiping his brow with a huge bandana, "I'd admire to buy the drinks, now that's done. And if you can find the time, we'd sure be happy to have you stop by at the ranch for a spell."

Maxwell smiled, a strange little smile that scarcely told its viewer whether it was one of happiness, pleasure, or more cynicism. Then he mounted and swung toward Saunders.

"You've just bought yourself a guest," he said.

In the bar of the combination saloon-hotel in the little town of Piute, Maxwell felt his shoulder muscles ease in a flow of relaxation such as

he hadn't known in years. The men around him were friendly, gregarious ranchers, who accepted Saunders' introduction of the white-haired stranger as enough of a reference to make the latter a welcome guest in their midst. The bourbon wasn't good, yet it warmed Maxwell, and it wasn't until he was on his second drink that he recalled that he'd broken his pledge never to kill again, even if his victim had been nothing but a pack of mad dogs.

"Cal," a beefy, florid-faced man wearing a tin star said to Saunders as they stood against the bar, "reckon it's none of my business, but we had a visitor while you were gone. Wrangler looked like, name of Bart. Said he planned to mosey out your way, and would be waiting for you. Looked dangerous to me, somehow. Wore his guns low, and said something about how you'd fired him once."

At the sheriff's words, Maxwell saw Saunders stiffen momentarily, then shrug resignedly. He'd told his two hands to take a few days off in town, and now he abruptly turned to Maxwell and suggested they get moving.

"Thanks, Sheriff," he said, downing the last of his drink. "I'm much obliged." He spoke not at all as he and Maxwell covered the three miles from Piute to the Saunders ranch.

Once inside the snug, freshly-painted ranchhouse, Maxwell could well understand Saunders' reluctance to talk about Curly Bart. Where once had obviously been neatness and the comfort that only a woman's care could provide, there now was chaos. Tables and chairs were overturned, dishes smashed, picture frames hung askew, and the whole grisly scene was as though a giant twister had roared through the house and had missed nothing.

"Martha!" Saunders yelled, and immediately leaped toward the rear of the house. As for Maxwell, he paused only momentarily before turning quickly to the other side of the building, and toward a room at the right that obviously led into a bedroom.

The next moments were ones which, lightning-like, brought back to the white-haired man scenes he had been certain he would never see again.

On the bedroom floor, her clothing torn and a look of sheer terror painted on her face, lay a woman in her early forties, her eyes glassy, a pool of blood providing a cushion for her gray-streaked hair. There was a gaping hole in the middle of her forehead.

The girl on the bed looked even worse, her clothing in shreds, and the few strips of white cotton that covered her glued to her young body as if pasted on with crimson paint. She moaned agonizingly, and her eyes widened at Maxwell as he hurled himself into the room. But whatever it was she was trying to tell him was lost in the explosion that crashed within his skull.

He heard the one blast from a .45 as he tumbled into oblivion.

**S**lim Maxwell came awake with no idea of the passage of time. His head throbbed, his eyes burned, and only the smell of freshly-starched cotton, and the softness of a woman's flesh under him, revived him enough to realize where he'd fallen—atop the dead woman with the bullet-hole in the middle of her head.

He had no doubt now that it was Saunders' wife, just as he had no doubt that she was long past needing his care. As for the rancher himself, he lay spread-eagled on the far side of his wife, blood oozing from the corner of his mouth, a jagged hole in his side.

Groggily, Maxwell swayed to his feet. The stabbing pain in the back of his head, and the sticky wound that met his touch, told him he'd been viciously slugged, and he mentally muttered a prayer of thanks that it had been nothing more. The shot he'd heard as he fell quite obviously had been the one that cut down Saunders.

Yet the man was alive, Slim quickly assured himself, as was the girl on the bed, who now had lapsed into unconsciousness. Staggering, holding to the bedpost for support, he made his way to the ironstone pitcher on a dresser in the corner, and quickly doused his flaming head over the slop jar. It cleared much of the fog from his brain, and gave him a chance to take stock of the situation.

Quite obviously, Curly Bart or whoever his attacker was had been hiding behind the bedroom door. He'd slugged Maxwell first, and almost in the same movement had snapped off a shot at Saunders. The question now was, had the man left, or was he still lurking nearby to be sure his work was completely finished?

With his mind beginning to function almost normally, Maxwell slipped Saunders' gun from its holster, and, checking its action, moved quickly through the house, searching every closet and corner. There wasn't a sign of life.

Outside, the same empty stillness greeted him, with only the whinnying of the stock in the far corral disturbing the almost eerie calm of the night. With a sigh, Maxwell shoved the .45 into his belt, and hurried back inside. There was a possibility that, with speed, either Saunders or the girl on the bed could be saved.

In the kitchen he found a kerosene lamp, clean towels, salt, lard, and a teakettle of water on the stove whose lid perked noisily. He grabbed as many of the articles as he could and headed for the bedroom.

Gently, he picked up Saunders wife and carried her body into a room next door that seemed to be a crude type of guest room. Laying the woman on the bed, he covered her with a blanket, and went back to Saunders.

The man breathed wheezily, stertorously, and Maxwell quickly took a pillow from the bed and put it under the rancher's head. Then, throwing a blanket over him, he dropped to his

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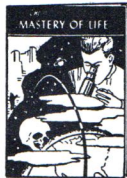


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knees and examined the wound in the older man's side. It had torn into the rancher's flesh less than two inches from the heart. Only the removal of the slug, Maxwell knew, could save the man's life. Saunders began to moan.

"Easy, now," Maxwell said, cradling Saunders' head in his arm. "You've been hit bad. But it may not be too late. Just try to take it easy. I'll need help to get that slug out of you, and maybe your girl can help. But I don't know; she's been badly beaten."

Saunders answered with his eyes, and Maxwell got to his feet. He'd picked up a half-bottle of whiskey on his second trip into the kitchen, and now he forced a gulp of it into the rancher's mouth. As he dropped the man's head onto the pillow again, the girl on the bed began to moan softly.

Maxwell muttered a prayer of thanks for at least one thing—Saunders' position on the floor made it impossible for him to see the condition of the girl, whose young body was a mass of bloody bruises from shoulder to knee.

With his jackknife, Maxwell now cut away the last shreds of her torn clothing, working swiftly and quietly, pausing only occasionally to adjust the light. With the sodden dress and savagely-ripped underclothing pulled from her skin, the girl showed that she must have been, just hours before, a very beautiful and full-bosomed young woman. As she appeared to Maxwell now, however, he knew that it would be only her youth, only a miracle, that could prevent even more damaging internal scars than those which now criss-crossed her creamy white skin.

Again the girl moaned, and then her eyes opened widely. The scream, when it came from her throat, was piercing and ridden with terror.

"Now, now," Maxwell soothed. "It's all right, do you hear? You're safe now."

Again the girl screamed, and cringed in fright.

"Angie! It's me—Pa!" Saunders' voice was surprisingly strong. "This is Mr. Maxwell. He's here to help us."

At the sound of her father's voice, the girl subsided into a soft moan, and Maxwell now put the liquor bottle to her lips. She gasped and choked on the mouthful he forced into her lips, and then fell back heavily.

"That man—that . . . !"

"It's all right, dear. I tell you it's all right," Maxwell soothed. "But I'm going to need your help. Your Pa's hurt bad, but if I can get the bullet out of his chest, he'll have a chance. But I can't do it alone. Do you understand?"

"I—I can't move. My—I'm on fire!" "Let her alone, Maxwell," Saunders said. "You can't ask her to help. Even if I die, she . . ."

His voice trailed off, and Maxwell quickly stooped and lifted the rancher onto the bed beside his daughter.

The kerosene in the lamp had

burned low, and he now went through the house collecting lamps, transferring kerosene from one to the other in an attempt to get the strongest light possible. Then, using a mixture of salt and lard, an ancient remedy he remembered dimly from his childhood days among the slaves on his father's land, he daubed it across the girl's chest, her stomach and her thighs. At his touch, she winced, and once cried out in pain, but she finally subsided again, and closed her eyes.

Maxwell now turned to the man at her side.

"Here, take another slug of this. Get drunk if you want to. You'll need it. Just save enough for me to pour on the wound when I'm through."

"You—you're a good man, Maxwell. I won't . . . forget this."

"Sure. Now relax, will you."

The next hour was a nightmare for Maxwell. Sterilizing the knife over the flame from the lamp, he cut and probed at Saunders' side, as the rancher, gritting his teeth and alternately lapsing into blessed unconsciousness, moaned and occasionally cried out in agony.

Only when the strain on his eyes became more than he could bear, only when it was necessary to pause to wipe the perspiration from his face, did Maxwell hesitate. And only when the light had grown so dim as to make further progress impossible, did the white-haired ex-officer drop his knife with a curse.

He still had not found the bullet. "Give me the light. I can hold it."

The girl's voice recalled her presence to Maxwell for the first time since he'd started to work, and he looked at her now with renewed respect. She had pulled a sheet around her, and there was a confidence in her now that had been missing before; and when she rose to her elbows and took the lamp, Maxwell looked at her for no more than a second before he felt the strength pour back into him. Then he took up the knife again.

This time he probed swiftly and deep, and slowly, agonizingly, the lead slug came up into his bloody hand. As he edged it out, the girl swiftly plunged her fingers into the gaping hole, and held them there while Maxwell poured whisky into the wound, and then bound it with strips of cotton cut from the sheet he'd taken from the guest-room bed. Only when he'd finished did his utter and complete exhaustion surround him, and he staggered to the bedroom rocker. He was asleep within a minute.

He never even felt the soft kiss of the girl on his forehead, as he lapsed into unconsciousness.

Maxwell came awake with the belowling of Caleb Saunders on the bed across from him. "Angie! Angie! Can't I even get a cup of coffee around here?"

The rancher saw Maxwell awake now, and his eyes told the man in the rocker more than any words could how much his help was appreciated.

"I tell you I won't forget this, Maxwell—you know that."

"I know that. Now take it easy, man. You're not out of the woods yet, by any means."

The girl Angie, when she entered the room, now wore a bright cotton dress, and her face showed the only traces of her ordeal of the night before. It was her red-rimmed eyes that revealed to Slim Maxwell that she hadn't slept, but had spent the night mourning her dead mother in the next room.

When they'd eaten the huge breakfast Angie brought to them, the girl appeared again, this time carrying the family bible. Saunders took it wordlessly, and for the next half-hour read from it in a sonorous, even voice. When he'd finished, and had laid it down on his lap, Maxwell saw tears in his eyes for the first time.

"Ma," he said, simply, and that was all.

"She's all laid out," Angie said simply.

Maxwell swallowed, and averted his eyes. "I'll bury her," he said, "so you can watch from the window." Both Saunders and his daughter nodded solemnly.

When he'd finished, and had tossed the last spadeful of earth on the grave, Angie appeared beside him and silently laid a bouquet of flowers at the head. As he put the shovel aside, Maxwell saw out of the corner of his eye the face of Saunders, staring at them from the bedroom, a hand going to his eyes to wipe away a tear.

"Mr. Maxwell?" Angie murmured, as they walked back to the house. "I—my father and I want to thank you for what you've done. You know we . . . we couldn't have lived if you hadn't been here."

"Nonsense," Maxwell said, and turned to face her. "I hope, Angie, that you won't judge all men by . . . by the one last night. He—"

She silenced him quietly, and lifted her face to his. "You don't have to say that," she said. "I haven't judged all men by him—any more than I've judged all men by Pa . . . and you."

He kissed her then, fleetingly at first, and then with the full passion and power of the urging that was in him. "Wait for me, Angie," he told her, and abruptly headed for Saunders' room.

When he reached the side of the rancher, now propped on his pillow, it was to be greeted by the cowhands, George and Tex, who'd ridden in while he and Angie were completing the burial of Mrs. Saunders.

"Howdy," George muttered. "The boss told us what you done."

"It was nothing any man wouldn't have done."

"Mebbe," George said. "Now, though, we're doing our part. We're going after Bart."

"Wait!" Saunders said. "I don't hold with killing; you know that, George. I say, leave Bart alone. Let's let be what'll be."

The man George, rangy and whip-

set, hitched at his pants. "That may be, Boss," he growled, "but the fact is, this man Bart's wanted all over the west. He's got at least ten killings on his record, and he's crippled at least another dozen. Are you going to let him go scot-free to harm more people?"

"Wait a minute," Maxwell told them. "This boy's *my* target. I want him!"

"No, Maxwell!" Saunders voice was strident, pleading. "This isn't your fight. Stay out of it, man! Let—"

"You got a handgun, George?" Maxwell's voice was even, edged.

"Yeah, sure. I—"

"Here," Saunders muttered, grimly. "I'm givin' this to you, in a token of appreciation." He suddenly handed Maxwell a pearl-handled Colt .45. "Drummer sold it to me, said it could stop a longhorn at fifty feet. Don't know if he was tellin' the truth. Never used it, really."

Maxwell took the gun, looked at it curiously for a moment, and then buckled it around his waist. He'd had little or no experience with the weapon, even though he'd worn one throughout the war; his rifle always had been his specialty, and somehow, deep within him, he still felt that it would be a rifle that would bring down Curly Bart.

"Thanks," he said, and after nodding briefly to each of them, strode from the room.

As he saddled his roan outside, Angie came to him, stiff-legged and showing the pain she still felt from the beating she'd received at the hands of Curly Bart. She carried a saddlebag filled with bacon, hardtack, flour and coffee.

"Take my mare," she said simply. "It's the big black. I think yours looks a little the worse for travel."

"Thank you. I'd like to, but—well, I don't know if I'll be coming back this way."

"I want you to come back. Unless, that is . . . unless you have someone else waiting for you."

"No, I have nobody . . . nobody at all."

"Then . . . the horse has our brand on it—*my* brand. I would be grateful if you took it—and came back on it. We—I'll—want to know what happened."

She kissed him then, as she'd done before, and then pushed him abruptly away. "That's for being the fine man you are," she said, "and for what you are going to do. I've kissed you twice now. When you come back, I hope you'll kiss me."

Maxwell touched her chin briefly, and then quickly heaved himself into the saddle. "I'll be back, Angie. Remember that—I'll be back!"

He sat in the saddle now in the warm spring sunshine, and wandered back mentally over the months that had passed since their parting. Months? They seemed like years to Maxwell now, as he flexed his frozen fingers and swept his eyes

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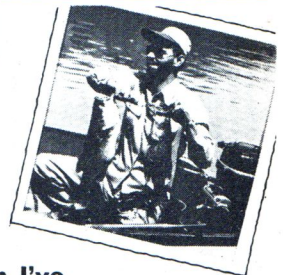
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over the distant horizon.

Months? Sure, months, and yet Maxwell couldn't help but feel that it had been much longer than that. He'd been sure the man would head north into Montana, and for weeks he'd trailed him endlessly, from one trading post to another. Once he missed him by no more than a day, and at another time by less than three hours.

And always Bart's trail was one of blood, and cruelty, and lust. A six-year-old boy had fallen before the man's surging pony in one community, and when the father had drawn on Bart, the killer had gunned him down cruelly. And, to cap the atrocity, he had carried his victim home across his pommel, only to drop him at the widow's feet. Before he'd left, he'd ravished the shrieking woman and left her for dead.

In Montana, Maxwell had trodden his hands, and been saved only because of the kindness of a friendly trapper.

Bart? He was heading south again, and relentlessly, desperately, Maxwell stuck to his trail.

At Cheyenne, a bank holdup had been pulled by a man answering Bart's description; at Denver, his trade mark had been left on the corpse of a Wells Fargo guard, and at Pueblo a maniacal school girl bore mute, if violent, testimony to Bart's having passed through.

Throughout, it appeared that Bart knew he was being followed, and Maxwell found ever-widening traces of the grim pattern of the man's ferocity. A poker game in Durango had left a player shot through the stomach, a man who'd had the temerity to claim that one of the players, a curly-headed stranger, had been cheating. A payroll robbery two miles west had left but one piece of evidence—the bandit had been a curly-haired stranger. In this last one, though, Bart had not been so lucky—a cowpoke had snapped off a quick shot that had taken away a part of the killer's ear.

So the man needed medical aid, Maxwell told himself now, as he again flexed his fingers in a quick practice draw. He'd be heading for the border, that much was certain; the question now was, would he be able to catch him before he disappeared into the mountains of Mexico?

It was that a gnawing thought came back to Maxwell—was it possible that he'd been afraid to catch up with the killer all this time, that he'd been holding back, overcome with a soldier's premonition of impending death? Could he have caught up with the killer sooner, if he'd wanted to hurry?

No! He simply had insisted to himself that Bart meet him on his own terms, rifle against rifle. Certainly not in a drawing contest, where his frostbitten fingers would be no match for the trigger-fast ones of Curly Bart.

He shrugged now, and again soaked up the warming rays of the spring sun; and a day later a Wells Fargo

station attendant spoke of a cowpoke with a bandaged ear who'd just ridden through, heading south.

"How many roads are there to the border?" Maxwell had asked.

"Just one, through Echo Canyon." The white-haired man had spurred his horse at the word, and took off at a gallop. His plan now was to make Bart come after him; he would be no match for the man in a straight shoot-out, of that he was certain. But in the foothills and rocks of Echo Canyon, with the echo giving him a slight distracting edge—well, there was always the chance that Fate would be on his side.

Near the entrance to the canyon, he came across a blood-soaked bandana, and he dismounted to examine it carefully. It was still wet, even though the sun must have been on it for some time. So he was closing in at last.

Bart had to be less than fifteen minutes ahead of him!

The trail now led through the rocky foothills to his right, and Maxwell spurred his black mare to the left, and into the rough country that bordered it. After months in the saddle, he had to be certain he didn't cap it all by riding into a trap.

At a ridge, less than a mile from where he'd entered the hills, he drew up sharply and dismounted. Then he listened without drawing a breath for one tell-tale sign that Bart was near him.

From the canyon came the sound of a horse's hooves!

"BART! CURLY BART!" The shout burst from Maxwell impulsively, all the pent-up fury that was in him spewing forth in an excitement he hadn't known since Shiloh, "BART! DROP YOUR GUNS! WE'VE GOT YOU SURROUNDED!"

Once, twice, three, and then four times, the echo ricocheted off the canyon walls, and it was followed almost immediately by the echoed answer from Bart.

"COME AND GET ME, YOU BASTARD!"

Maxwell nodded to himself, and eased his mare forward, heading toward the spot from which Bart's words had seemed to come. Moments later, and he reined in suddenly and dismounted. Calmly, he rolled a cigarette and lighted it.

So this was the showdown at last! He took his rifle from the holster alongside his saddle, and coolly checked it. Then the .45 came out, and he spun the cylinder expertly. It still was not his choice of weapons, and with the sharp, needled pain that still ran through his fingers, he knew the odds would be against him if he had to draw with it.

And now he was ready. Throwing the reins over the mare's head, he left her, and silently began to creep forward across the rocks, the rifle cradled in his arm. He could feel the excitement begin to well within him, knew again the urge to kill—and he grimaced roughly at his now



forgotten resolution never again to shed another man's blood!

Slowly, painstakingly, an inch at a time, he edged forward, his finger tips tingling, his whole being one of alert assurance. He was only vaguely aware of the perspiration that had begun to run in rivulets down his spine.

"Drop that rifle!"

The voice had roared out of the emptiness at his right, and Maxwell spun quickly toward it, at the same time as he plunged to the ground. His action was followed instantly by a brace of quick shots from a six-shooter that crashed over his head and chipped fragments from the rock surface. The echo ricocheted back and forth across the canyon.

"You didn't muffle your big feet," the voice jeered now. "I did." Silently, Maxwell cursed his stupidity in not realizing Bart could be so close.

"You the hombre's been following me?"

"That's right."

"Marshal?"

"Nope."

"Fast?"

"Pretty fast."

The jeering mockery came back into the voice. "Wanta try to take me out in the open?"

"Why not?"

"Then throw away the rifle, and come on out."

Maxwell smiled. The man was no fool, that was for sure. With only his handgun, Maxwell stood no chance against the wily Bart, and the latter knew it. The white-haired man paused now, and glanced quickly to the left and to the right.

He was to the west of Bart, judging by the latter's voice. What's more, it was close to sunset. If he could play it smart, he might be able to wangle around until the sun was directly behind him. He spotted a boulder now, leaning next to a tree. By getting on top of the rock, he would be in such a position that the sun would be a ball of fire at his back. He started to inch forward.

"Throw your rifle away yet?"

Maxwell tried to get a lead on the direction of the voice. "No," he answered. "I plan to use it to kill you with."

The laugh that echoed up the canyon was loud, maniacal.

Maxwell was on top of the rock now, his left shoulder against the tree. As he steadied himself, Bart ripped off two fast shots that tore harmlessly into the tree trunk beside him. Then Maxwell used his own .45 in the general direction of the voice. Their echo was followed by a moan from down below.

"You got me, damn you!"

Maxwell smiled mirthlessly. So that was it! The oldest trick in the book.

"Then come out," he ordered, "with your hands up!"

His Colt was back in its holster now, and Maxwell held the rifle carefully on the place where he knew Bart had to appear. Then, almost

furtively, the big man strode into view. His right arm hung lifelessly at his side; in his left was a rifle which he held high, his hat resting at an angle on the muzzle.

A trick? Maxwell wasn't sure, and, as he studied the man, his own Springfield dropped a fraction of an inch. Bart was a handsome devil, no question about that, with strong white teeth contrasting with the curly black hair, the entire picture set off by a Mexican sombrero trimmed in silver, and a holster and belt in the same rich, hammered metal.

"Who are you?" he asked Maxwell, gently.

"Name's Maxwell. You don't know me."

Bart sniggered mirthlessly. "Hell, I always figured I'd get it from a fast gun—not a cowpoke with a rifle."

Maxwell relaxed his guard for the barest fraction of a second, and even as he did, Bart's "lifeless" right hand leaped for the holster on his thigh. Before the slender man on the rock even knew what was happening, the desperate Bart was fanning shots with unbelievable rapidity.

It was his closeness to the tree that saved him, Maxwell knew. That and the blazing sun at his back. Yet even so, he heard the whistle of air created by the lead as it sped by his right ear. Then he had pumped out one quick shot of his own, and Bart vanished behind the rock from which he'd come.

It was then that the plan emerged in Maxwell's mind, the one chance in a million that had to be taken. In his place of hiding, Bart obviously was between two boulders, the one nearest to Maxwell giving the killer a bullet-proof shield. There were just three shells left in the rifle. It was a long chance, but it was one that had to be taken.

Suddenly, Maxwell stood up. Then, with almost nerveless calm, he raised the rifle to his shoulder, and aiming at a spot in the second boulder that gave the best chance of ricocheting the slugs into Bart's hiding place, the slim man quickly pumped out three fast shots.

This time there was no faking the moan that came from Bart's lips. A moment later, and the man had spun erect, twisted once, and plunged on his face.

He was dead before he touched the ground, and Maxwell knew it as surely as he knew the great surge of relief that suddenly sighed within his own breast.

Only then did Maxwell turn and face the sun, now a red ball on the far horizon. It appeared to be more than just a red ball; it was a bloody ball. But tomorrow, Maxwell told himself, tomorrow, it would emerge fresh and shining again, and a new day, a new life would begin. By then, he would be well on his way back to Piate.

It was a long ride, but he knew it would be one that would be worth every aching step.



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## Last Flight

Continued from page 13

him. He didn't really care, he told himself, but they were dropping him. He would have to tell Nita, and the prospect was distasteful, as if he were admitting that he had lost a handball game to one of his students, or was too tired to mow the lawn. It was, he guessed, foolish pride, as if being moved from his billet was a milestone on the path to middle-age. He glanced at the headlines.

"RUSS TENSION BUILDS. . . ." he read. And yet they were dropping him, with his hard-won, expensive flying skill and anti-submarine experience. He put down the paper impatiently.

Nita moved in from the kitchen, immaculate in sweater and skirt even at that early hour. She disdained a negligee or robe at breakfast, was always up before him; he had never, even in the hectic days of their war-marriage, seen her untidy in the morning.

She poured the coffee and sat opposite him, studying him with her warm brown eyes. She straightened the tarnished golden wings on his chest, merely for an excuse, he knew, to touch him; she sensed something on his mind. *God, he thought, how I love this girl. . . .*

"Chris?" she asked. "Why not get a new pair this weekend? Or shall I go over these with the polish?"

*Well, he thought, I might as well tell her. . . .*

"Let's not bother, honey. I may not be in the squadron much longer." And then childishly, despite himself: "Thirty-eight's too old, they tell me."

"Oh, Chris! What happened?"

He shrugged. "It's normal. New JG came in just off active duty; there are only so many billets. The skipper called me at school yesterday. This may be my last weekend."

Another Reservist's wife might have welcomed the news, but Nita looked as if she were going to cry. She had learned to trust his flying in the horrible days of the South Pacific; today his staid weekend patrols in a twin-engined search plane must seem as safe to her as to him.

"It isn't fair! This is the only thing you do to get out with the boys. You don't belong to lodges, or play poker, or anything. It isn't fair at all. . . ."

He smiled, finishing his coffee. "I don't feel the need to get out with the boys. Half the old bunch have been dropped anyway." He arose and tugged at Julie's pony-tail, smiling down into her freckled face. "I'd rather spend the weekend with you two, if you want to know. No. . . . It isn't that. . . ."

He lapsed into silence, wondering why he flew. It wasn't the money; the Navy weekends brought him a hundred or so a month, but he poured most of it into insurance. No, it

reached deeper. And he couldn't explain it, even to Nita, close as they were. . . .

Were warm ashes left from the zeal he'd known in the Pacific? Nope, there was none of that left; the memory of the Marianas Turkey-shoot could awaken him sweating in the night.

Just habit to want to fly a little, he guessed. Almost a hobby.

For now there was no enemy. Only a vague and hardened unease. . . .

Nita kissed him goodbye in the doorway. Past her, through his book-lined den, on which she had insisted when they built the too-expensive little house, he saw his daughter at the breakfast table. The morning sunlight teased her spun gold hair into luminescence as she pored over the funnies.

Inexplicably, he shivered. Then he climbed into the Volkswagen.

His neighbor, watering the lawn, snapped to mock-attention and saluted as Chris backed down the drive. Finally he hobbled away as if he had sprained his back.

The strange discomfort passed. Chris smiled and headed for the base.

Chris, in flight gear and swinging his hard-hat, walked alone down the flight line toward the briefing room, ready for the barrier patrol. He glanced at the snub-nosed Grumann "Trackers" on the line. They waited for their four-man crews, wings folded ludicrously over their heads as if cringing from the heat. On the ground they had always amused him, but in the air they were solid, stable craft, as specialized as the pelican or the cormorant at the hunting and killing of undersea prey.

They were old friends, but friends the skipper, a harried Los Angeles stockbroker, had just confirmed with regret that he would soon leave.

Well, there was only so much money for gas and maintenance. They had to keep the billets open for younger men—the "tigers"—the boys who would fly the most if the whistle blew.

*If the whistle blew. . . .*

He entered the briefing room, and almost against his will wandered past the empty rows of chairs to the front. The map was still there, the map that had haunted him for months.

It was a map of the Los Angeles basin, from Santa Monica Beach to the San Bernardino Mountains, 60 miles east. An ordinary map, but labeled "Civil Defense." On it was an overlay.

Part of the overlay consisted of a large red circle in the aircraft district, where presumably analysis had determined that a reasonable enemy would aim. In that red circle, although it didn't say, Chris assumed that one died instantly. From the circle a sickening pink ellipse reached eastward, born by prevailing winds over the metropolitan area all the way

to the foothills. On it was printed: "Fallout".

The pink area interested Chris hardly at all. His eyes were on the red circle.

In it was the block on which he lived.

"Mr. Lassiter?"

He turned quickly. "Yes?"

A red-cheeked young JG was holding out his hand, a tall young man with clear gray eyes.

"I'm your co-pilot today, sir. Eddie Foster. Just got in the squadron."

Chris shook hands. This kid, he guessed, was the reason he would not fly again, but he liked him immediately. "Call me Chris." He jerked his head toward the map. "Don't know why I look at that thing. It scares the pants off me."

Foster spared it a glance and dismissed it. *A bachelor, I'll bet*, thought Chris. Joe Maguire, the squat pilot who would fly wing on Chris on the long barrier patrol, arrived, and then Chris' own enlisted men, Young and Chief Di Angelo.

A reserve squadron was an informal body. Di Angelo, a hard-eyed, gaunt Pacific veteran and a TV repairman, had flown as his radar man for years.

"Eddie, this is Pete Di Angelo. Without a hangover, he can spot a snorkling sub on his radar in a forty-knot gale. With a hangover, he can't see his own scope. And this is Wayne Young, our madman."

Young was a pleasant, chubby, college student who spoke seldom. But he was razor-sharp with the delicate Magnetic Anomaly Detection—M.A.D.—gear; he basked quietly in the assurance that he was the best "madman" in the squadron.

Di Angelo and Young and Chris had learned the plane together—Chris would hate to leave them.

The skipper gave them a hurried briefing. The pattern was familiar; the long run out to sea, the turn along the border of the search area; the long run homeward through the Missile Range.

"You'll investigate skunks and photograph suspicious ones; you'll try to get a cut on rackets you hear. . . ."

Skunks were unknown radar contacts; if subs, they were always your own, of course. Rackets always turned out to be radar emissions from your own surface ships. But Chris checked each contact anyway. Why bother with the patrol unless you did?

They got the usual warning about the Pacific Missile Range.

"We still assume that foreign subs may be assigned to snoop off Point Mugu, as they did off Cape Canaveral. So be particularly alert for reconnaissance subs in that area."

He spoke without conviction, and Maguire, a tough Los Angeles police lieutenant, asked dryly: "Suppose we spot one?"

The skipper looked pained. "Relay a contact report through Stargazer," he said. "Stargazer" was the group code for the channel island radios. "Take

his picture. And *don't* lose contact. You'll be relieved on station. Even the Missile Range is international waters; we can't do anything about his being there, but we can sure keep an eye on him until he leaves."

It was peacetime; it was all they could do. To carry the deadly Lulu or Betty nuclear depth charge would be to invite incidents, Chris supposed.

Anyway, an armed, ready plane awaited their call at the base.

"Are there any friendly subs on the missile range today?" he inquired. He'd never asked before; he hardly knew why he asked now. But the low hulls were hard to identify; it would be embarrassing on his last hop to stir things up over a U.S. sub.

"I didn't see anything on it," said the skipper. When he met Chris' eye, Chris caught sympathy and true regret. A warm glow suffused him for a moment. *Anyway, the Old Man cares, he thought. It bothers him.* . . . The skipper leafed absently through a pile of dispatches and then looked up.

"No, Chris," he said. "If you see a sub *there*, it ain't usn's. It's they-un's."

As they filed out, the skipper drew him aside. His gray, drawn face was bitter. Chris and he had flown from the carrier *Enterprise* in the startling days of Pacific defeat.

"I'm sorry, Chris. Just sick about it. After all these years. . . ."

Chris smiled. "Forget it, Ben. I can use the weekends, anyway. . . ."

But the feeling that he was being wasted still nagged him. . . .

Chris flew at 1500 feet above a thin layer of cloud. For awhile, they'd skimmed conscientiously beneath it for visual search over the Missile Range but Maguire kept losing sight of Chris in wisps of vapor, and finally complained. So now they bounced over it, occasionally glimpsing dark patches of water, but relying mostly on Di Angelo's radar.

Chris gave Foster the controls, and dug into one of the box-lunches Young had handed forward through the cockpit door. The small of his back pained him; for two hours, crammed into the seat with the chute unyielding behind his back, he had suffered increasing. A slipped disc, he had been told, and there was nothing like a long automobile ride or a barrier patrol to antagonize it.

He looked at his watch. 11:30. Another hour to go. One more hour, it seemed, in his flying career. He gnawed on an aged sandwich, reflecting that flight rations, at least, had not changed over the years.

And then it began, with Di Angelo's voice on the interphone, like a single rock that bounces down a hill, loosening a slide, releasing an avalanche. . . .

"Pilot from radar," said Di Angelo. "I have a contact bearing zero-one-zero, ten miles."

Chris pressed the button on his yoke and answered. "Roger. What's it look like, Di?"

There was no answer for a moment. Then: "The man said there weren't no subs?"

"That's right."

"Then it's a floating oil barrel, or something. But it looks like a snorkling sub."

They lapsed into silence, and Chris went on with his lunch.

"Pilot from radar," Di Angelo said. "If that's an oil barrel, it's getting bigger. And it's making about 15 knots, crosswind."

Obviously, it wasn't an oil barrel. . . . But radar could be wrong; it might be a fishing boat or a pleasure craft. Was it worth investigating?

"What do you think it is, Di?"

"I think it *was* a snorkling sub. Now I think it's a surfaced sub," Di Angelo answered immediately.

Well, it wasn't a sub, unless the skipper had rocks in his head.

"Pilot from madman," said Young suddenly. "That oil barrel just turned on its radar, sir. I got a racket at zero-two-zero."

Chris stuffed the sandwich back into his box. "I'll take it," he told Foster, taking the controls. He banked to the left. "Steady on zero-two-zero," he said. And to Foster: "Eddie, call our playmate and tell him we're investigating a contact."

He heard Foster call Maguire, and concentrated on Di Angelo's bearings. Nine miles. . . . About four minutes. "Get the camera up here," he told Young. And then to Foster: "Tell Maguire to stay on top. . . . We'll go down and see."

Ultra high frequency radio gear was a line-of-sight affair; leaving Maguire on top of the clouds would give Chris an extra relay in the link from himself to the off-shore island radios to the base.

"Four-one Hot Potato, this is Four-zero Hot Potato," broadcast Foster. "Maintain your altitude. We are dropping down to investigate. Relay to Hot Potato Base."

"This is Four-zero Hot Potato," answered Maguire's co-pilot. "Roger."

"Dead ahead, eight miles," said Di Angelo. Chris dropped the nose slightly, and they were cut off from Maguire, in a world of softly heaving white.

At 600 feet, the clouds turned dirty gray and then they were through, with one last wisp of fog blotting their vision, and then reluctantly falling behind. The untiring west wind was scuffing the ocean, scooping whitecaps from the surface and tossing them into the air. About a state four sea, decided Chris. . . . Twenty knots of wind.

"Dead ahead," Di Angelo reported. "Seven miles."

Chris narrowed his eyes, and Foster took binoculars from behind his seat and scanned the water. He tensed.

"There it is, Chris. Something. . . . A boat. Or a sub?"

And then Chris saw it too, a sub, slipping swiftly south through the rough seas, now visible and now seem-

ing to sink beneath the surface as a breaking wave hid her, discernible more from the constancy of her bow wave than from contrast with the white-capped surface.

A sub probably, from her southerly course, on her way from the dry-docks at Hunter's Point to her berth in San Diego; a sleek new sub making knots to be home by Saturday night.

So the skipper had been wrong. Well, someone would have to plug that hole in intelligence; in wartime, it could be fatal; there would be no time to tell friend from foe.

*Friend from foe. . . .*

Why had the sub been snorkling beneath the surface, if it was only in transit? A drill, perhaps?

*Or suppose it wasn't ours? Suppose it was a snooper?*

This was ridiculous, he told himself, and yet. . . .

"Young, break out the camera and give it to Mr. Foster. And check our sonobuoys. . . ." He stared at the distant shape. "Hey! What's that?"

He sat for a moment in shock. A huge, dark-blue shape, a thing of the sky and not of the sea, rode the fore-deck of the sub, lethal and needle-nosed pointing just off her starboard bow.

*A guided missile?*

His mind rejected the obvious, the catastrophic obvious. *We* had missile subs, several by now. He'd seen pictures of them, their bows thickened with the tubular hangars in which the weapons were stored. Surely a missile above decks could only mean a test. No foreign sub skipper in his right mind would expose one this close to the U.S. mainland. Not off the Los Angeles defense complex. Not until the whistle blew.

*Or could the whistle be about to blow?*

He jammed his thumb down on the microphone button. "Hot Potato Four-One," he began. The hell with code. . . . "Maguire!"

His earphones crackled: "This is Maguire. Go ahead."

"There's a sub down here with a missile on deck. Tell the base!"

He heard Maguire call Stargazer, faintly heard Stargazer relay the message, heard no reply from beyond the horizon. What now? He could only wait. . . . He took a deep breath, trying to steady himself. They were over the Missile Range; it must be a test; the sub was, after all, heading south, not toward Los Angeles; the missile was actually pointing safely to sea.

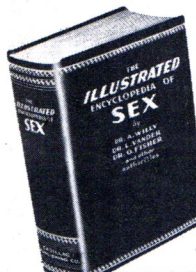
*But if it were a test, why hadn't he been briefed? Why hadn't he been told?*

"Sonobuoys set," reported Young suddenly.

"Roger," he said automatically. What good were sonobuoys, bobbing with dangling microphones in the water, their tiny radios transmitting engine noises of a sub that had already slung its nuclear dart and dived?

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What good was anything?

"Five miles," said Di Angelo. "We see it," Chris said irritably. He had another decision to make, and quickly. Did missile subs carry anti-aircraft? He could see none, but they could be hidden in the conning tower. How close should he come, until he knew?

He banked, playing for time. "Maguire," he said impatiently. "You get an answer?"

Maguire's voice snapped back. "Negative. Just 'wait.'"

All right. He had done all he could. It was a U.S. sub, it had to be, testing the missile topside in rough seas, probably not intending even to fire it. But when he completed the circle, Foster, glasses to his eyes, gripped his arm.

"Chris!" The voice was a whisper, an incredulous whisper on the interphone, "They're turning toward shore. . ."

The dark black hull was turning, the missile bearing shoreward now, squatting parallel to the deck like a live thing about to spring. Chris' mind darted frantically, bird-like, searching for an explanation. Hadn't he read that the impact area was some dry lake in Nevada? Near Tonopah? So it could be a test firing, even shoreward.

At a Nevada desert? Or the Los Angeles metropolitan area? Or International Airport?

Or the red circle hugging his home, and Nita, and Julie?

"Maybe it's a dry run," he said hoarsely. "A rough-water test, or something. . ."

Foster looked at him bleakly, and shook his head. "Take a look," he said, handing Chris the glasses and taking the yoke.

Chris put the glasses to his eyes, bracing his elbows against his chute straps, training the powerful lenses until startlingly, the sub leaped into the circle of his view.

He gasped. This was no dry run.

This was no careful, leisurely test of a new weapon. This was no intricate count-down, with all the delays he had read of. He had heard that U.S. subs could surface, sling a missile, and dive in less than ten minutes; this sub looked as if it intended to do it in five. And he didn't really know how long it had been up. . .

A group of blue-clad figures were fighting the spray by the missile's nose, clinging to a platform. One man was sprawled half-way up the fuselage, making an adjustment. Another was yanking lines from the weapon, snaking them aft toward the conning tower.

At four, five miles, he sensed more frenzied haste than he had seen since the Pacific. The frigid, awful truth dawned.

It was hostile; it was going to fire!

And he had no weapon. . . The group by the missile's nose

broke suddenly, scrambling aft to the conning tower. The man hanging amidships stayed, intent on his job.

Chris found his eyes, mouth, head engulfed in throbbing heat. He had to think, and fast, or it was too late; he cursed the moments he had wasted circling. But what could he do? Desperately, knowing it was useless, he called Maguire.

"Maguire! You hear anything yet?" "Negative."

And even more uselessly. "You're not armed? Rockets, or anything?" "Armed? Negative."

Chris swallowed. For a moment he closed his eyes, trying to draw strength, and Nita was very near. He pressed the microphone.

"Maguire? I think it's hostile. And it's going to fire. We got to go in. . ."

Foster stared at him open-mouthed. "Go in?" he blurted. "With what?"

Chris ignored him. "Stand by to bail out," he said on the intercom. "I'm starting a climb."

At least he could give the crew a fighting chance. If there was time. . .

"Chris," Foster said tightly, as if forcing out the words. "Listen, will you? Listen, I'll stay. I think you're nuts but I'll stay. . ."

Chris shook his head, but then they saw the last tiny blue figure sprinting aft along the deck, heading for the conning tower.

"Hatch jettisoned," said Di Angelo from the after station. "Standing by to bail out. . ."

The missile lay in lonely majesty, pointing a few degrees above the horizon, poised for flight. A fuel line, actuated from somewhere in the hull, jerked loose and slithered aft, and Chris knew that for better or for worse his men must ride with him. "Get back in your seat, Di," he groaned. "There's no time." And uselessly: "Strap in. . ."

"Tell Maguire to call Stargazer," he told Foster. His own voice sounded distant in his ears. "Tell him we're going to try to ram. . ."

And then his whole being focused on the distant sub and its spawn.

They lost the sub once in the dive, as they bored through a low-lying cloud.

When they burst through the lacy fog, Chris saw the black hull glistening in a patch of sunlight 2,000 yards ahead. The missile seemed to his acute senses to be throbbing with life, as if straining at its lashings. A thin wisp of vapor streamed downward from its base.

"Not yet," he breathed. "Please God, not yet. . ."

"Dead ahead, three-quarters of a mile," chanted Di Angelo, in exactly the tone he would have used in a drill. "One half. . ."

Half a mile. . . 15 seconds. . . Please, hold it 15 seconds! . . . He dropped the nose, leveled off at 15 feet, skimming the water, afraid that at the last moment he might pull up instinctively, deliberately trapping himself for fear that he would finch.

Out of the corner of his eye he saw Foster's lips move as if in prayer. . . .

And in the last moments his Nita lips moved too. He whispered, "Nita . . . Nita . . ." From his great throbbing fear and grief came a vision of her and Julie, playing like two children on the lawn, days or months or years ago. "I have to," he told them. "I have to. . . ."

And then he heard it. With the dark shape lengthening before them, he heard the call, the panic-stricken howl from Maguire.

"Lassiter! Break off! *It's ours!*"

He would never know how close they came, but he would remember an agonized grunt from Foster, arm upraised to protect his face, as they passed over the massive rocket, a grunt as if he had braced for a blow to the pit of the stomach.

And remember, as they banked to look back, the hellish cascade of fire from its engines, the smoke hiding its mother ship, and its stately climb, faster and faster into the torn and mottled eastern sky.

And he would remember the long, silent flight home. . . .

Chris cut the engines and crawled stiffly after Foster from the plane. The skipper faced him.

"Chris, I think I know what you were going to do out there. Do I have it straight?"

Chris shrugged. "I don't know." The enormity of what could have happened hit him suddenly. He found that his knees were shaking. "I should have been able to identify it, I guess. . . . Thank God you got us word. . . ." "I had something else on my mind this morning, but it was my fault."

Chris strongly suspected that his own billet had been on the skipper's mind, but remained silent.

The skipper looked away. "It was my fault," he repeated. "And I'm making a report. I'm recommending that they keep you flying if they have to fire half the junior officers in the squadron."

Chris looked past the idle props. Foster and Young were passing down the line of planes, very close together. They walked slowly, but there was no weariness in their motion. Young said something; Foster threw his head back and laughed, punching the air-crewman's arm lightly.

To Chris, who could not have dredged a laugh from his whole racked system, they looked as if they could have taken off on another flight without so much as a cup of coffee.

He glanced into the skipper's eyes. "No, Skipper. I think not," he said, working his shoulder muscles. "No. . . . Find me a desk on the wing staff, maybe, but flying's getting to be for the birds."

In a few hours he would be home. . . . A hot shower, a Manhattan with Nita, an evening of TV, perhaps. The prospect cheered him and he came up with a grin.

"For the birds," he said. "And the tigers. . . ." ●

## Death on the Loose

*Continued from page 23*

city of 18,000 people! Here a few blocks from the city park where hundreds of children played every day. Somewhere, among the crowded houses, I knew that the six snakes prowled—angry, silent, deadly.

My first thought was to call the police. I walked, keeping my eyes to the ground, back to the house and went inside.

My daughter bumped into me, her jump-rope in her hands, hurrying toward the door.

"I'm going out to skip," she said.

My voice exploded suddenly. "No!" I shouted.

She looked at me curiously, her lip trembling at the severity of my tone. I realized I was near panic. I lowered my voice, spoke softly. "Later . . . you can go later," I said.

My wife, Jan, had turned from the sink when she heard me shout. "What is it?" she asked evenly, knowing by my tone that something was very wrong.

"Keep her in," I said. "The snakes got out."

She covered her mouth with her hand, a sudden movement. Her eyes showed terror.

I reconsidered the call to the police. Wearing a badge, riding in a squad car, writing tickets was one thing. Hunting down six deadly rattlers was quite another. I did not doubt the willingness of the police to help, but I had seen dozens of men struck dumb by the sight of deadly snakes. Perhaps for good reason, most people have an almost unreasonable fear of reptiles, even harmless ones. I decided that the police or the fire department would not help. I visualized the radio broadcasts that would strike terror across the city and the reactions of the people who would panic. Hundreds of them, giving way to fear.

I went to the telephone and called Mike Dawson, a friend who accompanied me on my snake hunting trips. The phone rang four times and I was about to hang up when a deep baritone voice answered.

"Mike. . . ." I asked.

"Yeah. . . ." he said lazily.

"This is Jack. What are you doing right now?"

"Cleaning up. I was outside. That storm made a mess of the place."

"Come over here. . . . now!" It was a command.

"I'll be through in a minute. I've just got to. . . ."

"Now," I inserted.

"What's up?" he asked seriously.

"I'll tell you when you get here," I said, knowing that someone on the party line might be listening on the phone.

"Okay. . . . I'll be over," he said, aware that I would not have called him this way had it not been important.

"Bring your tall boots," I said.

There was a pause. I could sense his thoughts as he breathed into the phone. "I'll be right over."

I hung up.

"What are you going to do?" my wife asked.

"Find them."

She waved her hand expansively. "Where?"

I started to lace my heavy hunting boots. "I don't know," I said.

If I had a chance to get two or three of them, which was still a long gamble, what about the others? Six. An impossible number. But I knew only two men in the city who had hunted snakes extensively. I was one and Mike was the other. Any other searchers would be a waste. For one thing most of them had never seen a rattlesnake up close. In the movies perhaps, but being face to face with a rattlesnake is an entirely different thing. The police or other volunteers would be shooting wildly at anything that moved in the grass. This would be a greater hazard perhaps than the snakes. When I had finished lacing my boots, I pulled my slacks down over them.

I found my long-barreled .22-caliber pistol and loaded it with bird shot. This is an ordinary .22 shell filled with about a hundred tiny shot. The shot expands, making a pattern exactly like a shotgun. At close range you couldn't miss a small target. Like a rattlesnake. Like six of them, if I could only find them.

I heard Mike's tires slide on the gravel outside. In a moment he was at the door, tall, his face flushed slightly red with excitement, his lips tense.

"They got out?" he asked.

I nodded. He followed me into the house.

"What are you going to do?"

"Find them. Will you help?"

"Sure. But six. . . . can we find six?"

My nerves were wearing thin.

"Dammit we've got to find them. Every last one. Did you bring your pistol?"

He nodded. I gave him several cartridges and he slipped them into the revolver chamber.

He smiled faintly. "I'm ready," he said.

Outside I checked the thermometer, because I knew that when the temperature was below 60 degrees, the snakes looked for cover, because slow, almost lifeless.

In Southwest Oklahoma the rattlers hibernate in caves and cracks in the earth for nearly six months to escape this cold. When they emerge in the early spring, they are half blind and in an angry mood. They lie on the warm rocks and sun themselves until the temperature, which dominates their lives, rises to a comfortable degree. Then they leave the caves and dens for the season.

The thermometer read 52-degrees. They might be huddled around a trash barrel next door, or in a garage, or in the deep grass. I looked at the broken cage.

"If you were a snake, Mike," I asked, "where would you go?"

"In that storm. . . I'd try to get under a rock."

"Sorry," I said. "No rocks. Then where would you go?"

"I don't know."

"Stick your gun in your shirt. We'll start at the box and work a widening circle. We've got to look everywhere. If you see one, shoot it."

"I suppose somebody asks what the hell I'm doing hunting in town?"

"Tell 'em you're killing rats. Every-time you shoot means one less snake."

"Don't you think we need help?"

"Sure," I said. "Go in and call all the people you know who've hunted diamond-back rattlesnakes. How many do you know?"

His face was blank. "I see what you mean. Should we warn people?"

"And start a riot? Right now the snakes don't feel like moving. They're hiding from the chill. But if it starts to warm up, we'll have to send out an alarm. Right now let's see what we can do."

We started moving around the yard cautiously. Like looking for needles in the trite haystack. Except these needles had holes in them filled with deadly poison. You hear the nonsense about the rattlesnake always warning with a tail shake when somebody comes near. That's a bunch of hogwash. I've hunted snakes for years, and, more often than not, the western diamond-back just looks at you until you get close enough, and then he drives his body toward you silently, knifing the fangs into your flesh, oozing the milky poison into your body. They can coil, strike, inject the poison, recoil and be ready to strike again in the time it takes a half-dollar dropped from your waist to hit the floor. Try that sometime. It's pretty fast!

We hunted for thirty minutes, checking every crack and corner. Nothing.

We had finally worked out to a vacant lot two houses away. Here the grass was nearly a foot high. We were walking through the grass when a sudden movement caught my eye. I wheeled just as the snake's fangs bounced against my boot top. I jabbed my foot down on the snake before he could slither away in the grass, and fired. I watched the body writhing in the grass, turning crazily over and over, until it lay still. Mike came toward me.

"If there are others, they won't like the shot," I said. "You run tell my wife to call the fire department and tell them I'm burning this vacant lot to get rid of mice and rats. Then tell the neighbors what we're doing, so they won't come out here. We'll set fire to this lot and burn them out, if there are any more. We can kill them as they come out."

As Mike ran to the house, I took my cigarette lighter and started fires along the edge of the grass. Fanned by the wind, the flames moved quickly. Mike and I took positions on the

windward side of the lot. We waited. My hands were close to my revolver, because when the snakes came out of that smoke, they would not be slowing down for anything.

The flames inched closed and closer, until I felt certain there were no other snakes in the grass.

"Freeze," Mike said.

I turned with my hips and saw him. He was a huge one, sixteen rattlers on his tail and as big around as the calf of Marilyn Monroe's leg. Mike took a quick aim and fired. The snake was moving so fast he only got the tail, blowing it off. Blood oozed from the end, leaving a faint trail of blood. He fired again. This time his aim was true. The snake was motionless.

I saw the next one as he came out of the grass, and my heart pounded fiercely as I took quick aim and squeezed my finger. I missed. I fired again and got him. Before I had finished, I heard Mike fire, turned to see him stomp his boot heel on the head of another. The fire burned down. The field was completely burned.

"That makes four," I said. I turned to see a police squad car stopping by the lot. The officer got out frowning.

"Let's go over there quick. I don't want him to see these snakes." As we walked over to the car, I noticed that half-a-dozen housewives were standing on their porches, not looking any too happy about our shooting. If they had known what we were hunting, they would not have been standing around watching.

"Get in the car," the officer said. "And I'll take those guns."

"What's wrong. . . we were just killing rats. They've been eating up the place."

I opened my gun and handed the officer one of the cartridges.

"I know it made noise," I said, "but these are no more dangerous than those damned BB guns the kids fire."

"There's a city ordinance against this. You guys know that."

"Okay. . . you're right. No sense arguing. We thought we were doing the neighborhood a favor. We just burned off the lot and shot them as they came out. We got permission to burn the lot. I didn't think to call you boys."

"How many did you get?" the cop asked.

"Got four," I lied. "Little ones. They've sure been bad around here. The city ought to do something with them."

"Yeah," he groaned. "We got 'em over at my place. Well . . . you through now?"

"Sure," I lied again.

"So go put the guns away. Since you weren't shooting slugs I don't think it makes much difference. A bunch of ladies got scared, that's all."

"Thanks," I said.

The squad car pulled away from the curb. I looked at Mike. Sweat was running along his cheek, partly from the heat of the fire, and I thought

partly because of the officer. It had been a close call.

"Jack," Mike said as we walked back toward the house, "what now?"

"Two to go," I answered. I was encouraged. Searching for two snakes now seemed a lot better than searching for six.

We sat down for a minute on the back porch steps. We wiped the smoke and dirt from our faces. Then I looked at the thermometer. It was getting warmer. Wherever they were, I knew that the remaining snakes would start moving around.

"If we don't find them soon," Mike said, "what are you going to do?"

"Report it. I'll have to."

He laughed softly. "You'll be cussed by everyone in town."

I shook my head. "I've been cussed before. I just don't want some kid to step on one of those babies."

I looked at my boot where the first snake had struck. The fang marks were plain against the leather, but the impact had not been strong enough to penetrate the leather. Two small stains of white fluid had dried on the boot. I swallowed hard.

"Mike," I said desperately, "we've got to find those snakes."

We started again. We looked everywhere. By this time the neighborhood was growing very curious about our activities. Go poke around your neighbor's trash barrel, looking in and under corners sometime, and see how much curiosity you can generate. We were on the spot.

The last time I checked the temperature it was nearly noon and the mercury had climbed to 66 degrees. We met again at the side of my house, and Mike's face was grave.

"I think we've lost them," he said.

"I know."

"I guess I'd better call the police," I said.

I started toward the door. A clod of mud had stuck to my boot, and as I kicked it free, it rolled toward the house foundation and bounced off the concrete. Then I saw that the entrance cover to the foundation had been blown away by the storm. The opening was 18 inches wide and about the same height. Mike was going in the house.

"Wait," I said, "get my flashlight. I'm going under there for a look." Mike looked at the hole, then back at me.

"That's not too smart. You can't stand up under there, you know. If a snake is in there, you'll have your face on the ground."

"If he's in there," I repeated, "I'll have to take the chance."

Mike returned in a moment with the flashlight.

"We've got to do something, Jack," he said. "Your wife is about to crack."

I didn't reply. I took the flashlight, switched it on and squeezed my way through the small hole. Inside it was pitch dark. And quiet. I could hear my breath coming in short gasps. My pistol in one hand, the flashlight in

the other, I inched forward. The ground was unlevel, dips and small mounds scattered about. These threw fearful shadows.

I moved cautiously over the damp ground. I came to a small block of wood that had been left during construction. It gleamed muddy white in my light and I squeezed the trigger, catching myself just before the hammer slammed home. I tried to get my breath. I had to be alert, keyed up, but to lose my head would be suicide if I did find a snake.

The difference between peak alertness and panic was a thin, indistinguishable line. Once a man crossed that line, his reaction invariably was one of panic, and in this case, perhaps quick death. The bite of a snake on the hands or legs can be treated without too much difficulty. But a bite on the neck or face is usually fatal. The poison is too close to the heart, and once it reaches the heart the end comes quickly. You can't wrap a tourniquet around your neck!

Ten minutes, fifteen. I might not even get out from under the house. And once the snake bit me it would probably bite me again. Perhaps a half-dozen times before I killed it. I stopped to rest. I couldn't think these thoughts. I had to be calm. When I felt my shoulders relax, I moved forward again. I had worked one entire side of the house carefully and had not seen anything except a black widow spider which I killed. I wasn't worried about a lousy spider.

Then I worked over toward the side of the house where the floor furnace was installed. I got so close I could feel the slight warmth from the metal. Just as I twisted to move away, the angular, hideous head shot up in front of me, perhaps two feet away. I rolled and fired at the same time. The snake was directly in my light and I saw the entire top of the head disappear. The pellets clattered noisily against the metal of the floor furnace.

I completed my roll, started to take a breath, when I felt the movement beneath my body. My heart gave a single great beat, and I felt the pulsation in my ears.

*I had rolled on top of the sixth snake!*

Instinctively I started to roll off the struggling snake, but in the split instant before I moved, I knew that my recovery time would be shorter than that of the snake. I was not his match for speed.

I pressed the weight of my body down, trying to sense by the movement where the snake's head was. The thin jacket I wore would be enough protection from the fangs as long as I kept my body squarely over the head. But if I raised up even the slightest, I had to be prepared to take a pair of fangs. If the poison hit me in the chest, I was a dead man.

The snake was struggling wildly. The tail spanked about freely, hitting my buttocks. It occurred to me that

I could not wrestle him indefinitely. I had to do something.

Finally as the snake squirmed, I could feel his head moving slightly just below my heart. The gun was useless now. I dropped it in the dirt. The flashlight was in the way also. I let it go. Then when the snake paused, I began to slide my hand beneath my body. I closed by eyes tightly, visualizing the exact position of the head. My fingers were only inches away. I held my breath then.

I waited while the snake squirmed beneath me. When it stopped for an instant, still holding my breath, I plunged my hand below my heart and grabbed for the head. This gave him room to move. But not enough. I held the snake's head in a death grip. I tightened my hand around him, pressed down with the side of my body to pin him beneath me, and began to pull. He thrashed fiercely as the pressure grew. In a sudden jerk, my hand pulled free. I dropped the severed head in the dirt and rolled away, crawling toward the light of the entrance, leaving the gun and the flashlight.

I reached the entrance, and Mike helped me pull through.

"I heard a shot. Did you get one?" I didn't try to stand when I was free of the entrance. I lay on the grass breathing deeply.

"You got a cigarette?" I asked.

Mike lighted one and handed it to me. I breathed the smoke.

"Did you get one?" he repeated.

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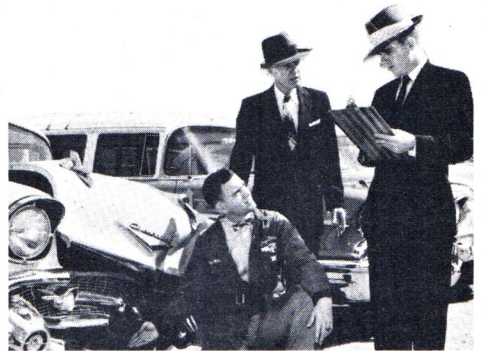
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"Two," I said.  
"With one shot?"  
I smiled wearily and opened my hand. He saw the blood stains, and the ones on the front of my jacket. His face contorted in a grimace. I lay quietly, knowing he was recreating the scene in his head.  
"Did he get you?" he asked.  
I shook my head in the negative.

"You want a drink?" he said nervously.  
I nodded.  
"I'll tell your wife you got 'em all." He went inside.  
I heard him close the door. I lay quietly smoking, looking into the sky. The sun was warm on my face. It was, I decided at last, going to be a pretty nice day.

## Fund Raising

Continued from page 21

unpatriotic. However, John Bates, who owned a controlling interest in a Chicago accounting firm, finally asked: "Doctor, I'm sure we're all in sympathy with the problem you face. But have you figured out what this addition is going to cost?"

The Doctor beamed, responding to his cue.

"I am glad you asked that question, Sir. But I would prefer to have Mr. Barnard, here"—pointing—"the Chairman of our Board of Governors, explain this phase."

Whereupon Mr. Barnard, president of the biggest bank in town, took over and suavely explained that the things we thought we were there to discuss had already been decided. But, of course he didn't make it as pointed as that. He stood up and walked behind his chair, pushed it in to the table and leaned against it.

"Gentlemen," he said, "being a banker, I've gotten into the rather uncommon habit of finding out what something costs before I buy it." He waited for the polite snickers to subside before he continued. "Before we could put a price tag on this new wing, we had to know what was going into it. So we have engaged the most reputable architectural firm we could find to draw up a set of plans and specifications, and price it out. We are prepared with their sketches and a price tag."

As he reviewed the plans for the wing, I wondered whether the other people in the room felt as I did. We had been asked here to discuss something that had already been decided! Why then were we here? The answer was not long in coming.

Mr. Barnard unbuttoned his coat and put his hands in his trouser pockets. "I don't think I'll have any argument, gentlemen, when I say that this is a project which we all agree should be undertaken immediately. If there is no objection, I should like to have it so noted in the minutes."

For the first time I noticed a stenotypist in the far corner of the room behind my back. Again nobody was going to put his name in the minutes as being against charity, helping the afflicted, or aiding the sick.

Barnard continued. "Now we know that this is going to cost us \$960,000. It was my feeling and that of the other members of our Board, that before going to the public with an ap-

peal for funds, we should get professional advice as to what our chances are for raising this sum. Therefore we've obtained the most competent firm available to assess our chances of success. Gentlemen, I have waiting outside a representative of Nelson, Carter & Associates, a professional fund-raising firm. With your permission, I would like to bring him in."

The man who entered the room could have passed for a floorwalker or a bank clerk. His clothes were clean, neat and in the latest style, but obviously not from Brooks Brothers. I was later to learn that fund-raisers, while they earn envious salaries, never display wealth. They may own Cadillacs but they never drive them in towns in which they have jobs. No customer or potential donor is invited to their homes, because their circumstances are well above average, and they don't want this known; their entertaining is done on the outside. And they usually manage to avoid picking up the tab.

I was to learn from the man who was introduced by Mr. Barnard that fund-raisers are in turn evasive, self-effacing, arrogant, bold, humble, crude and polished, as the occasion demands. Their entire philosophy is geared to making the volunteer think that what happens is his own idea. If a stragem' works, the fund-raiser takes the credit; if it fails, it is the volunteer's fault.

Jim Rand straightened his tie and smoothed his hair before he started. He wore a dark suit, a gray tie and a starched collar, and the white handkerchief in his coat pocket was pressed to a crease and unused. "I want you to understand, gentlemen," he said, "that we are here because Mr. Barnard asked us for an opinion as to what your chances of success might be. Of course, we have no way of guaranteeing your chances, but I will say this; your town has a successful record of giving. Within the last six years you have raised \$2,000,000 for St. Thomas' Church; \$1,450,000 for a Civic Auditorium and \$850,000 for a Rehabilitation Center, in addition to meeting your quotas for United Fund drives. You can do it! And we can help you. But it is up to you to provide the leadership."

Edward Barnard chimed in at this point to say, "Jim, I'm sure we can provide the leadership. We have it right here in this room. What do you say, gentlemen? Shall we help Dr. Toner and Mr. Rand get the wherewithal to build this much needed addition to our hospital facilities?"



There were one or two "ayes," and the rest of us followed like sheep.

Barnard carefully clipped the end off a cigar and lit it. "Okay, Jim, suppose you outline the program."

It was at this point that I felt I'd been had. For Rand whipped out an agenda for the rest of the meeting which covered organizing the committees for planning, special gifts, corporate and industrial gifts, and publicity. It even had suggested names for each committee, and I noticed with some distaste that they had me down as Chairman of the Corporate Gifts Committee!

I thought, boy, just wait until they get to this point in the agenda. I'm going to walk out of here! But, of course, I didn't. When Ed Barnard put it to me, I chickened out. I remembered that we were negotiating a million-dollar loan with his bank, and I had to have the money for expansion. As a company president, I wasn't working for just one boss, but for a six-man board of directors who would take no excuses. They had authorized me to move ahead and to borrow the money. If I failed, it would probably cost me my job. I'm sure Barnard knew this.

It was smoothly done. "Bill," he said turning on the charm. "I'm hoping you'll give us a hand in the corporate gifts area. As president of one of our most rapidly expanding industries, I'm sure you'll be able to swing the necessary support from industry in the area. Besides, it won't be very painful for you. With Jim Rand here to help you, about all you'll have to do is make a speech or two and put your name on the letterhead. Jim will take care of getting the money."

He couldn't have been more wrong! I learned that no self-respecting fundraiser has ever raised a thin dime. The professionals will tell you so. They will admit that they scheme, connive, motivate, and employ any devious methods possible to achieve a goal. But will they stoop so low as to ask for money? Not on your life!

So when Barnard put the question I meekly said "yes," knowing I was being euchred. From there on my troubles began.

Before I could get to my mail next morning, Rand was on the phone. "Mr. Pendleton, I think that was a fine meeting yesterday, don't you? It certainly is great to know that you're going to take over Corporate Gifts. I'm looking forward to working with you. By the way, I wonder if I could drop in for just a few minutes and see how you'd like us to handle one of two minor details, including the press release announcing your acceptance of the chairmanship?"

His few minutes turned out to be a few hours. I cancelled a staff meeting, and passed up a luncheon date with an important customer. Meanwhile he was giving me a basic course in fundraising. He had maneuvered me into a first name basis before he gave me the "Now I'm going to let you in on the ground floor" approach.

He carefully ground out his cigar-

ette, and put the holder back in his vest pocket. Then he folded his newly-manicured hands and said "Look Bill, we should recognize something from the start. You and I both know that this hospital wing is a hell of an important thing to this town.

"We are going to get out an elaborate brochure for you. It won't start with the need for a hospital wing. It will start with national health and welfare, juvenile delinquency, competition in the space age and the need for a physically-sound population. Then we'll point to your community as a center of research, and the fact that the national welfare depends on this town. The wing is taken for granted. If you don't have it, the country may fall apart in its hour of crisis, that's all.

"I think we'd be wise to play this tune right from the start. We're showing the way to the rest of the country; not just building something for this community. This is the pitch I want to use in the publicity release. Here it is. Of course, you have a good portrait photograph we can send along with it?"

I nodded and started to read the press release. It was replete with quotations from me about the need for the project but I couldn't quarrel with it. As a matter of fact I was rather flattered at the knowledge I displayed.

"Now if it meets with your approval, we'll release this to the Chicago papers and the wire services this week. This should be followed up by an invitation to a selected group of corporate executives to attend a luncheon to hear about this project. We ought to plan on about 60 people. We'll have Dr. Toner and Mr. Barnard there to give you some backing up. Could we give this at your club?"

This was a subtle way of telling me the lunch for 60 people was on me, since my club operates on the basis of having only members sign, no cash.

Rand put a new cigarette in his holder. "Now, if it's all right with you, Bill, I'd like to have you look over this list of people and tell me which ones you know by first name, so we can address them properly for your signature. And, as we go along, if you can tell me anything about them, let's make a note of that too."

By the time we had gone over the list it was past the lunch hour, and I had lost a valuable half-a-day. I thought this was a one time shot. Unfortunately, Rand was back the next day.

He came in apologetically. "Bill, I'm embarrassed about the amount of your time I took yesterday. I promise I'll be good today. How much time can I have? Fifteen minutes? Good!"

He pulled up a chair and out came his cigarette holder. He opened up his briefcase and slid a sheaf of letters across the desk. "Now if you'll just sign these letters of invitation to the enlistment luncheon. These men should each be asked to take eight or ten names of firms to solicit. Of course, we'll have the literature and lists ready before the luncheon."

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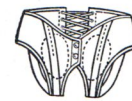
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Hundreds of thousands of people have discovered wonderful new comfort with Rupture-Easer. Compare it yourself with conventional steel and leather trusses!
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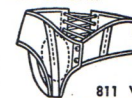
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Enclosed is:  Money Order  Check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Send C.O.D. Be sure to give size and side.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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**RUSH THIS COUPON NOW!**

No sooner had he left than Ed Barnard was announced. He smelled of Yardley's and fifty-cent cigars, and his approach was leisurely. I began to suspect that he did no work at the bank, but was the front man, the promoter.

"Bill, please forgive me for dropping in so precipitously," he said, "but this loan of yours is coming up at our next meeting, and I just wanted to take a quick tour of your plant before I go into our Committee. It's rude, I know, but I figure the best way to report on your activity is to go through without disturbing your normal operation. Could I ask you to give me the two-dollar tour?"

In other words he wanted to look without giving us a chance to rehearse and put on a show! So I gave him the tour. But as he left, he gave me one which I felt was somewhat below the belt—in a gentlemanly fashion, of course. It was while we were waiting for his chauffeur to bring his car to the door.

"By the way, Bill, I understand that friend Rand was here today to start setting up the program. You realize, of course, that in this sort of thing it's customary for the Chairman to make the initial gift? You can't very well ask anyone to do something you haven't done yourself."

"Well, I wasn't aware of it, Ed. But I can see the logic of it. I'll do what we can."

He brushed an imaginary dust spot off my lapel and nodded. "I'm sure you will, Bill; I'm sure you will. But sometimes that's not enough. You're going to be hitting corporations for twenty-five, fifty and a hundred thousand. You have got to get up into this category yourself. Because, when you ask them to give, they're going to ask what you gave. And no company that's your size or smaller is going to go any more than you do. Just what did you have in mind, Bill?"

The question threw me off balance. If I said too little, I was a piker. If I said too much, he might think I was a poor credit risk. I hedged.

"Well, I'll tell you Ed, I'm controlled by a board of directors who are primarily lawyers and bankers. They are only interested in dollars and cents. And I can't spend more than \$5,000 for anything without their approval."

Barnard put on his hat as his car came up the drive. "Well, maybe they're wise," he said. "But I really think you ought to take this to your Board, Bill. A five-thousand-dollar gift from your company would kill the campaign. I think you ought to come through with at least twenty-five thousand, and it's certainly in keeping with sound financial management as far as your balance sheet is concerned."

The result was a battle with my board of directors and a begrudged agreement on their part to give fifteen thousand. And they gave me this only after I emphasized that our company was being given a great deal of publicity because of my part in the pro-

gram; that it was important in our recruiting of new employees; that it would help in the sale of our stock, and that the man who was going to lend us a million dollars had virtually insisted on it. After they approved the expenditure, they deducted \$15,000 from the amount I had asked them to give me for a new laboratory! In other words, the gift cost my company the balanced research and development program I felt was needed. What's more, I felt this could hurt us badly, because unless we kept up with our competition in new products we'd be out of business. I was also worried because this set a precedent for the Board to look twice at my requests for funds which related to non-operating expenditures.

Our first luncheon meeting was a success. We had fifteen people attend, and they each took an average of six assignments, or companies to solicit. They were reminded that before they could ask for a gift, they must set a standard of giving themselves. My letter of invitation had indicated that the purpose of this luncheon was to assign prospects, and the men present gave me the impression that they had been through campaigns like this before. Between their own firms and those they solicited, these men produced \$200,000 in two weeks. I began to think that maybe Rand knew what he was doing.

Not a day went by without a phone call or a visit from him, and I found myself giving more and more time to the project. It was like playing a game where you can watch the score building up, and I could feel myself getting the fever. My vice presidents began to complain that I was holding up their sales, engineering and manufacturing operations because I was not available for conferences.

After the initial flush of success, Rand came to me with a formula. He wrote it on the table cloth at my club, after a second Martini. In retrospect, I see why my vice presidents were worried; I was having lunch with this man on an average of three days a week.

Rand put down his glass and carefully wiped his mouth with a napkin. Then he adjusted the point on his pencil and explained, "Bill, you should feel really proud of your initial effort. But remember, we've just culled the cream. We knew that these boys would give, and give generously. Now we've got to go to work on those that aren't used to giving the kind of money we need. We've got to do this scientifically."

He started to write while I nodded to the waiter to bring us another Martini; this wasn't helping my business acumen either. "We still need about \$500,000 from industry," he said. "All the firms who have not yet contributed employ a total of 40,000 people. This means we have to get an average of \$12.50 per employee. Our experience has been that we get about half of what we ask for. So all right, let's say we've got to ask each firm to give \$25 for each person they have

in their employ. Now this sounds like a lot of money, I know. Suppose we say to each firm, let's spread your gift out so it's painless. Spread it out in monthly payments over the next two years. Will you give a dollar a month per employee to assure your employees the kind of hospital service they need?"

He quaffed half his Martini with a gulp, and gestured triumphantly with his glass. "Hell, medical insurance costs the companies many times this amount. Don't you think they'd go for this, Bill? If you agree, I'll go ahead and have the pledge cards printed up this way—It is our intention to give one dollar per month per employee, for the next 24 months, to the Clayton Hospital Center. This is based on our present employment of \_\_\_\_\_ people."

That afternoon our advertising manager casually mentioned that he had seen proofs of the pledge cards at the printer the day before. In other words, I merely had rubber-stamped a decision that already had been made!

About this time the brochure came out. It was an impressive piece, with pictures of smiling children in therapeutic wards, masked doctors bending over operating tables, technicians peering into microscopes, and ambulatory patients basking in a solarium. On the back cover, mine was one of four portrait photographs, and I was quoted as saying this was the greatest thing since sliced bread.

When Rand spread it out on my desk for the first time, he emphasized one aspect of the booklet. "I want you to notice," he said, "that in this section we have broken the project down into memorial opportunities. A room is worth \$2,500; a laboratory is worth \$10,000, and so forth. Now these rooms can be named for someone. Anyone who has money, and has had a casualty in childbirth, is a natural for buying a maternity ward. The president of Munson Gas Works has a wife who is a polio victim. Now if you could stop in to see him, and suggest a memorial gift in this area, I am sure he would be good for \$10,000."

It was distasteful to me, but I did it, and Munson came across. We got \$5,000 from a small manufacturer when Rand learned that we had just given this firm a contract to build \$60,000 worth of parts for us, and that the chances were in favor of our giving them more business.

Barnard, who was on the Admission Committee at the University Club, got \$2,500 from a man who was applying for membership.

After a time I rebelled and I told Rand that I'd have to slow down my activity and catch up on the work load in my office.

The result was a call from Barnard and several other influential men in town, reminding me that I had taken on an obligation and had a responsibility to carry it out. Why not have a series of five or six dinners, to try to raise the two-hundred thousand we



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County.....
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Occupation.....  
Height..... Weight..... Sex.....
4. Name of Beneficiary.....  
Person to whom Benefit is to be paid in event of death  
Relationship.....
5. Have you had medical advice or treatment or suffered from any accident or illness during the last five years?.....  
If yes, when and for what?.....
6. Are you now in good health, mentally and physically?.....
7. Do you have any physical defect or deformity?.....
8. Have you been injured while driving an automobile?.....  
If so, to what extent.....  
Signed at City..... State.....  
this..... day of....., 19.....  
The answers to the above questions are given to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sign here.....  
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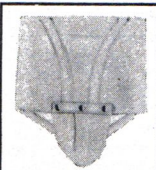
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still had to go? This opened my evenings up for strategy meetings as well, and for almost a month I did not have a week-day dinner at home. I was short on sleep, and ill-tempered, and as the money came in in dribbles, I kept wondering where we could get two or three more big gifts that would wind up the campaign and end my nightmares.

But these were not to be had. One night, Rand told me that we had tapped every corporation in town but that we were still \$60,000 short. "We'll put everyone who is interested on a Clean Up Committee. We should be able to get 30 to 40 such men. We'll ask them to go back to those who have given, and try to get just a few hundred dollars more. And of course we'll remind them that, while we have their corporate gifts, we do not as yet have their personal contribution to the fund. This alone should be good for about \$25,000."

The idea was repugnant to me. It was dirty pool, but I could see the end in sight, so I agreed.

Rand was right. The Clean Up Committee *did* bring in the money. A big victory luncheon was held, and we were all heroes. Barnard and Dr. Toner and Rand and myself. But the words of praise rang hollowly. Somehow I felt uncertain.

That night I talked it over with a neighbor, Jim Rush. He told me he had had an even more nauseating experience with professional fund-raisers.

"We had one on our Catholic High School campaign," Jim told me. "He started out by saying that he was not there to win a popularity contest, and that before he was through we'd hate his guts. He was one hundred percent right! Why the illegitimate son of a fund-raiser formed a committee to guesstimate the income of every member of our parish, and to put a dollar sign on each family's ability to give."

"Jim, this doesn't surprise me too much," I said. "One of the members of our Board of Directors is a Jew. UJA came after him for a gift, and he gave them \$2,500 last year. They simply returned his check with a note that they had him down for \$6,000! I understand that if he had failed to come across, he would have lost a great deal of business, and been left out of certain social functions to which his wife was looking forward. Naturally, he gave without a question. But, tell me, how did *your* fund-raiser do?"

Rush shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, he raised it all right. But he left deep wounds. He started by getting our parish priest to hand out cards during Mass with instructions to fill in our names, addresses and telephone numbers as 'volunteers' for the campaign. Not a man in our pew filled out the card, even though the good Father waited while the ushers collected each card right after they were distributed.

"Then, even though I hadn't volunteered, I got a form letter from the Bishop thanking me for volunteering,

and saying that my importance in the community called for my attendance at the organizational meeting the following Wednesday. I was to sit at Table 8! I later learned that such letters went to every parishoner, regardless of whether he'd volunteered or not.

"When I failed to show for the first meeting, the second form letter arrived a few days later. It said they knew I probably had been busy at the time, and that I would be expected at the next meeting a week later.

"This one didn't work either, so they really pulled the crusher. They sicked my boy on me. Carl will be ready for High School in two years. They organized a father-and-son meeting, and he invited me with the query "Wouldn't you help me get the best possible school facilities?" What could I do? You see before you another lousy conformist!"

This whole business of fund-raising had now begun to get under my skin, and within the next few days I checked it out at libraries and with other friends, one of whom was a professional campaign director. I learned that there were lots of gimmicks to this business besides the ones Jim Rush and I had experienced.

For example, a wealthy man, who was interested in a famous artist, agreed to contribute a room to a museum provided that a certain picture was donated for permanent exhibition. The fund-raiser found that the owner had inherited the painting many years ago when estate taxes were low. It was appraised at a high figure, and by contributing the painting to the museum, the owner not only saved a considerable amount on insurance but also picked up a tax forgiveness of about \$40,000! He became a public benefactor. The fund-raiser even had the temerity to demand—and get—twenty five percent of the tax savings as part of the deal! He also got the room that the wealthy philanthropist had agreed to contribute.

It's a common practice to encourage donors to contribute stock which they acquired years ago at low prices. Let's say a man bought 1,000 shares of Crooked Pretzel Corp. at a dollar a share in 1940. Now it's worth \$50 a share or \$50,000. If he's in a high enough bracket, he can keep all of this profit by contributing this stock to some worthy cause. He's made no profit unless he sells the stock, so he pays no tax on the gain.

I also learned that fund-raising is really big business. What would happen to this country's economy if you took the net profit of our top 120 corporations and gave it all away? Yet an equivalent amount was given for philanthropy last year. There are 40 million people contributing more than eight billion dollars to more than a quarter-of-a-million gift-supported institutions in this country! And for every one who contributes there is a volunteer who is raising funds—again, over forty million people. And, of course, for every volunteer there are

at least five or six appeals for money; so we get more than 200 million personal requests for hand outs. Half of this eight billion dollars will go to religion, with virtually all of the balance divided evenly between health, education and welfare—or about fifteen percent apiece.

Naturally, this kind of money attracts all kinds of people who are involved in raising it. And some of them try to milk it for all it's worth. For every dollar raised for the Disabled American Veterans, the fund-raisers are reputed to get and/or spend more than eighty cents. Yet the public continues to give.

The Sister Elizabeth Kenny Foundation reported it was spending less than 10 percent of the total contributed for fund-raising. But, recently, Marvin Klein, its executive director, was accused by Minnesota's attorney general of having taken kick-backs totaling over \$113,000 from the Kenny Direct Mail fund drives, and it was alleged that the cost of the drives was so great that it cost \$11,000,000 to raise \$19,000,000!

While the National Foundation—the new name adopted when the success of the Salk Vaccine took the sex appeal out of the polio drives—reports that they spend only 14.4 percent for fund-raising; yet this foundation is accused by the National Information Bureau of giving misleading information. The National Foundation spent twice as much on fund-raising as it did on research in 1958!

How can you police a thing like this? The fund-raisers themselves have set up an agency known as the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel to try to help keep it honest, but they are far from successful. While their published code of ethics prevents any of their members from working on a percentage of the take, and prescribes that a fee shall be fixed in advance, there have been instances where their members have accepted the fee and walked off the job before it was completed, leaving the volunteers to try to finish it as best they could. Their excuse was that they had put in all the time that was budgeted under the contract—they'd be glad to stick around for more dough.

By this time, the poor volunteers either have been disillusioned and have been glad to see them go, or they get up more money in hopes the campaign eventually will succeed.

In addition, many institutions, such as colleges and universities have become disenchanted with the professionals in the Counsel, because their hit-and-run methods—get the money at any cost—such as those used in the Clayton Hospital campaign, have alienated alumni and life-time friends. Most of them set up their own Development Programs, staffed by their own people and geared to a slower pace that preserves the dignity of the institution.

The more my friends and I looked at this overall fund-raising question,

the more we were convinced that it is based strictly on emotion—and sales promotion. The better the pitchman, the better the take, regardless of need. For example, the National Association for Mental Health raises about five million dollars a year to aid the nine million people in this country who are severely afflicted with mental illness. But along comes the muscular dystrophy drive with its Jerry Lewis telethon and other gimmicks, and raises just as much money for only 200,000 victims—almost fifty times as much on a per case basis.

So we give because our friends ask us; we're looking for something in return; somebody appeals to our emotions—for a dozen different reasons. It costs us time and money. And many of us, I'm sure, can't and don't take the time to make certain that the things we give to are really worthy causes, really need the money, and get the great percentage of the amount we give. The fund-raisers are too sharp for us.

So what can we do to solve this problem? The fund-raisers themselves cannot police their "profession," and state laws have been negligible and inadequate.

I have no panacea for the "we." But I do know about the *me*—and if enough people follow the formula, it might work. Here it is:

1. Establish in advance what percentage of your gross income you want to devote to charity. On a \$10,000 income, say five percent or \$500.
2. If you are a church-goer, where your contributions are probably on a weekly or monthly basis, deduct these contributions from the \$500.
3. Deduct any other gifts that you know you want to make.
4. Refuse all other appeals, regardless of deadlines, that you may get—NO MATTER HOW SMALL! Simply tell everyone that all of your contributions are made at year-end. You will file their appeal with others you receive and decide how to appportion your gifts then. At this point you will decide unemotionally, and if it's a worthwhile cause it will get a proportionate share of what you can afford to give.
5. Learn to say NO to any request to serve on a fund-raising committee unless you are convinced you can afford the time, that the cause justifies the time you will spend and the demands you will make on friends and associates, and that the cause will get the money—not the fund raisers!

What's that? You'd like me to come to the organization meeting to raise funds for our new war memorial?

Thanks, friend. I wouldn't forget the war for anything. But, right now, include me out, will you? I've had my share of fund-raising; and, as of today, I'm through with it—forever, I hope.

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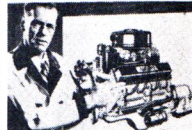
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# Paradise

Continued from page 33

living there, she had brought along a dress, pumps and other clothing to be worn after they landed. These she carried in a small bag, along with her tooth brush and cosmetics.

When they left Zamboanga, the sky was clear and the sea calm. An hour out, the aging motor conked out and they drifted for five hours while a faulty coil was rewound and adjustments made. The delay would put them into Sarangani Bay sometime in the early hours of the following day, but they elected to go on rather than return to Zamboanga and make a new start. As evening came on, Nordensen advised the others to try to get some sleep while he steered the craft.

Christensen and Overholzer stretched out on the duckboards aft, while Miss Frazier crawled into the cramped 9x5 sleeping quarters in the bow. It was the cool, dry season in the archipelago, yet the region had been having an unseasonable heat wave that made shorts and scant dress comfortable. Nordensen wore only a pair of Bermuda shorts, and welcomed the soft night breeze that came up out of the south.

Miss Frazier and Nordensen had met for the first time that morning when she came aboard. Having been preoccupied with repairing the motor and getting back on course, he had said scarcely a dozen words to her during the day, so that when night came on they still were strangers.

The night soon became overcast, and the moon that was expected did not appear. The sea was a vast expanse of darkness in which no light shone nor any stars winked in the heavens. Depending entirely upon his compass, Nordensen was steering by

dead reckoning, but he was not alarmed. There were no islands or hidden reefs along that route to run into, and all he had to do was stay on course.

Suddenly he felt a jolt, and he knew the craft had struck some floating object. He felt more bumps as the boat passed over it, and a moment later all hell seemed to erupt in a ball of blue flame that blew the craft bodily out of the water.

He found himself in the sea some 30 or 40 feet from the blast, and his first thought was that he had a struck a floating Japanese mine left over from the war.

For a few moments he was in a state of shock, yet he felt no physical pain. There was a great noise in his head, however, like that of many aircraft in flight.

His first concern was for the safety of his passengers.

He swam back toward the scene of the explosion, groping for something to cling to, but there was nothing large enough to support his weight. The blast, he knew, had occurred near the stern. Christensen and Overholzer had been asleep directly over it, which meant that their chances for survival were almost nil. The girl, up front, had been farthest away from it.

It was then that he heard her calling for help. He answered immediately, endeavoring to locate her in the darkness.

She answered from nearby, and when he reached her he found her clinging to what he later identified as the cover from the motor well, which had been blown off its hinges. It seemed to be the only part of the craft that had survived intact. It was seven feet long and almost four feet wide, and was made of redwood planks two inches thick.

Miss Frazier seemed to be in a state of shock but miraculously un-

injured. He boosted her up onto the cover, but when he attempted to climb aboard, it submerged. It did not appear to be sufficiently buoyant to support the weight of both.

"I'll hang on!" he said. But just then he felt something with large scales on it rub against his legs. "No, I'd better not. I think there are sharks around. Hang on tight; I'm coming aboard."

He drew himself up, and felt the raft submerging again. Quickly he moved toward the far end, an action which adjusted their weight, and the heavily-laden motor lid rose to the surface once more. For the time being at least they were safe from their enemies below.

Somewhere in the process of being blown into the sea, he discovered, he had lost his shorts. But he was not alone in this predicament. While helping the girl aboard he had noticed that her bikini was gone.

"Haven't you anything on?" he asked.

"Nothing," she replied. "I'm naked." "Think nothing of it. We're both in the same fix."

She said she had taken off her bikini and halter because they were wet from spray and she wanted to dry them. It was warm in the tiny cabin, so she had spread her beach jacket over her body. "If my father hears of this, he'll have a hemorrhage. And my mother will simply die! Good heavens, what a horrible situation to be in! How far do you think we are from land?"

He estimated their position to be somewhere roughly 20 miles south of the island of Mindanao. They were in the shipping lane, which was reasonable assurance that rescue would eventually come.

She promised not to panic if the sharks became persistent, or if a storm hit them.

"But I'm going to be embarrassed to death when morning comes," she said.

"Forget it. Two people in our fix have more important things to think about."

The top of the raft remained an inch or so below the surface of the sea, so that the waves washing over it lapped at their bodies and kept them drenched, adding to their discomfort in the chill of night. But there was nothing to be done about it. It was that or drown. Or, worse yet, be devoured by sharks.

Dawn broke at last, with an overcast sky, and there was no embarrassment on the part of either. It simply was a situation they had to put up with, and they accepted it philosophically. Evelyn was a gorgeous girl, as trim as a young filly, but these were facts he had known the moment she stepped aboard the previous day, thanks to the bikini, the loss of which hadn't meant too much. With the waves lapping at them every moment, and with the danger of a large shark coming up from underneath to tip their raft and dump them into the



"He came down here three years ago to extradite me to the States."

sea, there was no time for a man to think of anything but survival. At first the water had not seemed so cold, but as the hours wore on, constant splashings lowered body temperatures to an alarming degree.

What do two unclad persons of opposite sex on a narrow raft do to pass the time away? "They talk mostly," Nordensen told me. "And watch the sea."

Once they thought they heard a plane in the distance, but if it was an aircraft, it failed to pass within range of their vision.

Toward noon of that first day, the sun came out and warmed them. Their drift was west and a little south of the course they had been following when the blast occurred, but now in reverse. At the rate they were drifting, Nordensen estimated, they would reach the Sulu archipelago within five or six days, far south of their starting point. In the Sulu archipelago are several groups of tiny islands which bear no individual names. Their chances of landing on one of these would be good in the event of no change in the current.

By evening of that first day adrift, the overcast became sullen and threatening. The air grew quite chilly, so that the water, which remained at an even temperature, felt good on their bodies. They stretched out on the raft and let the waves slosh over them.

Later, the wind velocity increased, and toward midnight there was a distant rumble of thunder, unusual at that time of the year. As the storm moved toward them it increased in intensity, the lightning flashes sending ghost-like shadows dancing across the wide expanse of turbulent water.

Soon they were like helpless animals, fearfully huddled together for mutual protection.

The rain came in torrents, and was several degrees colder than the sea.

The storm lasted for about an hour, and when it was over it had left a blanket of cold water over the surface that chilled them to the bone. To keep from freezing, they lay together on the raft, first with the girl's back to Nordensen, and then the reverse. By changing position frequently, they found it helped a little, but by early morning they were as cold as a couple of hibernating Alaskan bears.

But again the sun came to their relief and warmed their bodies.

Evelyn tried to sleep during the day, when it was warm, but constantly choked on the water that rolled over her body. Nordensen dozed for a time sitting up.

Finally they solved the problem of sleep by sitting back to back. This method succeeded only until a wave tossed them together into the sea and they had to scramble back aboard before the sharks became aware of their predicament.

Soon after darkness fell on the third day, another storm hit them, but in a way it brought relief. The rain drops were so large they caught them

in their hands and drank their fill of sweet and palatable water.

But again the rain was colder than the sea, and they had to snuggle close to keep warm. Hunger was becoming a major worry. Nordensen dreamed constantly of big juicy steaks and French-fried potatoes.

On the fifth day, Evelyn became violently ill from swallowing sea water and had to be nursed through the night. On the sixth day the sun warmed them again. Nordensen's skin, already tanned a rich brown, became so burned that huge water blisters appeared all over his body. Evelyn, however, fared much better and suffered from no discomfort.

Nordensen kept watching for seaweed with which to form a covering for his body but the sea remained free of marine growth of any kind.

Evelyn was weakening by now, and he feared that if rescue did not come soon, she would surely die.

The next morning, he saw three big sharks following the raft, their snouts so close to it he could reach out and slap them. He and the girl had been dropping over the side of the raft to answer nature's call but the appearance of the sharks made it necessary to adopt less dangerous measures.

He tried kicking the snout of one of the sharks, and it went away. The others then became wary and dropped back a few feet out of range, but they never gave up their vigil. One looked to be all of ten feet long.

"Isn't it considered a bad sign when sharks follow a boat?" Evelyn asked.

"Aren't you the cheerful one!" he replied, and then explained that it was an ancient superstition of the sea and nothing more.

By now they had become so accustomed to their Adam and Eve roles that nothing bothered them. Hunger had become their principal enemy.

On the morning of the seventh, or perhaps the eighth day—for they had lost all track of time—they appeared to be no nearer land than they had been at the start of their ordeal. There still was no marine growth, no birds, and the sea was void of ships. But the sharks had left them and that was a big relief.

Nordensen's wrist watch had stopped shortly after he was dumped into the sea, and even though he left its works exposed for hours to the sun, it still refused to run.

It rained again that day, in big drops, and it again slaked their ever-present thirst. They had nothing in which to catch and hold the rain, and had to depend on the frequent thunder storms, which were considered unusual for that time of the year.

Their raft, now badly waterlogged, was gradually lowering itself into the sea, so that when sitting on it the water came up around their hips. It was impossible to sleep, except by one supporting the other in a sitting position.

There were times when a wan smile played at the corners of Evelyn's mouth when he attempted to reassure

her they would make it safely to land, but when she scanned the wide expanse of sea for islands and ships that were not there, a pathetic sadness came into her face, as if all hope had vanished. Nordensen now found his own voice lacked the confidence to be convincing.

That night it blew a gale from out of the south, and they were tossed about like jetsam. Several times the waterlogged motor cover was lifted high, and then slammed down in the wake of a towering wave. Nordensen was clinging with one hand to the raft, and had a grip on Evelyn with the other, when a daddy of all waves picked them and the raft up together, and slammed them down with explosive force.

Rolled over and over in the churning action of the sea, Nordensen fought his way to the surface and began shouting wildly for Evelyn. She was nowhere in sight, nor was the raft!

In the roar of the storm his voice was ineffectual.

Once more he faced the prospect of drowning, but that was of little concern to him now. He wanted only to find the girl.

Suddenly carried to the crest of a wave, he saw a dark object below him and rode the wave down.

It was the raft, and Evelyn was latched onto it. She hadn't been far from it at any time, she told him later.

"Her voice was the sweetest sound I ever heard," he later told me. "I'll remember that moment as long as I live."

They clung to the raft and rode out the storm, constantly on the alert for sharks. Back aboard the raft at last, Evelyn said a little prayer.

Dawn broke with clear skies, and they settled down to another day of waiting and watching. Time seemed to stand still.

In the afternoon, a small flock of birds resembling kildeer or plover and brought renewed hope. Where there were birds, land could not be far away!

Evelyn was the first to sight it. "Look! Land!"

A mile or so away, a sort of haze hung over what appeared to be a strip of land two or three miles long and several miles wide, though later it turned out to be somewhat narrower than that. The afternoon sun washed over the tree tops that thrust themselves up out of what appeared to be a jungle of green and yellow foliage.

Nordensen began paddling furiously. Though weak from hunger, Evelyn helped all she could. And at last they were sloshing through the surf to shore, where they danced about like lunatics, feeling of the dry sand and tossing it over their heads.

One of the first things they discovered was a spring above the level of high tide that was both sweet and palatable. After Evelyn drank from it she said, "I chisten this spring

'Adam and Eve on a Raft!'

They threw themselves down on the sandy beach then, and stretched out in the warm sun, their backs to the hot sand. It was such a relief not to have water sloshing over them, and to be on dry land, that they laughed and joked about their ordeal with the disdain that only the young can have for such things. Later, after they'd swept overhead and brought renewed tripped the raft, which eventually became their dining table.

While Nordensen went in search of food, Evelyn considered the problem of providing some sort of body covering. Tropical grasses seemed to be the answer.

When he returned, dragging by the tail a three-foot iguana he had slain with an ebony club, Evelyn was wearing a grass skirt and halter. She had made for him a skirt of the same material which he drew on and staged his interpretation of a Zulu war dance. It would have to do, she told him, until they found something better.

Skinning the iguana without a knife proved to be something of a problem, but with the sharp edge of a stone they worried off enough of the tough hide to get at the flesh, which they wolfed down like starved animals.

They then made two beds side by side, using grass and moss for cover and the soft, warm sand for a mattress. They slept until around noon of the following day.

Drawing upon his training as a Boy Scout, Nordensen now succeeded in starting a fire, a fire which was to burn for 91 days and nights! They had roast iguana for lunch.

Evelyn marveled at their accommodations. A bedroom with a view of the ocean, a table to eat on, a sea to step into for their morning dip, and a seemingly endless supply of food—what more could anyone ask? This was Paradise! And she promptly named their little island that. Lurking, however, in the depths of the jungle was a danger they had not yet discovered, one that before long would become the bane of their existence, a thing to fear and avoid.

During their first three or four days on the island, they explored parts of it, looking for food sources. They found a strip of sandy beach, where a small fish from six to eight inches in length came in with the tide to bury itself in the sand. There were so many of them, right after a high tide, they could scoop them up in their bare hands.

Under the rocks just off shore, they found small crab in sufficient numbers to provide a tasty meal now and then. It was off-season for fruits and berries, yet the island was a virtual storehouse of good things to eat. Iguanas and monkeys sometimes marched right through camp, and one old monk came daily to sit at a respectable distance and watch them dine.

"He wants to see if we're eating any of his relatives," Evelyn said.

It was on the sixth or seventh day that they discovered the fresh footprints in the sand. Bare footprints that they themselves hadn't made!

"If there's someone on this island," Evelyn said, "why hasn't he shown himself? Why would he hide from us?"

It was a question for which Nordensen had no answer. They had believed the island to be uninhabited. They had supposed it to be one of the Samales group, a series of tiny islets that lie east of the Sulu archipelago. None of these was believed to be inhabited. To find someone occupying Paradise was due cause for alarm. Since no one had appeared to welcome them, it seemed that their presence there must be resented.

Discovery of the footprints caused them to curtail their movements for a few days. They remained close to camp, venturing no greater a distance from it than was necessary to gather their food. A large pile of green twigs and leaves was prepared to be thrown on the fire in the event a plane or ship was sighted. The green wood when burning would send a dense black cloud of smoke into the sky, denoting a distress signal.

Four days passed with no further sign of anyone being about.

All the islands in that area had been occupied, first by the Japanese and then by American troops. Had some soldier, American or Japanese, become stranded there, unable to get off? This seemed the most likely answer.

With no weapon of any kind with which to defend themselves, Nordensen decided to try to lure the man, or woman, into the open, and persuade him or her to abandon his hide-and-seek antics. It was possible that the owner of the footprints was a woman, but unlikely, Nordensen thought. They seemed too broad to be a woman's.

Messages left scrawled in the wet sand along the beach went unheeded.

As more days passed, Nordensen and Miss Frazier ventured farther afield. They came upon a small cave that showed signs of recent habitation. In it they found a towel stamped "U. S. Army," an unopened can of American sardines, and part of a can of Volger's coffee. On a shelf, Nordensen discovered a small pocket knife of Japanese manufacture.

The knife and coffee they welcomed with enthusiasm. They emptied the can of its contents and had coffee for the first time in many days. The can made the boiling of food possible and they had hot water too. The knife came in handy for many things, such as opening clams and cleaning fish, and for skinning the animals they killed or caught in snares. It also would serve as a small weapon.

Venturing to the far end of the island, they now came upon an abandoned grass shack containing three pairs of Navy dungarees, a can of Campbell's tomato soup, and an Army undershirt.

This changed their thinking some-

what. The island's recluse might indeed be a stranded American soldier, perhaps one who, finding himself alone on the island, had gone berserk. The possibility that he might be Japanese also was not ruled out. But all efforts to lure him into the open failed.

There were several springs on the island, they discovered. The land was boggy in places, due to its having an elevation of only a few feet above sea level. The water coming to the surface had a slightly salty taste at certain low spots, but was palatable.

"I don't get it," Evelyn said. "Why would this person resent our being here? It seems unlikely that he would reject human companionship."

"Perhaps he's a Jap soldier, and he doesn't know the war's over. He still looks upon all Americans as enemies."

"You may be right, at that. It's the most logical explanation."

Twice more they discovered the mysterious footprints in the strip of sand, where the strange little fish came in at high tide to burrow into nests overnight. They found depressions where the owner of the footprints had dug for his next meal. On two successive nights, when the moon was full, Nordensen watched from the edge of the jungle, but no one appeared.

Late one evening, when he was out in the shallow water at low tide gathering mussels from off the rocks, a rifle barked from somewhere at the jungle's edge, and a bullet slammed into the water a few feet away.

Nordensen ducked behind a rock as four more slugs splashed in the sea around him, but none came close. Then he saw Evelyn running toward him from camp, and he waved her back out of range. When darkness came, he waded ashore and returned to camp under a cover of night. There he found Evelyn in a state of panic.

"Somehow I don't believe he was trying to kill me," he told her. "The shots were too scattered. I had the impression he was trying to frighten me away."

Yet the bullets opened a new chapter in what had started out to be an idle, carefree life. Their island paradise had suddenly become a place of imminent danger, with a threat of death stalking their every move.

Thereafter Nordensen went to dig for clams and fish only after darkness came on, a wary eye out for the rifleman. And due to the changing tide table, it was not always possible to perform these chores after dark.

Evelyn had washed the dungarees found in the shack, and the two castaways were again quite civilized in appearance. Evelyn had converted the Army undershirt into a halter for herself.

Nordensen left more messages in the sand.

*We are your friends. Come and see us.*

No one came, and they continued to



live in fear of their lives.

At one place near camp, they found an expanded cartridge for an American automatic rifle. The empty shell appeared to have lain there for some time.

The absence of passing steamers, which had regular ports of call and moved about over the Celebes Sea at frequent intervals, suggested to Nordensen that the little island must lay far from the shipping lanes. Were they marooned on any of the islands between the Celebes Sea and the Sulu archipelago, they would surely have sighted steamers before now. Most of the uncharted and unnamed islands of the Sulu group were within sight of each other, but from Paradise there was no other speck of land visible to the naked eye.

Airplanes were sometimes heard in the distance, but none came within range, although each time one approached green leaves were heaped on the fire creating dense smoke that climbed high in the sky when there was no breeze to carry it away.

Each night Nordensen shifted their beds to avoid a surprise attack after dark. He did most of his sleeping by day, with Evelyn standing guard.

They lived now like a pair of frightened rabbits, never knowing when death would strike.

One night Evelyn awakened with a stinging sensation in her shoulder. An inspection of the area by firelight disclosed a tiny red spot, the result of an insect bite of some kind, possibly a spider. She thought little about it until her shoulder began to swell. By sunup the pain was agonizing.

Nordensen lanced the tiny wound and sucked out half a pint of blood, then he bathed it in hot water and applied a mud poultice.

By mid-afternoon, the girl was only semi-conscious.

It was during this dark moment that the island's other inhabitant chose to present himself, bearing a white flag of truce and an American BAR rifle.

He was a Japanese, in a tattered uniform, and was grinning from ear to ear. "I am come to surrender," he said in English, "My name Takeo Hatsuwaka, of Japanese Army. You take prisoner—yes?"

Nordensen found the man's grin encouraging but he had other things on his mind. "You know anything about poisonous insect bites?"

Unfortunately Hatsuwaka didn't, but he approved of the hot poultices. He said he had been on the island for about two-and-a-half years, and until that very month the only humans he had seen were five Americans in a PT boat who had landed briefly and departed.

Didn't he know that Japan had surrendered, and the war was over?

No, he said, he had now way of knowing that, but he was not surprised. For the past 26 months he had not seen a ship or a plane that he could identify as Japanese. All had been of U.S. design.

The Americans in their sweep

through the archipelago had not bothered with this spot not until the PT boat came. When its crew went off to explore the island, Hatsuwaka had slipped aboard in an effort to make off in it but the crew had taken the ignition key and in the short time they were gone he had been unable to start it. So he had grabbed everything in sight he could carry, including the BAR rifle, two bandoleers of ammunition for it, and some canned goods and clothing, and scurried back to his hiding place. The Americans had missed the stuff and made a search of the island, but he was too well concealed, and they finally went away.

Before the war he had been a share-cropper near Stockton, Calif. Having saved up some money, he had returned to Japan for a wife, and was there when Pearl Harbor erupted. He said he had no sympathy with the Japanese war lords but was forced to join the army. He was sent to the Philippines, and later to an outlying island. Their assault boat sank during a storm and many hours later, with a life belt about him, he had landed on this island. There had been no other survivors so far as he knew.

"If you were not in sympathy with the Japanese war lords, why did you take several shots at me?" Nordensen wanted to know.

*If the way in which men express their thoughts is slipshod and mean, it will be very difficult for their thoughts themselves to escape being the same—Alford.*

He was very sorry, he said. Not knowing the war actually was over, he was afraid the Americans would kill him because he was still an enemy. "But I am bad shot," he confessed. "I not even come close."

That morning he had found one of Nordensen's messages that he was able to understand and decided to come in and surrender. Just to show there were no hard feelings on his part, he handed over the BAR rifle and a trench knife he carried.

After another few hours Evelyn's condition began to improve and by the following morning she was able to take nourishment. From then on her recovery was rapid.

With peace restored to the tiny island, their spirits returned and they were gay. They even relaxed from the constant vigil of watching for ships. From an alert island recluse, Hatsuwaka assumed the role of servant, and he waited on them hand and foot. Their protests were to no

avail; he wanted, he said, to make up for his reprehensible conduct.

Life for the three castaways eventually became so pleasant that no one seemed to care about ships and airplanes. The days were pleasant and bright, the nights full of stars and a big moon that seemed to smile down upon them.

The air eventually turned crisp, but the nights remained beautiful and enchanting.

On one of these nights the sea moaned gently, and above the sound came the hum of an airplane far away.

"Aircraft!" Nordensen shouted. "Quick, the fire!"

They heaped dry wood on it until the leaping flames made flickering trails across the water.

The plane, an old PBV, came on, passed directly over the camp as the three castaways ran wildly about, shouting like maniacs.

It passed over, circled, came back and dropped a flare.

It made one more swing, then settled gently onto the water a hundred yards off shore.

On a task of recovering U. S. government property scattered over the area, the PBV, piloted by Lieut. Burt L. Brown, of Milwaukee, Wis., with Lieut. Alvin B. Holcomb of Seattle, Wash., acting navigator, had stayed off course and was lost. Brown had dropped down to get his bearings and had seen the fire. But he still didn't know to what group of islands this one belonged.

After 91 days on the island Evelyn had named Paradise, Nordensen and his two companions were taken to Manila, where arrangements were made to send Hatsuwaka back to Japan and the bride he had not seen in more than four years. Getting in touch with their money sources, Miss Frazier with her father, a Melbourne contractor, and Nordensen with his bank in Sydney, both soon were re-outfitted and ready to proceed to their ultimate destinations.

But suddenly they discovered they did not want to part. Where one went the other must go. They were married in Manila, and spent a month honeymooning in Hawaii, after which they returned to Australia.

When they were my guests in Arizona, it was two years later, and they were just winding up a trip that had taken them as far as New Hampshire to visit Nordensen's parents.

"Some day soon," Evelyn Nordensen told me, "we're going back to Paradise, and build a house on it. We don't yet know which island it is, but we'll find it."

They wrote me a couple of times after that from Melbourne, and then I heard no more. A letter I sent to Nordensen in June, 1959, and another in November of the same year, have not been answered. Neither has either been returned, so I would not be surprised to hear eventually that they are back on Paradise, this time to stay.

## Shame of Iwo

Continued from page 17

Beasts and birds judiciously avoided it. Men cursed their bad fortune when they had to stop over, even for a night. It fell to Japan purely by default, because nobody else came to collect it.

Iwo Jima first popped into Washington considerations only in September 1943, when the war was almost two years old. The Joint War Planning Commission stumbled upon this godforsaken spot and marked it down for future reference, as a *potentially* useful objective on our way to Tokyo. Even then, so little information was on tap about Iwo that the Washington planners spoke of it as part of the Bonins, although it actually belonged to a group known as the Volcano Islands.

As the tide of the war turned, the Japanese had also recognized the strategic significance of the island, and had begun to build it up into a mighty defensive bastion. By 1944, they had two airfields operational on Iwo, used by their Navy planes to harass our Fortresses. A powerful radar station spotted the bombers on their way to Japan, and then warned Tokyo of their approach.

It was getting too much! B-29 crews began cracking up under the strain. Air Force morale was sagging badly on Saipan and Tinian.

The Air Force now literally begged the Joint Chiefs to give them Iwo. But they encountered stiff opposition from the Chiefs, who, from their Washington vantage point, had different plans. They hoped to solve the problem with the more spectacular conquest of Formosa.

Fortunately for the Air Force, the top brass in the Pacific had a very low opinion of Formosa. The idea of taking Iwo instead was gaining the upper hand when Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander-in-chief of all Pacific operations, joined its advocates.

Admiral Nimitz's interest in Iwo was kindled by a top secret study prepared by Captain Forrest Sherman, head of his Fleet War Plans Division. Captain Sherman agreed with the commanding generals of the Army and Air Force in the Pacific who saw "no advantage whatsoever in the capture of Formosa." They asked for Iwo or another foothold in the Bonin-Volcano groups. Moreover, Sherman pointed out that the forces in the Pacific were insufficient for an objective as big as Formosa.

That clinched the argument as far as Nimitz was concerned.

Target date was set for January 20, 1945.

Up to this point, the Marines were blissfully unaware of what was being cooked up for them. For the Marines, life in the Pacific had boiled down to training for combat, combat, more training followed by more combat. Used to doing what they were told to

do, and excluded from the strategic planning of even those campaigns which they had to execute, they stolidly waited for their next assignment—Formosa or Iwo. It made little difference to them.

They had three divisions available for either operation. In August, the 3rd Marine Division had completed the liberation of Guam. Before that, in June and July, the 4th Marine Division had participated in the conquest of Saipan and Tinian. The 5th Marine Division was not yet battle-tested, but it had many seasoned veterans of prior operations.

It wasn't until October 9, 1944, that General Smith, commanding general of the Fleet Marine Force in the Pacific, was first told by Admiral Nimitz that Iwo would be his next job. He received his orders "to seize Iwo," together with an already completed study of the operation made within the week by Admiral Nimitz's staff; and with a directive naming the command echelon of the operation.

Contrary to popular belief, the Marine Corps was never in actual charge of these amphibious epics, certainly not up to the water's edge. The Marine brass entered the picture relatively low in the staggered command structure, and had a rather subordinate position in the chain of command. Furthermore, General Smith was a fairly low man on the totem pole. Admiral Spruance was designated Operation Commander responsible to Admiral Nimitz. He was followed by a galaxy of other admirals: Vice Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, to command the Joint Expeditionary Force; Rear Admiral Harry W. Hill, to be his Second-in-Command; Rear Admiral William H. P. Blandy, in command of the Amphibious Support Force; and other admirals and captains, to command the Gunfire Covering Force, the Support Carrier Group, the Mine Group, the Underwater Demolition Group and so on down to the Air Support Control Unit.

Designated in fourth place in the directive, after Nimitz, Spruance and Turner, General Smith's job was supposed to begin where the Navy's job ended—at the water's edge. But Smith thought his *responsibilities* began long before that—with the boarding of the first invasion-bound Marine on a Navy ship.

On his part, Smith designated Major General Harry Schmidt, commanding general of the V Amphibious Corps, to command the Landing Force on Iwo; and instructed him to draw up a tentative blueprint of the operation, with a shopping list of his needs.

Schmidt had to do his planning in the straitjacket of two serious limitations. One was the mass of intelligence data that was pouring in but, on closer scrutiny, proved to be alarmingly deficient in hard facts of truly up-to-date vintage. The other was the strictly rationed support he was told to expect from the Navy.

Throughout the Pacific war, intel-

ligence was uncommonly facilitated by a startling laxity in Japanese security, even in the most forward combat zones. Indoctrinated with a spirit of invincibility, Japan's combat troops could not very well be told to burn their papers when facing certain defeat. As a result, every command post we captured in the Pacific was literally bulging with invaluable intelligence data in files the enemy had carelessly left behind.

However, there was a grave deficiency in this lavish intelligence support—it was excellent as far as it went, but it did not go far enough. This was an operation planned for the early winter of 1945, but the intelligence data pre-dated July 1944.

There was an intelligence gap of at least eight fateful months that was serious enough by itself. It was near fatal by a fantastic development on Iwo of which the planners in Pearl Harbor remained largely unaware.

Just when American intelligence was more or less closing the book on Iwo, the Japanese decided to open it up and completely rewrite this chapter of the Pacific war. It was done with such skill and in such secrecy that it completely fooled American intelligence and seriously undermined the quality of our plans.

While Iwo was rather late in the war to attract American attention, it began to figure prominently in Japanese plans long before it became a real bone of contention. Already in 1943, they began the construction of a network of three airfields, and in 1944, they had two of them operational. They started pouring troops into the tiny island, until by May-June, 1944, they had 7,000 men on the rock.

The growing density of Iwo's population even appalled the Japanese commander, and thereby made him the wrong man in the right place, in the eyes of his superiors in Tokyo. They replaced him with a man who came determined to immortalize himself with a bitter-end defense of Iwo. He was Lt. Gen. Tadamichi Kuribayashi, a ruthless martinet and a metallic fighting machine, a cavalry officer of the old Samurai school, and one totally dedicated to the Bushido spirit.

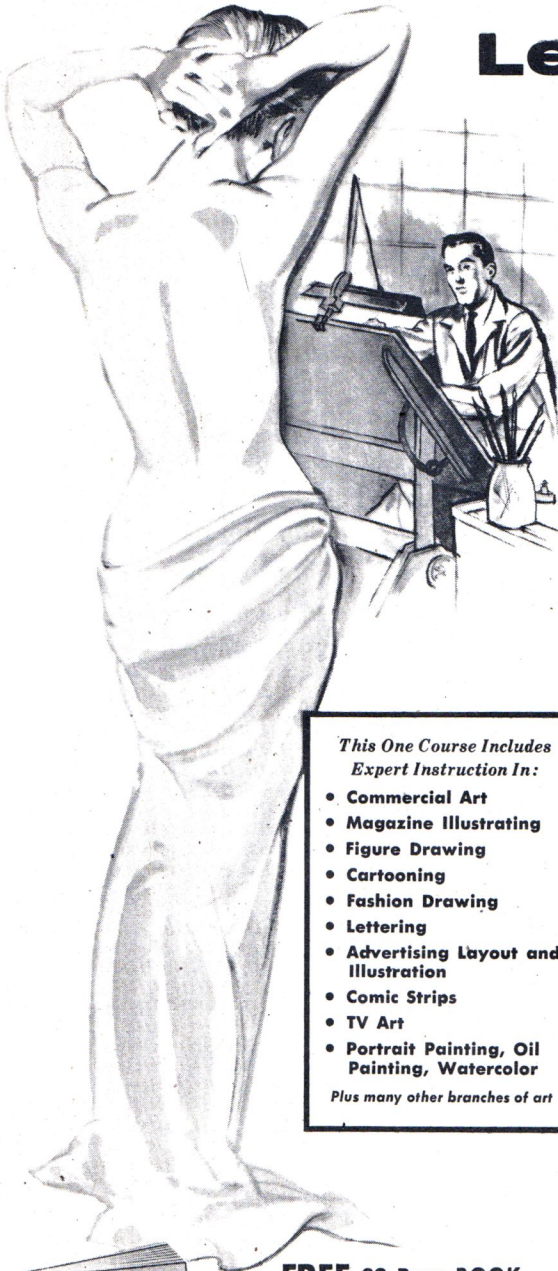
In a period of only eight months, and largely unbeknown by our intelligence, Gen. Kuribayashi turned the perfunctorily-fortified island into an almost impregnable bastion, bristling with guns, covered with pillboxes and blockhouses, and garrisoned by a force that was out of all proportion to the size and apparent importance of Iwo.

Even more important than the surface fortifications of the island, which Kuribayashi inherited and expanded, was a subterranean network which enabled him to fight the war on two levels—both on and under the ground. This was his answer to the major preparatory measure of the United States, bombardment from the air. His active defense against our air raids was only moderately successful, deceiving us into an exaggeration of the effectiveness of those raids. How-

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ever, Kuribayashi's passive defense preparations were so formidable and successful that they enabled him to conserve his strength virtually intact.

In the end, eight months of intermittent bombardment, 72 days of daily land-based air raids, and three days of stepped-up shelling did little even to scratch these fortifications.

Kuribayashi's system of static defense was based on an ingenious exploitation of Iwo's many caves. They were improved and made habitable; their entrances were camouflaged and so planned as to make them virtually impregnable even to direct hits. The network ranged from small caves that could accommodate only a few men to several so big as to house up to 2,000 men.

Kuribayashi then set out, in the short time available to him, to build a system of tunnels to connect the caves and the various defense sections. His plans called for some 40,000 yards of such underground passageways. About 5,000 yards of them had been completed when we landed. One of these passages, near an airfield, was capable of accommodating 2,000 troops. Another, 500-foot-long tunnel, about 75 feet underground, led to Kuribayashi's main communications center. It was a large blockhouse of reinforced concrete whose roof was ten feet thick.

The fantastic revamping of the barren rock into an impregnable fortress went on at breakneck speed, but little of it was evident to our intelligence. Men and material kept pouring into Iwo, from as far away as Tokyo. Kuribayashi's building program needed enormous quantities of cement and reinforcing rods, and other vital construction material. He was getting almost everything he needed. His new gun positions clamored for more guns and he was getting them, too. The new fortified positions needed men and more men, and they were arriving on schedule. Some of this build-up could not escape the attention of American observers now flying daily sorties over Iwo. Yet most of it did. Or if it did not escape them, their observations certainly failed to alert American intelligence to the magnitude of Gen. Kuribayashi's program.

Our ignorance of Kuribayashi's move under ground, and his complete revamping of Iwo's surface fortifications with an intricate system of new pillboxes and blockhouses, was but one of the several gaps in the American intelligence effort.

Our failure to recognize the magnitude of the build-up of his garrison was another.

Our intelligence properly assumed that Kuribayashi was getting in reinforcements. But it badly underestimated the flow. The documents captured on Saipan showed that even in May-June 1944, Kuribayashi had about 7,000 officers and men in his command. By October-November, intelligence figured he had a garrison approaching 10,000. The last estimate of the Japanese order of battle was prepared on January 6, 1945, at a

time when all arrangements for the invasion had been completed.

The final head-count of American intelligence gave the grand total of Japanese strength on Iwo as a maximum of 13,900 officers and men, of whom only 10,800 were thought to be combat troops.

By then, however, Kuribayashi actually had 21,060 men on Iwo, all of them trained and equipped for combat. His actual combat strength was thus double our intelligence's final estimate!

Our intelligence was similarly far off the mark in its estimate of the Japanese heavy weapons on Iwo, the very guns which were to raise such havoc with the Marines, and kill and maim so many of them. And no wonder! Even between December 3, 1944 and February 10, 1945, Japanese gun positions increased by as much as 700 per cent, while the percentage of the increase was in the thousands over the status reflected in those captured Japanese documents, getting more antiquated by the hour.

To top it all, our intelligence did not even know that Kuribayashi was on Iwo, much less what revolutionary and costly changes he was making there. Intelligence reports named Major General Koto Osuka as the senior officer in over-all command on Iwo, although he had been replaced by General Senda in December 1944; and although both Osuka and Senda only commanded the Army's mixed brigade.

*A man in the right, with  
God on his side, is in the  
majority though he be alone  
—H. W. Beecher.*

Kuribayashi was known to be somewhere in the area. But our intelligence located him on Chichi Jima, where he was supposed to be watching, more or less idly, the developing doom of Iwo.

The haphazard nature of this intelligence effort, for a major operation against an island shrouded in mystery, can best be illustrated by two examples.

Early in December 1944, the submarine *Spearfish* sneaked up to the coast of Iwo, and its enterprising skipper upped periscope, hoping to be able to observe the island and watch the activities of the Japanese troops. His observations proved invaluable, but his was virtually the only eyewitness report we had. This independent surveillance by the commanding officer of a random sub, made upon his own initiative, remained the sole effort to obtain first-hand information.

Not until the Navy's underwater demolition teams, and a handful of Marines accompanying them, brought back soil samples a couple of days before the landings did we have an accurate knowledge of the forbidding nature of the beaches, and of the

volcanic ash that covered them. By then it was far too late to adapt our vehicles to the terrain or to issue field shoes that would have prevented the men from sinking ankle deep into the soft ash.

While deficiencies were rampant in every respect (and even the trusted charts supplied by the U.S. Hydrographic Office proved out-dated or inaccurate), some of our intelligence officers permitted themselves to be carried away by their imagination, and to indulge in a bit of war-time melodrama. Photo interpretation revealed the existence of many partially-buried gasoline drums on the beaches. Someone in intelligence, who recalled the alleged British strategem to pour oil on the English Channel and thus build a wall of fire to prevent the Nazis from invading England, now warned that these gasoline drums might be there to serve a similar purpose—to check our landing forces with a curtain of fire. However, no panic was created by this figment of the imagination, and no special arrangements were made to counter it. This one suspected Japanese defense gimmick failed to materialize.

It should be evident even from this random listing that Iwo was one of the major intelligence blunders of the war. In retrospect, our entire intelligence effort for Iwo appears to have been totally inadequate, even smug and arrogant. It failed altogether to present a comprehensive and accurate picture of the island. It misled the planners in drafting their blueprints. And, worst of all, it sent the Marines into an island about which we knew terribly little, and what little we knew proved dangerously, expensively inaccurate.

In actual fact, the whole venture was gravely endangered by these shortcomings of our intelligence, and only last minute luck saved us from a major disaster that could have thwarted the landings. The Japanese had built ingeniously located positions for heavy guns to cover the beaches on which they expected us to land. These positions represented a potentially fatal threat to the invasion, but our intelligence failed to have even the slightest inkling of them.

Fortunately for us, on February 17

—the second day of our pre-invasion bombardment—the Japs were misled into opening a murderous fire from these very batteries whose location was entirely unknown until then. This fatal blunder of the enemy enabled us to pinpoint their most dangerous gun positions, those which flanked our landing beaches. According to General Schmidt, only their last-minute destruction enabled the Marines even to land on D-Day.

The whole Japanese defense plan was based on a network of major defensive installations—systems of pillboxes, blockhouses and caves—and these became primarily responsible for the heavy casualties. Our intelligence tried to locate these defensive

installations, but managed to pinpoint only those that could be seen on the aerial photographs. In their final report, they told the Marines about 450 of such installations, all they could find plus an upward estimate. In actual fact, the Marines bumped into 750 of them and found even those whose existence was known fully or virtually intact. Inadequate as the naval gunfire was, it proved even more ineffective because our intelligence had failed to ascertain and advise about the true strength of the installations!

Who was responsible for this near-fatal intelligence blunder, which had such unprecedented casualties as a result?

The Marines had two major intelligence organizations working on Iwo—the G-2 of General Smith's "Task Force 56," headed by Col. Edmond J. Buckley; and the G-2 of General Schmidt's V Amphibious Corps headed by Col. Thomas R. Yancey, an Army officer loaned for the operation. But the limited intelligence organization of the Marines was not equipped to procure the kind of sweeping and detailed information needed in advance by the planners of the campaign. Buckley's, and especially Yancey's, sections were assigned chiefly to combat intelligence, expected to supply tactical information during the campaign, to interrogate prisoners, and to exploit captured documents.

How little the Marines themselves had of their own was highlighted by the fact that the G-2 section of the Expeditionary Troops was thrown together from intelligence officers of the Fleet Marine Force; but even this improvised organization began to function only in December, when the planning stage of the campaign had been concluded and the vast bulk of intelligence data was frozen "as was" as of that date, some two months prior to the actual invasion.

By contrast, Japanese intelligence turned out to be uncannily excellent. Gen. Kuribayashi put his intelligence units into high gear in the immediate wake of Saipan's fall, in July 1944, and kept it there to the bitter end. In addition, he was supplied with the highest quality intelligence from Tokyo.

Even while our ships were assembling, Japanese submarines kept them under constant surveillance and reported every move to Tokyo. Due to these snooping subs, and to their communications intelligence, the element of surprise at Iwo was completely cancelled out, although it figured most prominently in our own calculations, and was instrumental in the Navy's eventual decision to curtail the softening-up of Iwo. Some ten to fourteen days prior to the assault, and about a week before the first American ship appeared off Iwo, Tokyo warned Kuribayashi that the attack was imminent! How accurate and detailed this information was became abundantly evident from the documents we captured on Iwo. A

notebook found on a dead Japanese contained this intelligence:

"The task force will take four days to arrive at Iwo Jima from Saipan. One battleship, 18 cruisers and destroyers, 40 transports left Hawaii. (? and 5th Marine Division) 3rd and 4th Marine Divisions, one brigade." The question mark could be left at that. In actual fact, only the three divisions listed participated in the operation.

Thanks to their intelligence, Kuribayashi had ample time to alert and deploy his forces. He put them in Condition Red on February 14; and by next day, or four days before our landings, all Japanese units had left their bivouacs and took up their battle assignments.

It is obvious that foolproof intelligence is essential for foolproof planning. As it is, not even the greatest tactical genius in the world can plan safely and well with blatantly, grossly-faulty intelligence data. Yet the planning of Gen. Schmidt suffered from other, equally detrimental arrangements, similarly unconvincing to saving Marine lives.

Most discouraging even at this stage was the strict rationing of naval support the Marines could expect for the operation.

In the beginning, Smith and Schmidt were told that the Navy would give them a cruiser division to begin the shelling of Iwo on D-minus 8, and seven old battleships, with six additional cruisers, to step up the shelling on D-minus 3. The two Marine generals recoiled. Even in the face of the inadequate intelligence data about Iwo's defenses, the Marines' naval gunfire specialists warned them in no uncertain terms that the island needed an awful lot of hot lead to soften it up.

It became evident to Smith and Schmidt that much more was needed than what the Navy was willing to supply. Already on October 24, General Schmidt asked for 10 days of shelling by the cruiser division, and at least 3 days by the old BBs and the additional cruisers. He was profoundly shaken by the answer he received.

Admiral Turner informed him that his request could not be met. Worse still, Turner now advised him that a general shift in schedules and the needs of General MacArthur (who was then mounting his dramatic return to the Philippines) had necessitated a downward revision of naval preliminary fire. The cruiser division was out. Total naval preliminary fire was cut to three days of battleship bombardment!

By then, General Smith had even broader qualms. In the innermost recesses of his mind, he was not quite sure that this whole trip to Iwo was necessary at all.

"When Admiral Nimitz advised me that Iwo Jima was to be our next objective," General Smith told me, "we had already captured Saipan, Tinian and Guam. We had then just

finished the mopping up on Palau. I felt that the Marines' war had come to an end with the capture of Palau.

"My feelings were based on certain conversations I had a few months before with a bright Jap on Saipan. He was a certain Yoshida, a mere major, but actually far more important than his rank indicated. He was the liaison officer of Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo to the high command in the Marianas. While the Japs on Saipan had only a tactical view of their own situation, Yoshida knew the strategic score.

"Major Yoshida surrendered to us, not because he was yellow by any means, but because he was firmly convinced that Japan had already lost the war. 'It is only a matter of a very short time,' he told me, 'before Tokyo will throw in the sponge.'

"This was only the middle of 1944. But Yoshida proved to my satisfaction that Japan was licked. I presume the same sort of information was also available to General MacArthur and the Joint Chiefs in Washington," General Smith continued, "but they seemed to be blind to the facts of life and to our real opportunities.

"General MacArthur insisted that a large scale invasion, approximately the magnitude of the European invasion, was necessary to reduce Japan. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and our Allies were of the same opinion, and all our plans were based upon this strategic assumption.

"But despite these grandiose concepts, I refused to believe that we would have to fight our way into the country. After October 26, 1944, no more naval threat from Japan existed. My opinion hardened as the weeks went by. The original target date for Iwo was January 20, 1945. It was moved to February 3 because MacArthur refused to release the ships we needed, although his campaign in the Philippines was as good as won. At any rate, he no longer needed that kind of naval support.

"D-Day was finally set for February 19, 1945.

"I did not know about them at that time, but two major developments in the war tended independently to bear out my own opinion that Japan could have been defeated without the conquest of Iwo. One was the decision reached at Yalta that Russia would come into the Pacific war. The other was the A-bomb, then abuilding at Oak Ridge and Los Alamos. Here we had three trump cards—Soviet participation, the A-bomb, and Iwo. We needed one or two of them to win, but not all three. And of the three, of course, Iwo was the least important.

"It is my opinion," General Smith concluded, "that we would have won without Iwo. And without Iwo, 6,000 American lives could have been saved."

General Smith was speaking to me from the vantage point of hindsight. Whatever his views had been

when Admiral Nimitz told him to "seize Iwo," he accepted his orders without a demurrer. What with forty years in the Marine Corps, he was sufficiently tradition-bound to recognize his own place in the chain of command.

While he accepted the assignment without a word, he refused with everything he had to accept the curtailment of naval support in ships and fire. But every one of his and Gen. Schmidt's requests for additional firing time received the same answer from Admiral Turner: the Navy's schedule would provide adequate preparation without even one more day. The decision was final.

Still worse was in store for the exasperated Marines. At midnight, January 26, 1945, Admiral Spruance assumed command of the 5th Fleet and became Operation Commander of the Iwo enterprise, in fact as well as in name. The first thing he did was to organize a fast carrier strike by Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's Task Force 58 on the Tokyo area, to coincide with the three-day bombardment of Iwo. Apparently smarting from his own failure to score a decisive victory in the Battle of the Philippine Sea the year before, he now had his heart set on making this strike the most spectacular naval effort of the war and, indeed, the culmination of his own career.

General Smith was nonplused. He expected Mitscher's Task Force to aid the Iwo operation, but now even this hope—for it was little more than that—went up in smoke. Still the cup was not full. Next, Admiral Spruance took away the *USS Washington* and the *USS North Carolina*, two of the new, 16-inch-gun battleships which represented the backbone of what Smith called "the niggardly allotment of fire," and assigned them to Task Force 58 for the strike against the Tokyo area.

Then even Admiral Turner voiced protest. Admiral Spruance signalled back his apologies, pointed out the historic importance of the strike, expressed his regrets—and allowed no change in the arrangements.

This was the situation on D-minus 8, when the huge expeditionary force was already deploying for the invasion. On that February day, Gen. Smith produced his last trump card, hoping against hope to make the admirals see the light, and to get from them whatever increase he could in naval gunfire. His trump card was a bitter memo from Col. Dudley S. Brown, his chief of staff.

"Naval gunfire has been so weakened," Col. Brown wrote, "as to jeopardize the success of the operation. Certainly, under the present plan of support, assuming that the initial landings are successful, the cost in Marines killed will be far greater than under the plan agreed upon before our departure from Pearl Harbor."

Even this prophetic memo failed to make the slightest dent.

Admiral Spruance sent back a signal that, in the light of subsequent events, seems truly fantastic.

"I regret" he wrote, "*this confusion caused in your carefully-laid plans, but I know you and your people will get away with it.*"

It was with a huge armada to be sure, but one that was woefully reduced in fire power, that the Navy deployed for the Battle for Iwo Jima. Upon arrival at the objective, the remaining big battle wagons—all of them pre-World War II, old battleships—came under the direction of Admiral Blandy, one of the best friends the Marines had in the Navy. Blandy was on the *Estes*, doing the best he could. But decisions on the spot were in the hands of Turner on the *Eldorado*. And the final decision was with Spruance, who was nowhere near Iwo Jima. His mind was preoccupied with that "historic strike" against Tokyo.

*One lie engenders another—once committed, the liar has to go on in his course of lying; it is the penalty of his transgression*  
—Jacox.

Firing commenced at 0800, on February 16, 1945—on D-minus 3, exactly as the admirals wanted it. The weather was dismal, the ceiling low, visibility almost nil. All firing schedules had to be thrown overboard. The shelling became sporadic and intermittent.

At the end of this first day's firing, damage to the enemy's installations appeared negligible. One day down. Two to go.

The weather improved on D-minus 2 and the softening up fire now seemed to have accomplished considerably more than on the day before. But the last day of preliminary naval gunfire began with the job far from finished. Then on D-minus 1, visibility again deteriorated. Observers and spotters found their task almost impossible because of a low ceiling. Frequent light rains during the day further interfered both with the firing schedules and observations.

During rare moments when Iwo became visible, all the observers could see was that the bombardment had been a flop. But in the evening on February 18, the softening-up phase had ended. Blandy's heavy units had withdrawn from Iwo, their job far from accomplished. Due to the intermittent nature of the bombardment, and the unduly frequent pauses between periods of shelling, *their allotted ammunition was not expended.*

Now, on the very eve of D-Day, both photographs and reports indicated that by and large Iwo's defenses remained intact. Confusion was rampant on the *Eldorado*. It became compounded by a message from Admiral Spruance. Apparently alarmed

by the patently negligible results of the bombardment, Spruance now amazed Blandy by authorizing him to defer the landings "if the required reduction of targets (had) not (been) accomplished."

The solution of the thorny dilemma was abandoned by the Operation Commander. Turner and Blandy became truly the men on the spot. Blandy equivocated. One more day of bombardment, he advised Turner, could find and destroy additional installations; but *if necessary*, he added, landing could be accomplished as scheduled.

By then Admiral Turner was on pins and needles. Sporadic raids by Kamikaze planes wrought havoc with some of his units, and he was apprehensive that more of the same was on the way. While Smith and Schmidt waited with bated breath, knowing full well what was waiting for their Marines after this dismal pre-invasion bombardment, Admiral Turner announced his decision:

He ordered the execution of the assault plans without modification. The preliminary bombardment phase was finished. D-Day for Iwo Jima remained as set, February 19, 1945.

*The Marines were sent into an island whose major defenses were totally unknown to us, and those which were known remained largely intact.* In this single sentence is wrapped up the tragedy of Iwo Jima.

Years later, General Smith summed up the grave event for me.

"At Iwo Jima," he said, "I asked for ten days' bombardment, and had to compromise on only three days' fire, to prepare for the Marine landing on perhaps the strongest fortified island in the world, where every yard of volcanic terrain was covered by Japanese guns.

"The Navy idea of battle economy often reached unbelievable proportions. After our series of amphibious successes, the Navy began to wonder, I think, if they were giving us too much gunfire. Perhaps the Marines could get along with less, they thought. One of my biggest and most hopeless fights with Admiral Nimitz, and with almost every other admiral associated with me in this operation, was to get them to see my viewpoint on naval gunfire.

"In the case of Iwo Jima I completely failed to sway them. At Tarawa, they could not take out the visible defenses. But on Iwo, the defenses were *invisible*. They needed so much more pounding, but we were given so much less! It was enough to drive one insane!

"If the Marines had received better cooperation from the Navy, our casualties would have been lower! More naval gunfire would have saved many lives!"

Old Howlin' Mad, who had resorted to prayer on the night before the invasion, trying to get from Divine Providence what he failed to obtain from the admirals, was thoroughly

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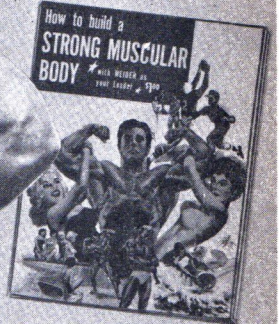
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and eloquently disgusted. He stayed put during the campaign, but the moment the island was declared occupied, he left the scene of his gravest disillusionment.

The war was not over yet. His Marines had still another hard nut to crack—Okinawa. But Smith had had enough. He no longer had the strength to haggle with the admirals; and he refused to serve under an Army general, and under MacArthur in particular.

He was going home to retire. But he ran into a new battle.

When stories about the heavy casualties on Iwo leaked out, an avalanche of anguished protests came down upon the Pentagon. The big brass of the Marine Corps was to bear the brunt of this home-front assault, and General Smith was singled out as the man primarily responsible for the massacre.

In his rumpled utility greens, looking at you with a sardonic smile from behind old-fashioned, steel-rimmed glasses, the stocky, old Marine looked more like a permissive father who could not slap the behind of a certified brat. In actual fact, Smith was spectacularly tough, with a quick temper, a colorful vocabulary, and an innate flair for dramatizing his volcanic eruptions.

Already, in 1906, when he was a mere lieutenant in the Philippines, leading his company of Marines on nothing worse than long cross-country hikes, he was hung with his nickname, "Howlin' Mad." That sobriquet was to haunt him for the rest of his life. It became responsible for his fierce reputation in World War II, and now it made him the obvious scapegoat. To top it all, he got a new nickname in the process—they started calling him the "Butcher of Iwo Jima."

Old Howlin' Mad retired in July 1945, a month before V-J Day. He was allowed to go without the fanfare that was accorded all the other great military leaders of the war, even George S. Patton, the Army's stormy petrel, the other blood-and-guts general of World War II.

General Smith was snubbed and humiliated. The man who led the Marines most of the way on their triumphal march to Japan was not even invited to witness the surrender ceremonies on the *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay.

In 1949, he published his memoirs, *Coral and Brass*, hoping to vindicate his sword with the pen. But his charges were dismissed as the usual apologia of a frustrated military man. Admiral Spruance, who bore the brunt of his ire, never even deemed it necessary to dignify old Howlin' Mad with an answer.

Spruance was a brilliant naval leader, with a muted temperament and a highly intellectual turn of mind. He did not dazzle with his undoubted competence. He set no emotional fires, as did Bull Halsey, with any pilot lights in his own soul. He was a re-

served and pedantic man who relaxed by himself, in the seclusion of his quarters, listening to classical records which always accompanied him to sea.

He was a gray man, his virtues and faults so camouflaged as to attract no attention, start no controversy. Yet this same man was responsible for the two of the greatest controversies of the Pacific war—one, over the failure to exploit to the fullest measure our victory in the Battle of the Philippine Sea; the other, over our heavy losses in the Battle for Iwo Jima.

In the Iwo battle, it was not what Spruance did that unleashed the floodgates of blood. It was rather what he failed to do. In a sense, it was not his fault. Admiral Spruance was a man of the Navy. An engineering officer by training, he rose from ensign to full admiral. From his first job as an inspector of machinery in a Navy

Yard to his last big wartime job as over-all commander of the occupation of Okinawa, he never had an hour's experience in *warfare on land!*

And yet, in the Iwo operation, he was the supreme commander of a delicate and difficult *land* war. He was the highest authority in the preparation and execution of an immense and intricate engagement whose payoff was, not at sea, but on *land*.

The Marines had to suffer and bleed from the tutelage of their naval superiors. They never suffered or bled more than when Admiral Spruance was the ultimate source of their destiny. If nothing else, their experience under Spruance and the blood-bath of Iwo Jima clamor for a change in the status of the Marine Corps and for its long overdue emancipation from the Navy's tutelage.

This is the major lesson of Iwo Jima and the legacy left behind by its glorious dead. ●

## MEMO TO CONGRESS

The editors of BLUEBOOK respectfully propose that a law be enacted as soon as possible to change the statutory role of the U.S. Marine Corps; to separate it from the U.S. Navy; and establish it, as the nation's strategic force-in-readiness, an independent branch of our armed forces.

We further propose that this new Strategic Land Command be combined with the Strategic Air Command, to create a new military organization—the world's first and only Strategic Striking Force, directly under the Joint Chiefs of Staffs.

There is a precedent for such a move, as well as an urgent need. The precedent is supplied by the Strategic Air Command, an autonomous, self-contained striking force. It is now under the ultimate command-authority of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs.

The need is indicated by the changed complexion of warfare.

Nuclear weapons and inter-continental rockets have completely altered both the character of war and the mission of the various arms. Campaigns like Saipan or Iwo Jima would be unthinkable in this atomic age. Amphibian operations, like the landing at Inchon in the Korean War, are certain to prove either impractical or, indeed, impossible.

Strategic challenges require strategic answers on a strategic level. Lightning provocations demand lightning responses.

A special force is needed to carry the war to the enemy on land in the immediate wake of the massive counter-blow from the air. Such a force is needed to be in a permanent state of combat readiness, as is the Strategic Air Command.

It has to be superbly mobile and flexible, and sufficiently compact to permit absolute maneuverability. It has to be imbued with exceptional fighting spirit and unquestioning discipline. It must be commanded on the strategic level, by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs under the President.

The United States has such a force virtually ready-made.

It is the United States Marine Corps.

It is the ideal force-in-being to be turned into our Strategic Land Force, to supplement the Strategic Air Command, and to amplify many-fold our striking potential.

The lessons learned on Iwo Jima—and described in the foregoing article—are among the powerful arguments that motivate our recommendation. The facts of survival in the atomic age, and the pressing needs of the new face of war supply the rest.

*The Marines deserve better by us! We must give them what they need, and more than just the tools of war! We must give them their proper command organization and strategic autonomy!*

Then we can rest assured that, no matter what the odds, they will always finish the job.

But we have to act *now!* Our country's future, the world's future, our own future—yours and ours—may depend on what you do.

*The Editors*



## "Dark People Thing"

Continued from page 30

armed with Ampex stuff treated for tropical use. That cut it to the point where we could fly in. I flew to Leopoldville early last June, taking most of the shooting crew and a lot of the gear with me. Our experts had told us that you get the right weather from June through September. Hot dry days and cool nights, and no rain at all.

I got us settled into the Regina Hotel and made arrangements for air-conditioned accommodations for the whole group. I put the big letter of credit through the Banque Centrale, located a Frenchman with good English who knew the local scene and, through him, began to arrange transportation, power, labor—all the hundreds of things that have to be lined up before you can shoot the first frame. His name was Rene du Palais, a lean sad-faced joker about 40, an importer with time on his hands. You didn't have to tell him anything twice. The Banque Centrale had recommended him.

When the rest of our group and the rest of the gear arrived ten days later, I was feeling almost optimistic, which is a dangerous state of mind in this business. I was further along than I had hoped to be, and I had the childish faith that this was one time when things would go as smooth as butter.

Barry Driscoll acted jittery but fairly cheerful. Kirk Morgan was half-drunk, noisy and foul-mouthed. Mark Weese, who had been working day and night getting scripts blocked out, looked exhausted. Nancy Rome hugged me and said I was the only thing in Africa she was glad to see.

On the way in from the airport, I explained to them about how this was two cities, with 20,000 whites in one and 400,000 blacks in the other, with the blacks commuting over to work each day. I said I had almost all the documents and licenses and permissions lined up, and how we had found a dandy man in this Rene du Palais.

I got them all sorted into their rooms, and when I had my first chance to be alone with Barry Driscoll, he explained Kirk Morgan's foul mood to me. Kirk had known better than try to move in on Nancy, who wouldn't have touched him with a barge pole, and so he had tried to set up one of his typical relationships with our Luara Walden. But, after a good start, he had tried to rush it too much, and she had righteously slugged him with a very heavy historical novel and told him to watch his language when in the company of ladies.

"Morgan needs a conquest to mend his self-esteem, Joe," Barry told me. "Will he have any special problems around here?"

On the basis of my ten days of observation, I said I didn't think he

would have any problems at all, and Barry seemed relieved. "Whoever the lucky lady turns out to be," he said, "our only problem will be keeping her off camera. Morgan likes to make big promises."

I knew from experience that Kirk Morgan was going to be an amalgam of all the heroes he had played in the past, and he was going to posture for twenty-four hours a day, but with luck I wouldn't have to be exposed to it too long. Once we were really rolling we hoped to average out at two sequences a day, so that we could wrap up the whole ball of wax in three weeks.

We were in, I suppose, deepest Africa. But the climate was fine and, except for the pressure of work, the living was easy. The locals were friendly and helpful. I won't go into the plots we were setting up to shoot. Let's just say they were adequate for the medium involved.

You would be seeing one of them every Tuesday evening this season, and Kirk Morgan would still be an active menace to maidenhood, had not Rene du Palais been damn fool enough to bring his 19-year-old daughter to watch the first day of shooting. Her name was Therese. She had been educated in a convent. She was engaged to be married as soon as her young man finished his army service and came back home to Leopoldville.

I met her mother later, a dumpy flabby woman whose muddy skin tones spoke of complex racial mixtures. Perhaps, once upon a time, she had looked like Therese. It was hard to believe. Therese was slender, shy, innocent, with smoky hair, huge gray eyes, skin of velvet, ivory and gold. The agents of kings used to search for just such women.

**R**ene brought her out in his antique Renault, brought her proudly, in dust and clatter, to watch the Americans perform their tribal rites.

Exposing Therese to Kirk Morgan was as predictable as tossing a fat grubworm into a hen yard. And it happened almost as quickly.

Though Morgan had muffed the approach to Luara Walden, don't look on him as a clumsy clown. He usually adjusted his stalk to fit the quarry. Though for the past week and a half he had been ordering Rene around on childish errands, the moment Morgan took one long look at the girl, Rene and his daughter somehow became the special and honored guests of that great star, Kirk Morgan. We all saw it beginning, and if any one of us could have thought of a good way to stop it, I like to think we would have. Maybe we all hoped he wouldn't be able to get her away from her father's watchful eye.

I guess he set her up with the greatest of care, because she was so obviously worth great care. Though he had shown absolutely no interest in any part of Equatorial Africa, he suddenly became a tourist in need of a guide. An elderly female relative

chaperoned them. She did not have much English, but Therese had more than enough. They saw the view of the city from Mount Leopold. They ferried across the river to Brazzaville. They saw Point Kalina and the Cristal Mountains, the Stanley Pool, the Belvidere and de Bock Park.

I remember talking to Barry Driscoll about it over some midnight bourbon in his hotel room, saying, "I've hinted to Rene, but all he says is that Therese is a very good girl and Mr. Morgan is being very kind to her, and it was a boring life for her before we arrived."

"At least," Barry said wearily, "Morgan is easy to get along with on the set. Think of her as a sacrifice to creative harmony, Joe."

"Can you think of her that way?"

"Hell, no! And so maybe he scores and somebody blows his head off, and then what happens to this crummy deodorant series? Remember, Joey, the public worships him. So we are all making money. Go to bed."

When we had seven shows in the can, and were beginning to roll pretty good, something went clunk in the sound recording system, and we had no spare for it. It is ever thus on location. After urgent cabling, I arranged to get the frammis or whatever it was airshipped out, but it would be three lost days, and so we folded operations.

At midnight, Rene came to the hotel and woke me up. The fabulous and vulnerable Therese was missing. She had outwitted her panic-stricken chaperone. He wanted words with our star, and I knew even before I looked that he would be missing too. All the agitation and concern went out of Rene's face. He looked sick, tired and old as he turned away.

On the evening of the third day, Mark Weese and I were sitting in my room checking the prop lists against upcoming scripts, when Kirk Morgan came in without knocking.

"Ready to roll in the morning, Joe?" he asked me.

"Yes. And where the hell have you been?"

He gave us a smile of wicked contentment, muffed a theatrical yawn and said, "Place name of Goma, at the Hotel du Grand Lac. Very clean, very comfortable. Good food. Good service. I recommend it." He slouched over to pour himself some of my liquor.

Mark's pouched old face twisted into a look of distaste. "How about the French chick, Morgan?"

He turned and sipped his drink, and said, "Tasty. *Very* tasty. But three days does it, men. A dull child at heart, you know. Once the bloom is off the blossom, they tend to get emotional."

"Walk out on her?" I asked.

He winked at me. "You insult my honorable instincts, Joey. I just now let her off at her own garden gate. Blubbing and snuffing." He yawned again and ambled out, taking the half drink with him.

"Wouldn't it be nice if somebody killed him?" Mark said earnestly.

"Somehow they never do."

"Poor scared little chick," Mark said.

"Yeah. Sure. This number sixteen, author, you got a lion cub written in, and Rene says we can get a local leopard cub a lot easier and cheaper. Okay?"

"Okay. And don't let's either of us show we feel real sick right now."

Rene du Palais was at the Regina Hotel early the next morning. It was not as rough as I had thought it would be. He brought a small, round, smiling man with him, and introduced him as Jules Boudreau.

"I can no longer, in self respect, work for you, Meestair Connolly," he said quietly. "It would be humiliation for me, because what has happened is now known to everyone. Do you not understand?"

"I understand. I am sorry it happened, sorrier than I can tell you."

"It is my own stupidity at fault. I now think of the many times you tried to warn me. I believe you are a decent man. I could not know that this Morgan could be . . . so cruel an animal."

"How is your daughter?"

Only the truly French can shrug with so much meaning. "Unwell," he said. His voice became businesslike. "I have brought you here Jules Boudreau who will do the work perhaps better than I have done. He understands the things I have been doing, and he will continue for you. There is some small money due me which perhaps you will give to him to bring to me when it can be arranged. Good-bay, sir."

I said goodbye to him and I held my hand out. He looked at my hand and then into my eyes with that anguish no actor can reproduce. "I am so sorry," he whispered. "I could not yet shake the hand of any of you. I am so sorry." He turned and fled through the shadowy lobby and out into the white sunshine.

Jules Boudreau was not as good as Rene, but all the worst problems had been solved before he took over, so we made do with him.

The day after we packaged and sealed up number fourteen, Jules took the afternoon off and attended the funeral of Therese du Palais. She had dressed in the wedding gown she would never wear, slipped out of the house at dawn, bicycled to the quays along the Congo River, and jumped in. Some dock workers saw her go in. It had taken them thirty minutes to recover the body.

I was there when Barry Driscoll told Kirk Morgan what had happened.

Kirk Morgan looked mildly astonished. He licked his manly lips, fingered his sculptured throat, swallowed hard and said, "A hell of a silly thing to do. The kid must have been missing some marbles. She wasn't what you call real bright."

Barry slowly and carefully called Kirk Morgan a series of graphic, precise and unprintable things. When they began to sink in, the hero face turned dull red, and the hero roared, "You want to make this stinking series, Driscoll, and make a bucket of bills, or you want me to cable Manny and say I can't work with you and send somebody else? You want to make a little test case? You want to see who gets backed up?"

I saw Barry think it over, and I saw all the spit and steam go slowly out of him. "Okay," he said softly. "Let's just get this job the hell done and get out of here."

"Okay," Morgan snarled, "and it's the last of mine you do, pal."

"I couldn't be more grateful," Barry said softly.

So we were pros, and we kept rolling along like pros, and the stack of completions kept getting taller in the corner of my room. I've been around long enough to know it was good tight work.

The Ampex tape is nearly two inches wide, and each sequence went into its own dull-finish aluminum reel can, almost as big around as a table at the Blue Angel. The closure all around the outside edge was sealed with tape, and the coded show and script number was put on the center label of both the reel and the can.

*I can make a lord, but only the Almighty can make a gentleman—James I.*

I think we were just past number twenty when Nancy Rome made the first comment about Kirk Morgan, one night while we were having dinner.

"What's with Our Hero?" she asked me.

"I try not to notice him. Should I?"

She frowned. "I don't know what it is. He seems to be getting . . . kind of strange and subdued and remote. Barry's having trouble getting him to project all that famous Morgan charm and energy."

So I started watching Kirk Morgan, and I soon saw what she meant. He seemed dull, dispirited, lethargic. Barry had to roar at him and prod him to get him to give his lines any zing.

It made one hell of a problem, and it seemed to be getting worse. The whole operation represented a very fat investment, and if we couldn't make it work, there were going to be heads rolling in the dust.

Barry, Mark Weese and I had a nervous policy meeting about it.

"The guy is going dead on me, and it's getting worse all the time," Barry said.

"He eats and his color is good, and he hasn't lost a pound," Mark said, "but I get the kookie feeling he's

sort of fading away. You know what he does when he isn't working, eating or sleeping? He sits and stares at the wall, hour after hour."

After we argued it all out, we had a plan of action, but we weren't happy with it. First, we'd move as fast as we could on the fourteen or so we had left at that time. We would get him checked over by a doctor. And Mark would do as much as he dared to change approved scripts to give Morgan less meat and fatten the lines and action for the other players.

We got him checked over, and it turned out he was in perfect health except for a very low metabolic rate. That figured, because he acted like a machine that was slowing down. So we started stuffing him with thyroid extract and dexedrine. It helped a little.

By the time we were left with only three to go, we knew the quality had sagged badly, but we hoped we could bull it through on the momentum of the first twenty weeks.

Mark Weese and I got ourselves loaded on the night before the last day, when we hoped to knock off the final three. I remember Mark peering drunkenly at me and wagging his finger and trying to be mysterious, but looking more like a gossipy matron on a resort hotel porch. "It's a hex," he said. "Deepest Africa. Witch doctor stuff. Revenge, Joey. For the dead girl. For Therese."

I was in an air-conditioned room in a town where I could buy Coke, Kleenex and Time Magazine, and I wasn't about to buy any hex theory.

But I remembered it the next day, and thought about it. We finished the series that day, without quite having to jab splinters under Morgan's fingernails to keep him in motion. Let us just say his acting was what they call wooden.

So that night I pumped Jules Boudreau. I had not learned very much about that little round man. He did not have as much English as Rene. His approach to life was earnest and apologetic, without Rene's automatic dignity. I had learned that his continuous smile was a reflex, a grimace without meaning. It was merely the way he had learned to hold his mouth.

I took him up to my room after dinner and we spent an hour going over all the details connected with closing up shop and disposing of rented and purchased equipment. As usual with such ventures, I expected to be the last man to get away, and I had no urge to prolong my stay.

When the work was over, I fixed Jules another drink and I said, "Morgan seems to be getting worse. He has to be dressed and undressed. They'll have to lead him aboard that airplane. Tell me, Jules, you've lived here a long time, have you ever seen anybody get like that before?"

"Sometime," he said, without disturbing his smile. "Not so many time." "What causes it?"

"Pipple say many t'ing."

"The local people are talking about him?"

"Oh, yes! It is a sad scandal with this Therese, of course."

"What do people say?"

He shrugged plump shoulders. "You know the mamá, she have tribe connections way back, a rare strong pipple, knowing dark t'ings, they say. Also is true the child, she was cared for in the home by servant pipple loving her, so ver' savage not so long time ago. She dead in her wedding t'ings, and it can be much hate. So they say is medicine made against him. In some places of the worl' is called gris-gris. Some is voodoo. Some is hex. A dark pipple t'ing."

"What do you think, Jules?"

With a sweep of his chubby hand he included all of Africa. "Some t'ings in this land, is better I t'ink we don't look at so close. But all this is maybe done with pictures."

"With pictures?"

He leaned forward, lowering his voice slightly. "A savage man, he does not want pictures taking of him, no? It is this reason: He t'ink a picture steal a piece of him, of his soul, take it away on paper, leaving him smaller."

"I've heard of that, sure."

Jules stood up. "This time somebody fix it so it truly happens to Morgan. All the time the cameras turning, sucking away his soul." He walked over to the double stack of film cans, touched them with his fingertips and turned and aimed his small smile at me. "In here now, he is laughing, talking, fighting, making the love being brave and handsome, no? It is all in here, nearly all of him, so he can walk around, yes, but more like the king beetle when the spider she is nearly finish. How you say it? A husk."

I could feel the small hairs stir at the nape of my neck. "But doesn't a man have to believe that such a thing is happening to him for it really to happen?"

Jules came back and sat down. "So in what part of the mind is the believing 'eh? In the top where you know it for a certain t'ing, or buried down where it is lost in the darknes of the soul, eh?"

"I think it's a lot of damn nonsense!" I said.

Jules stood up abruptly. "In the morning I will be here. Thank you."

After Jules left, I learned I was a little too conscious of the twin stacks of film cans. I had been aware of them all along, as a sort of visual index of our production. I went over and stared at them. In one very logical sense of the word, Kirk Morgan was imprisoned in those fat aluminum discs. Each one was good for a hundred showings. But copies would be made from the mint masters as soon as the cutting was done. For several years Kirk Morgan would be released over and over again to go

through his frozen motions and say his canned words, before being locked up again.

I sat there on my heels and told myself this was merely a symbolic point of view, a sappy and poetic point of view. Morgan's soul was not sealed into those cans. Yet I had the fancy that if I held my ear close to them when the world was sufficiently still, I would hear the thin, insectile cries of anguish.

I shivered and took some mighty hacks at what was left of the opened bottle before I went to bed.

I was partially dressed the next morning before I happened to notice the tapes were gone. It startled me for a moment until I realized that Barry Driscoll had probably awakened with one of his fits of early energy and had begun to organize the trip home. He could have wangled a key from the management and had some of the crew carry the cans out without disturbing me.

When I went down to breakfast he was sitting alone, staring bleakly into what was probably his third cup of coffee. I knew it was unwise to attempt to join him, but I stopped by the table for a moment and said, "Was I snoring?"

He stared up at me. Huh?"

"When you people came in early and carted off all our packaged genius, man."

"What the hell are you talking about, Joe? You know I don't like humor this time of day."

"I never touch it myself. All the cans are gone."

"What!"

"They were there when I went to bed. They're gone now."

He sprang to his feet, with a color like damp ashes. As we stared at each other, I felt the bottom falling out of my career.

It was Tuesday morning. We assembled the whole unit. Nobody knew one damn thing. Nobody knew one damn thing. With the aid of Jules Boudreau, I alerted all the police power of the Crown Colony, right up to the Governor General. Barry approved posting a reward of 100,000 Belgian Congo francs for the return of our epic. To use an unfortunate tourist expression, this was \$2,000 in "real money". Barry canceled the flight reservations out. Everybody tried to be very helpful. Police swarmed all over the place.

On Wednesday morning Barry placed a phone call to Manny in California. It had to go via Brussels, and it wasn't put through until five that evening. Mark Weese, Nancy Rome and I were playing three-way gin in the lounge off the lobby when Barry Driscoll joined us as soon as the phone call was over. He had a dull stare, a sagging jaw and trembling hands.

"How is dear Manny," Nancy Rome asked.

"I learned something new," Barry said. "I learned it is possible for a

man to scream in a whisky baritone. He didn't roar. He screamed."

"So what's the deal?" Mark asked.

"If they are gone for good, we stay here and we shoot them all over again. It's the only way to cut losses. You and me, Joe, we go off salary. We work for free. If we have any objection, we can get out of the industry."

Nancy stared at him. "But Mighty Morgan is in no shape to work!"

"I tried to explain that. He kept yelling at me to get Morgan sobered up. I said he should ship me a new lead. He said we peddled the deal with Morgan aboard, so that is the way we shoot it."

"So what do we do?" I asked him.

"We sit here and we pray we find those cans, Joe."

After the four of us had sat there for maybe fifteen minutes making wild guesses as to what could have happened to the cans, Jules Boudreau came smiling in, accompanied by a tall Belgian official in a resplendent uniform, and a withered, timid, apprehensive native in a mustard brown tweed suit originally designed for a much larger man.

The native was a traveling merchant from Matadi. He had been picked up in the native quarter of Brazzaville when an informer told the French police of a strange story the man was telling. The French had released him to the Belgians for interrogation. The man had taken an early ferry across the Congo River. It is a twenty-minute ride from Leopoldville to Brazzaville. He had seen two tall natives, well dressed, each carrying two large, cheap, heavy suitcases. They had come aft and opened the suitcases near the rail, and had proceeded to hurl a great many large silvery disks into the broad river. They sank immediately. When all were gone, the strangers had closed the empty suitcases and walked slowly away.

The ritual had mystified the merchant and, being a stranger in this part of the land, he had asked about it in the bazaars.

I went and got an empty can out of stores and took it down to them. Even before his response was translated, I could tell from the way his face lighted up that this was exactly what he had seen dropped into the river. They had been dropped out near the center. No, he could not identify the two men. He had not looked at them closely. They were strangers to him. They were dressed as clerks of the government, or bookkeepers in small places of business.

When he had been assured the man was not lying, Barry gave him a reward of 500 francs, which both astonished and delighted the man.

Jules soon disabused Barry of any attempt to retrieve the tapes. It was a deep murky river, with fast currents and a bottom of gluey mud. There were no divers. Nothing had ever been recovered from it.

When the four of us were alone again, Barry said, "But it's so damned pointless! What *good* does it do anybody?"

Nancy, with an odd expression, said, "Maybe it's a kind of primitive justice, Barry. Maybe they thought Morgan was the boss man. He gives that impression. They knew we were here to do the films. That lovely child threw herself into the river. So . . ."

"It could be a form of primitive artistic criticism," Mark Weese mumbled.

"Let's everybody make funny jokes," Barry said. "We're cooked. There's only one thing left to try, and that's to get Morgan out of his stupor. Somehow. One time I directed a snake-pit movie. We did some research at the funny farm. I saw people there acting like he does now. They called them catatonics." "Maybe Manny can ship us a head shrinker," Nancy said.

"Tomorrow," Barry said, "I shall try to think. Today has been all I can take. Tonight I drink. Tonight I abuse my ulcer. Where's that waiter?"

About six hours later, when all good people were in bed, I found myself tiptoeing with tipsy guile along the hotel corridor, with Nancy Rome's hot little hand clasped in mine. We were whispering and giggling. It does not matter where we were going, or what had led up to this venture, or whether, once it was interrupted, anybody ever got a rain check.

Just as we were passing Kirk Morgan's door, the sound came through the dark heavy wood. Now I've worked westerns, and once I saw a stunt bungled so badly a horse snapped its spine. As it struggled to get up, it screamed. I had never been so rattled by any sound in my life. It's eyes were mad and rolling, and it screamed and screamed until somebody located a real bullet and put an end to it.

This was almost the same sound, a high, wild, tearing scream. It stopped, and when it began again there was a sickening liquidity to it, a bubbling, gargling, strangling sound. And then there was silence. I was cold sober. I stared at Nancy. Her eyebrows were right up to her hair line, and she was sober too, now and she was sinking her nails into my hand.

I tried the door. It was locked. After I bounced my shoulder off it one time, I knew ten of me couldn't crash in that way. I sent Nancy to round up Barry Driscoll and I went down and roused a sleepy, surly, indignant manager. They were getting very tired of our little group. He came up with a pass key. Barry and Nancy were waiting there for us. The manager opened the door and turned on the lights, walked stolidly over to the bed, stared down for perhaps two-tenths of a second, then whirled and departed like a good wingback running an off-tackle fake. He no longer looked indignant.

After I took a look, I wouldn't let Nancy look. I made her go back to her room. Barry and I waited out in the corridor for the doctor. His name was Dr. Arcenaux. He examined Kirk Morgan and pronounced him dead.

You will remember the dramatic coverage in the newspapers, about how Kirk Morgan had contracted some tropical bug, but had insisted on completing the SAFARI series before he folded, and how the warm, human executives of El-Bar, after viewing the series, had decided that Kirk Morgan had been so ill a posthumous release would do his critical reputation no good; and so, in honor of his memory, they had vowed never to release those forty scripts done under such valorous conditions. (Actually, Manny is making a forlorn effort to get some of his bait back by jamming the market with reissues of old junk, before the public forgets who Kirk Morgan was.)

Yet somebody has to tell the truth. After various documents were signed and verified and authenticated, and the body had been taken down and out through the rear to a place where it could be kept refrigerated until it could be shipped to the Pastures of Heaven, California Branch, Barry and I had a drink with Dr. Arcenaux in Barry's room. The doctor was brisk, young and tidy, with a pair of extremely cold blue eyes.

### *It Was This Way . . .*

An irate citizen of Mulhouse, France, stormed into the police station to demand the arrest of a shopkeeper who was alleged to have sold him a defective pistol.

"How do you know it's defective?" the police sergeant asked.

"Because," the complainant said, "it didn't fire when I tried to shoot my wife."

\* \* \*

A New Castle, Indiana, motorist, haled into court for driving without a license, explained the situation readily.

"I didn't think I needed one," he said, "because I don't know how to drive."

\* \* \*

A drunk in Dallas, arrested for reeling along a busy street, denied in court that he was intoxicated. Asked to explain the fact that his breath reeked of whiskey, the indignant citizen had a quick explanation.

"It's my wife's fault," he said. "She was drunk when I left home, and I got this way kissing her good-by."

*Joseph C. Stacey*

"Without the medical doubletalk, Doctor," Barry said, "what was the cause of death?"

"Pneumonia."

"Who are you trying to kid?"

"I never make jokes about my profession, Monsieur."

"I'm sorry all to hell, but it didn't look like pneumonia to me."

The doctor raised an eyebrow. "You are qualified in medicine, Monsieur? All germs, all viruses, work more quickly in Equatorial Africa. The fluids came quickly into the lungs, perhaps filling them in a mere matter of hours beyond the point where life could continue."

"So . . . in a manner of speaking, he drowned?" I asked.

"In the supuration, in the fluids of infection draining into the lungs, yes, it could be an unscientific way to speak of it." He inspected a gold watch. "I must go. My fee will appear upon your hotel bill." He stood up and sighed. "It is a sadness to see the strong young ones go so quickly."

"Why did he scream?" I asked.

He shrugged. "Error, perhaps. The feeling of slow strangulation. It is not one of the more pleasant ways to die."

After we were alone, I knew I had to share a part of what was in my mind. And so, trying to play it for nervous laughter, I briefed Barry Driscoll on my voodoo chat with Jules Boudreau, and told him the theory Jules had come up with.

He slowly shredded a cigarette and said, "So the . . . essence of Kirk Morgan was slowly being packed in the cans."

"An up-to-date, modern hex," I said, and my attempt at a laugh died too quickly.

Barry dusted the shreds of tobacco off his hands. "I suppose . . . that after . . . seventeen or eighteen hours at the bottom of the river . . . a pretty fair amount of water would have seeped past the tape into those cans."

I surprised myself by jumping up so quickly I overturned my drink. My voice was thin and high and fast, and I could feel my mouth twisting into a smile, like Jules Boudreau. "I don't think we ought to talk about this," I said. "I don't want to talk about it, and I don't want to think about it. I want to get on a plane and get out of here."

But I couldn't help seeing the expression on his face just as I turned away from him and left. I knew his mind had followed the same horrid pattern of illogic as mine. We were both remembering our final look at Kirk Morgan. The horror was not as much in the congested bloot of his face, with the bulge of terror fixed there by a bad death. True horror was in the puddings and spillings on pillow and sheet, the green-brown fluids that filled the silent room with the rich, jungly stink of the Congo River.

## The Man Who

Continued from page 42

concentrated. Not since the great hurricane of 1926 had there been such a sight in Miami. But in '26, skyscrapers had been twisted, as if by giant hands, and ships driven onto the streets. "How old are you, Alan?" I asked. "Thirty," he said. "Why?"

Thirty-four years had passed since the big blow of 1926. I said, "Go ahead."

"I turned up Twentieth to go to the airport. The wind was so bad I had trouble controlling the car, and I think it was raining. It was raining, wasn't it? Anyway, it happened so fast there wasn't anything I could do about it. She must have run out from behind some bushes in the park. I didn't see her at all until I was right on top of her. She was about 10 years old, I guess. I hit her, and heard her scream, and I wanted to stop but I just couldn't seem to turn around until I got to the station. Then I made a U-turn and came back.

"There wasn't any crowd. There wasn't any excitement. There wasn't any body.

"I figured somebody must have picked her up right after I hit her and rushed her to a hospital. So I came here, to police headquarters. I told the lieutenant what had happened, and then I called Virginia. Doctor, don't you think I ought to have a lawyer?"

"I hope not," I said. "I hope I'm all you'll need."

"When can I see Virginia?"

"In just a minute. First, I want to talk to her."

I rose, and he reached out and touched my arm. "You believe me, don't you, doctor?"

I said, "I believe you are telling the truth absolutely, to the best of your ability. Now, take it easy for just a minute."

Virginia was composed, now. She had combed her hair and fixed her face, and was talking to a police-woman. I said, "Mrs. Woodroffe, has your husband ever suffered from hallucinations?"

"My husband," she said, "is one of the most logical, sane, and clear-thinking people I have ever met. We have known each other for ten years. Alan is a scientist. He has never had anything approaching an hallucination. And he tells the truth—always."

I believed her. I said, "You can see him now." I led her into the other room.

Roper and I watched while they embraced. Roper said, "Mrs. Woodroffe, we have no reason to hold you. The Traffic Squad has gone over your hired car. Honestly, you haven't hit anything."

Woodroffe looked at me, his eyes desperate, demanding an answer that I could not, on the instant, give. They had a right to an explanation, and I, as a psychiatrist, had the duty to provide one for the sake of their

mind's security and the stability of their marriage. It was necessary that I find a corridor to this secret locked in Woodroffe's brain. "Lieutenant," I said to Roper, "do you believe in reincarnation?"

Roper smiled. "Nope. But my wife does. We made a trip to England a few years ago, and she said that everything about Windsor Castle looked familiar. Now she's convinced herself that in a past incarnation she was a lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria. But me, I don't believe in it."

"I don't believe, or disbelieve, anything until proven," I said. "But I always try to find a physical reason, even for the apparently supernatural." I turned to Woodroffe. "You're sure you've never been in Miami before?"

"I'm positive."

"Did your father ever live here?"

"No, doctor. My father has been dead six years. Our family has never lived anywhere except in upstate New York."

I said, "But he must have visited Florida. Try to remember."

Woodroffe was silent, head lowered, thinking. "Yes," he said finally. "He was down here. He was here during the big hurricane of September, 1926. He often mentioned it, when storm warnings were up along the coast."

*The way to be nothing is to do nothing—Hale.*

"Did he ever tell you about driving across the causeway in the storm, and running over a little girl?"

"No."

"You're positive?"

"Certainly! If my father had ever told me he killed a child, would I be likely to forget it? All he ever said about the hurricane was that he never wanted to go through another."

I asked Lieutenant Roper: "Would the department have records of a child run down and killed during the storm?"

Roper shook his head, no. "We had chaos here, that time. Four or five hundred people were killed—drowned, pinned under buildings, crushed by trees. To this day we don't know the exact number, or even the names of all of them."

Woodroffe grinned for the first time. "You aren't suggesting, are you, that I am the reincarnation of my father?"

"No," I said. "I am not. But I will give you a scientific explanation. You can believe it if you want. I suggest that your father *did* run down a child on Twentieth Street during the big blow. I suggest that it was the most traumatic experience of his life, that he never spoke of it, but that he never forgot it—and that he passed the *memory* of it on to you through genes and chromosomes."

I think Roper snickered; the Woodroffes both looked at me skeptical-

ly. I said, "Every cell in our bodies—and many mental traits and quirks—we inherit from our ancestors. Genes and chromosomes determine the color of our hair and skin, and whether we have freckles or are susceptible to sunburn. Our capacity for learning, quickness of mind, the shape of head and fingers, *all* these are inherited. Is it not possible that we might also inherit a bit of memory? Is it not possible that the strongest memory in a man's mind can be passed on to his son?"

I was watching Woodroffe. He said nothing, but I could see that he did not reject my theory, which was all I could hope for. I said, "You two kids go on back to your hotel and get some sleep. And stay out of the sun tomorrow."

After they were gone, Roper said, "You don't *really* believe that, do you?"

I said, "It doesn't matter, does it, so long as I rationalized this episode for those two young people?" I picked up my bag and drove home.

I didn't see Roper again until the following Thursday. He came charging into my office, looking triumphant as if he had solved some dusty murder. "I found it!" he said. "It kept worrying me. So I went through our old arrest and accident reports. Nothing there, like I expected. Then I went to one of the papers. The City Editor is an old friend. Honestly, doctor, I spent two days in their library, reading through the old files. And I found it!"

He laid on my desk the photostatic copy of a newspaper clipping, dated October 12, 1926. It was headed, "STORM AFTERMATH," and it read:

"Police are searching for a motorist who during the height of the September hurricane reported that he had run down and killed a young girl on Twentieth Street. The man said that at the time he had two injured women in his car, and was rushing them from the beach to the emergency medical center set up in the Seaboard station. After leaving the women at the aid center, he returned to the scene of the accident but couldn't find the body.

"Police have now learned that the child was not seriously injured. She was taken to her home and quickly recovered. In the confusion, the identity of the driver was not obtained, but his car bore New York plates. Parents of the girl feel that the driver will be relieved to learn of this, if he can be found."

I laid the photostat on my desk. I believe my fingers trembled.

Roper said, smiling, "Like to keep that, doctor?"

"Just for today," I told him. "I would like to read it over a few times more. Then I'm going to send it to the Woodroffes, in Rochester. It'll be waiting for them when they get home. I'll tell them it's your wedding present, lieutenant."

"Better make it from both of us," Roper said. ●

## Athletes

Continued from page 27

what these boys had said was just a drop in the bucket to what some of our non-participants said about them. Before long, people were demanding an investigation of the American athletes' after-hours activities.

Well, take it from me, Ray and John and Dave, and all the rest of our boys, spent about as much time "on the town" as I did running out on that track. But even if they'd been out every night 'til 4 A.M., those are things you settle in the locker room, not in the newspapers.

Those are hard words, I know. But whether you agree with them 9 or 90 percent, the fact is that they're getting truer with every passing day. Unless we wake up and start a concerted effort *right now*, one of these days we're not even going to be second to Russia. It could happen in Tokyo four years from now. What can we do to stop it?

A helluva lot. First, the U.S.A. must run its Olympic sports program *all the time*—for all four years—and not just the year of the Olympics.

One of the most overlooked truths in athletics is that *you're only as good as your competition*. Great athletes seem to come in bunches for a good reason. Would Dempsey have been Dempsey without Tunney? Would Babe Ruth even have been the same super-star if he'd been playing on the Phillies, and batting in front of anybody besides Lou Gehrig?

In almost every one of our sports, we have a good guy here, a good guy there—but they only get together once a year! How, I ask you, can they sharpen themselves for the inevitable top-of-top competition they're going to get in the Olympics?

This year's decathlon is a good example. In 1956, the great Kuznyetsov, of Russia, set a record in soundly beating our Rafer Johnson. In 1958, Rafer started working out at UCLA with a talented boy from Formosa, Yang. They can against each other every day after school for two years. Then they went to the Olympics together. What happened? Rafer edged out Yang for a new Olympic record. Kuznyetsov was a poor third.

You know what they say in business? If you want to improve your profits, get a real good competitor to set up a store across the street from you. We've got to start *now* setting up ways that our top men in every sport can get together a dozen times each year for the next four years. If it costs a little money, better we spend it here and go third class to Tokyo in 1964. e'W'll come back first class, believe me.

Of course, getting our boys together isn't the only thing we'll have to do. Before you can get them together, you've got to have them in the first place. The plain truth is that we need education in the so-called "minor" sports. I'm not kicking about having a

nation of baseball players, boxers and trackmen. But a little emphasis on gymnastics, for instance, would go a long way.

Even if we had all the emphasis we wanted, on all the sports, though, and our men and women constantly competing in them, I think we'd need one more ingredient to build champions—an ingredient we've had less and less of with every passing year.

I call it a *hungry athlete*.

The other countries have many; we have few. Spectacles like Germany's Armin Hary breaking the Olympic record in a *trial* reminded me of the Babe Ruth-Joe Louis killer instinct in their early days.

Whether the score was 1-0 or 10-2, Babe always put in his best. He *had* to. He'd risen from a rough, poor boyhood, and he knew how to look out for himself. The same went for Joe Louis. When he started fighting in the '30s, if you didn't win, you couldn't count on your next meal.

Whatever success I had in sports stemmed from this same kind of background. My father was a poor laborer from the South. He gave everything he could to me, but I knew that if I ever wanted to do any running besides errands for the corner market, I had to do it myself.

Just about every guy on our Olympic track squad that went to Berlin in '36 was in the same boat. We'd *all* had to struggle in the past to get where we were. We all knew we had to earn our own way in life, and I remember that we set eight records that week in the Olympics.

Believe me, I'm not asking for another Depression to take some of the inborn softness out of us. I had enough trouble riasing three children

through the last one. But when we turned to being wet-nursed back in the '30s, I don't think we realized we'd be breeding nice kids, talented kids, but too often, kids without that last-ditch drive which comes from knowing what an empty stomach is like.

So I have to ask myself: wouldn't I rather have eaten beans and raw onions for a few more years back then—and have seen the U.S. make the other countries look like weaklings out in Rome this year?

Even in these Olympics, our greatest heroes are those who had to fight hardest to get to the top. Rafer Johnson came from real poverty. Wilma Rudolph was one of 19<sup>th</sup> children. To me, the Olympics have always been the purest measure of free, individual accomplishment in the world. When a boy from Iowa crosses the finish line a foot in front of a fellow from Moscow, it *does* mean something, and vice-versa.

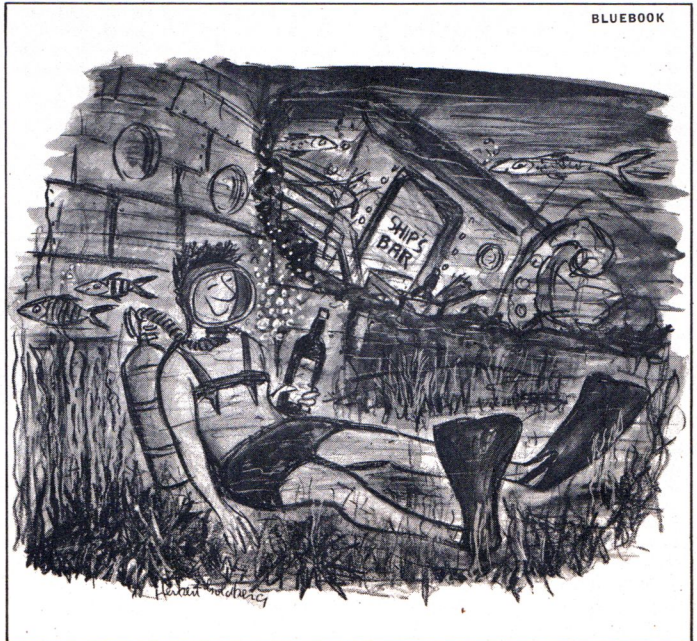
We laughed at the Russians eight years ago, when they refused to take the lift to the top of the ski jump. They insisted on walking up. "They don't know any different," we said.

Are we laughing now?

That's why I'm so hot under the collar about this thing. Yes, our boys did a good job in the 1960 Games. But *ogod* shouldn't be good enough for America. Only *best* should satisfy us.

Some of you may say, "Sure, the typical oldtime athlete talking about the good old days. Owens is just giving us the same old, corny, American success story."

Maybe. But I say that *unless we start winning the 1964 Olympics right NOW*—it might turn into the new American failure story. •



BLUEBOOK

# Grasshopper

Continued from page 28

a reform school had had a picnic there and . . ."

"Jughead ought to know," Opie interrupted, suddenly cheerful again. "The big ape was probably in and out of every reform school in the country before they got rid of him in the Army."

"Cut that out," Schwartz said angrily. "I got a good notion to tell Sergeant Simpson you called him a big ape!"

"Be my guest," Opie answered, pleased that he'd gotten the company clerk's goat. "He'd probably think it was a compliment—I bet if you sneak a look at his family tree, you'd find enough baboons hanging by their tails from its branches to start a zoo."

"Okay, I'll report you for that, too, McCall!"

"It won't do you no good—Jughead loves me," Opie said piously. "He's liable to promote me to sergeant any day now."

It was that last statement that really outraged Jughead Simpson as he thrust his head out of the window. "I heard that," he said grimly. "For your information, Jughead loves you so much he's promoting you to the top of the K.P. roster as of now, Mr. McCall!"

He would have said more but his phone was ringing. It was the sergeant major at battle group headquarters on the line. The colonel wished to speak with the company commander, Captain Herkimer, the sergeant major said.

"The cap'n ain't here yet," Jughead answered tartly—he was still smarting over that promotion slander. "What's the colonel want now—you got any idea?"

"Yup," the sergeant major said off-handedly. "He wants two men detailed from Headquarters Company to be grasshopper commandos."

"Okay," Jughead grunted. "I'll tell the cap—grasshopper commandos! What the hell are grasshopper commandos?"

"I wouldn't know, dearie," the sergeant major said sweetly. "You just tell Captain Herkimer to call the Old Man, see?"

Jughead put the phone down. "Grasshopper commandos!" he mumbled and then brightened a little. Whatever they were, he already knew who one of them was going to be. Private Opie McCall! Jughead didn't know just how right—and how wrong—he was.

Major Luther Baggs, of the battle group staff, was the one who had first broached the subject of grasshopper commandos. He'd been in Colonel Adam Spiller's office late the previous afternoon, when the exec had entered with a message in his hand and a long look on his face. The message, he said, was to the effect that General Dooley, commanding the

division, would visit the 2nd Battle Group day after tomorrow. He would bring with him some distinguished guests who swung a lot of weight in Washington.

"The general says he wants us to put on a real good show for these people he's bringing," the exec added glumly.

Colonel Spiller received the news with the enthusiasm of a man whose wife has just called to say the kids have smallpox. "Good show!" he snorted. "What the devil does old Dooley think I've got here—a troupe of trained seals? If he wants his confounded guests to see a good show, let him take 'em to the burlesque in town! That's a real good show . . . so I've been told."

The exec looked a little shocked. "Sir," he said, "I think that General Dooley had something in mind other than a . . . er . . . a burlesque show. He suggests that a demonstration of the aerial jeeps we used in Operation Hayride might be impressive."

"You mean those flying saucers that chased me under my own car?" Colonel Spiller asked testily. Then he brightened a little. "Hm'm'm, if they were to chase Dooley and his distinguished guests under a car, that'd be a good show all right. Baggs, have we still got those flying gadgets around here?"

Major Baggs stroked his red mustache, and his eyes glittered behind his rimless eyeglasses. "Yes, sir," he said. "I'm quite sure the flying platforms are still over in the Research and Development warehouse. Colonel, how would it be if we had a couple of SOT's fly the platforms for the general. That should be a real show."

The Colonel looked as though Major Baggs had suddenly gone into a fan dance in front of the desk. "You," he asked slowly—as though he didn't quite believe his own words, "are suggesting, Baggs, that we have a couple of drunks fly those damned doodlebugs?"

"You don't understand, sir," Luther said hastily, digging into his dispatch case. "SOT is a term that the R and D people use—it's short for soldier-of-tomorrow. Personally, I prefer to call them grasshopper commandos. The term is more descriptive."

Colonel Spiller's face began to get red. "Baggs," he said violently, "leaving out the gobbledey-goop, just what in hell are you talking about? Do you know?"

"Certainly, sir," Major Baggs said, looking down his nose. He pulled a sheaf of glossy photographs from his dispatch case and spread them across the colonel's desk. "These are pictures of experimental types of equipment for the individual soldier that Research and Development has been working on. Something radically new, as you can see, sir. The R and D crowd is really quite high on it."

"I'll just bet they are," Adam Spil-

ler said, looking at one of the pictures with distaste. "From the looks of this thing here, they must have been eating opium. What the devil is it?"

He was holding up a picture which vaguely resembled a soldier—at least, he thought, the thing wore boots and carried a rifle. Any human resemblance stopped along about there. The figure's torso was swathed in something that looked like a Don Cossack's jacket with cartridges looped in rows across the front. The face, if it had one, was hidden behind a shapeless, snouted mask out of which peered huge, goggled eyes. Around its waist was a belt, fitted with thigh straps, which held a row of metal canisters; two blast nozzles poked down on either side. There was an over-sized helmet with more goggles on the front and an antenna growing out of the top.

"It's a SOT, sir," Luther said. Then amended hastily, "I mean, that's what the soldier-of-tomorrow will look like."

"Good gad!" the colonel said violently. "Now they're trying to booby-trap our own soldiers!"

"It's not a booby-trap," Major Baggs protested stiffly.

"What's the Hallowe'en mask for?" the colonel interrupted sourly. "To hold up banks with?"

"It's a thermal face-piece to protect against atomic blast," Luther said, a little miffed. "The belt you see is a jump belt—those canisters are filled with a solid fuel propellant that discharges through nozzles. Suppose our SOT comes to an obstacle. A barbed wire entanglement or maybe a stream. What does he do?"

"Sits down on his duff and rests, if he's like most of the soldiers I've known," Adam said. "So what?"

The major's enthusiasm was unblunted. "No, sir," he said. "He squeezes a lever, and the belt gives him a sort of jet-assisted take-off. He simply jumps right over whatever is in his way. That's where I got the idea for the name grasshopper commandos, sir. It's rather neat, don't you think?"

"If I could think I wouldn't be in the Army," Adam growled. "And just how do you propose to use these . . . uh . . . SOT's to put on a show for Dooley and his blasted guests?"

Luther's eyes glittered behind his glasses again. "I thought we might get two men from Headquarters Company, sir. Ones who operated the flying platforms during the Hayride maneuvers. Then we'll dress them up in this new equipment . . . ah . . . I presume the general will want to review the troops, will he not, sir?"

"I never yet saw one that didn't," Adam grunted.

"Well, right after the review, the SOT's could come in on their flying platforms," Luther explained. "They'd land by the railroad spur on the other side of Viceroy Creek, behind the reviewing stand, sir. Then, with their jump belts, they could leap across the

creek and charge up the slope to capture the general and his party. It should make a spectacular show, colonel."

Adam Spiller, looking at the picture, had to admit that having a SOT come jumping up like a kangaroo to poke a gun in one's face, wouldn't be exactly humdrum. And the general had said he wanted a good show . . . seeing the look on his face might be worth the price of admission, at that, he concluded.

"I've got a feeling I'm going to regret this, Baggs," he said. "But you can go ahead if you can get hold of the same men who flew those fool platforms before—I don't want any recruit SOT's careening around on the things. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," Luther said, beaming. "Uh, it'd help, colonel, if you'd personally call Captain Herkimer and tell him that we want two of the men who flew the platforms during Operation Hayride."

"You know their names?" the colonel asked.

Major Baggs frowned and patted his mustache. "Um . . . let me think, sir. It's been some time ago. One was named McCall—he was a sergeant, I think. The other's name was Ledbetter . . . no, that's not quite it . . . Lederer, sir! They're our men!"

Colonel Spiller jotted the names down. "This had better work, Baggs," he said grimly. "If it doesn't, you can start heading for the boondocks. I'll be right with you."

"It'll work like a charm, sir," Luther said.

Luther Baggs didn't know he'd just inadvertently promoted Opie McCall. Had he known, the major might have started for the boondocks without waiting for the day after tomorrow to arrive.

Captain Augustus Herkimer, commanding Headquarters Company, was a red-faced blustering man; in the battle group he had the name of being a number one apple-polisher. Right now, he was gnawing on a cigar while he spoke with Colonel Spiller on the telephone. Jughead Simpson stood by the desk, a pad in his hand.

"Yaas, colonel," Captain Herkimer was saying in a treacly voice, "certainly we can furnish two men to operate flying platforms. We're the . . . heh-heh . . . 'Can Do Company', sir. I'll detail two . . . eh? Oh, I see . . . you have two particular men in mind. . . ."

Jughead started a little at the mention of flying platforms—he had hoped that he'd seen the last of those gadgets. The captain's voice was dripping more sweetness into the phone.

". . . Sergeant McCall and a man named Lederer . . . I've got it, sir. I'll personally see that Lederer and Sergeant McCall report to Major Baggs at the R and D warehouse this afternoon. Goodby, sir."

He put the phone down and swung around to the open-mouthed Jughead Simpson. "Sergeant," he said snap-

pily, "I just told the colonel that I'll have Sergeant McCall re—" His voice stopped suddenly, as he spewed his frayed cigar halfway across the room and came up out of his chair as though he'd been goosed from behind. "Sergeant McCall!" he yelled as he found his voice again. "Who in the double-sundered hell made that eight-ball a sergeant!"

Jughead's shock was even greater than the captain's. "Maybe the cap'n misunderstood the colonel, sir," he mumbled, grasping at a straw. "Maybe the connection was bad. . . ."

"The connection wasn't bad and I didn't misunderstand," Captain Herkimer groaned, sitting down heavily. "The colonel distinctly said 'Sergeant McCall'—I even repeated it after him."

"Sir," Jughead said desperately, "maybe the cap'n could call the colonel back and just say he made a mistake—McCall ain't no sergeant. Or ever likely to be."

The captain's face took on a purple tinge—he should have remembered that Augustus Herkimer didn't make "mistakes", Jughead thought glumly. Not any mistakes he owned up to, anyway.

"And have him think I don't know the names of my own *noncoms*?" Herkimer said through his teeth. "Are you crazy, sergeant? I'm not going to make myself out a liar for the sake of a few miserable stripes. Get out an order promoting McCall to acting sergeant—I'll bust the cuckoo back to private when he's finished his commando grasshoppering."

A black cloud completely obscured Jughead's day now. He said, "Yes, sir," dolefully, and went out with the laggard steps of a man heading for the gas chamber. With Opie McCall a sergeant, he was thinking, the Army didn't stand a chance. The Roosians could take the country without firing a shot.

Opie stopped the jeep behind the R & D warehouse a little before one o'clock. He flicked an imaginary bit of dust from the new sergeant's chevrons on his sleeve, and looked at Sergeant Lederer out of the corners of his eyes.

"Well, shall us sergeants go report, Sergeant First Class Lederer, sir?" he asked with elaborate casualness. "By the way, to whom do we report to? I forgot to ask."

"We report to Major Baggs," Lederer said grimly. He was a slender, tanned man who worried over things. "You chased him under a car with a flying saucer once, in case you don't remember."

Opie had started to climb out of the jeep; now he scrambled back as consternation spread across his face. "Not him!" he said. "I just remembered, sarge—I got a K.P. tour to finish up. I went right off in the middle of the dinner dishes."

"Get out of that jeep," Lederer snarled. "I don't know how I got

mixed up in this—whatever it is—but the chances are you're at the bottom of it. So, start marching!"

This was the same R & D warehouse where they'd learned to operate the flying platforms some weeks earlier, Sergeant Lederer noted without comfort, as they rounded the corner. The same Master Sergeant MacGillicuddy was waiting for them. Major Luther Baggs was not in sight and Opie breathed a sigh of relief. "Well, well, well," Sergeant MacGillicuddy said. "If it ain't the Fly-boys Lederer an' McCall! Welcome back, ace."

"Never mind the clowning," Lederer said morosely. "Where's Major Baggs? We're supposed to report to him."

"He'll be along," MacGillicuddy said in a cheerful tone. "While you're waitin', you can try on your soldier suits."

He led the way into the warehouse. Dim and dusty light came through grimed windows as Opie rounded the partition of a small alcove. He yipped suddenly and jumped back. Two outlandish-looking shapes, as menacing as men from Mars, lurked there in the gloom.

"We been invaded!" Opie yelled. "Run for your life, sarge! Those things have got guns!"

"Come back here, hero," MacGillicuddy said tolerantly. "Them are dummies wearin' your soldier suits." "You mean we wear that stuff?" Opie asked, returning warily.

"Why not?" MacGillicuddy asked in a reasonable tone. "The suits won't mind—one dummy's the same as another to them."

Opie glowered. Presently, however, he began to get into the masquerade spirit of the thing. He and Lederer had donned the impregnated uniforms, the molded boots, the armored vests and breech clouts. Sergeant MacGillicuddy adjusted the thermal face-piece on Sergeant Lederer while Opie stood back and admired.

"You look like a pop-eyed elephant, sarge," he said.

Lederer made strangled and profane sounds behind the mask. MacGillicuddy came out of the alcove now with a harness in his hands. It had web straps and canisters and two nozzles.

"Okay," MacGillicuddy said, leering at Opie, "let's cinch you up in your grasshopper gear, boy."

Opie eyed the strange rig cautiously. "What's that thing for, sarge?" he asked in a suspicious voice.

"You'll find out, laddie," MacGillicuddy grunted as he pulled the straps across Opie's thighs and buckled the belt around Opie's waist. "This is your jump-belt. All you got to do is squeeze that there little gadget an' off you go, happy like a bird."

The little gadget that MacGillicuddy referred to was a hand grip with a lever attached which dangled at the end of a cord in the vicinity of Opie's knees. Opie bent to grab the thing.

"You mean I just squeeze like



th . . ."

That was as far as he got—the rest was lost in a nasty hiss as twin jets blasted out of the nozzles. Since Opie was bent over, the jets hit the wall behind him; he crossed the warehouse in two giant and involuntary strides and rammed his head into the far wall. The shock sat him down abruptly. For a moment he blinked dazedly—then jumped to his feet, a wild look on his face.

"I been booby-trapped!" he yelled. "Get me out of this thing! If this you got to do to be a sergeant, I'd rather . . ."

In his excitement, he squeezed the lever again. This time he went through the warehouse's wide doorway like a goosed kangaroo. Major Luther Baggs was getting out of his car a dozen yards away as Opie hit the ground and bounced like a rubber ball. He tried to clear the car with his next jump but misjudged his distance and he and the major collided violently—and went down together in the dirt. The two looked at each other. The recognition was mutual—and unpleasant.

"So, it's you," Luther said bitterly, blowing through his mustache. "It's not enough you try to assassinate me once—now you try it all over again. So help me, I'm going to . . ."

Opie didn't wait to hear. He took off from a sitting start, the jump-belt assisting. His first leap cleared the car that he'd failed to negotiate earlier; his second took him around the corner of the warehouse. Lederer prudently had slipped out the back way. Opie's final jump landed him squarely on top of his fellow sergeant.

Friday came. Sergeants Lederer and McCall were in arrest in quarters, forbidden to leave the barrack area until, late in the afternoon, they left for the R & D warehouse under guard of Jughead Simpson. At the warehouse, Major Baggs was waiting for them—and he spoke briefly and to the point. There was no comfort in his words.

"If I had any choice in the matter," he said bitterly, "the two of you would be under lock and key right now. You're a menace running around loose—I should have remembered, Heaven help me."

Four-thirty came. Just about now the review would be starting on the parade ground a mile away. A phone call from Major Baggs presently would launch the grasshopper commandos on their mission. Sergeant Lederer, rigged up in his SOT suit, sat morosely in the jeep while Opie, similarly attired, leaned against a fender and idly pitched pebbles at the warehouse. A little farther along, Sergeant MacGillicuddy still fussed over the flying platforms while he talked with Jughead Simpson. The latter's voice was unnecessarily loud.

"They could be on their way to the coop at Leavenworth by this time tomorrow," he was saying happily.

"That'd be nice," MacGillicuddy

agreed.

"Shootin' would be better, of course."

"Listen to the big moose—he's loving it," Opie said darkly under his breath. He bunged a rock at a wasp's nest hanging beneath the warehouse eaves—and missed it by a yard. "One of these days I'm going to fix that character's clock for him but good!"

"Leave that bee's nest alone," Lederer said crossly. "Ain't we got enough trouble but you want more?"

"Aw, I'm not going to hit it," Opie said. "Listen to those two clowns over there—they're funny like a broken leg."

He whanged another rock at the wasp's nest—and this time his aim was bad. The stone hit the nest in the center; the nest fell to the gravel and rolled to a stop between the two flying platforms, spewing out a horde of angry insects as it went. For a moment Opie froze, his mouth dropping open—and his next reaction was purely reflex. He landed behind the jeep's wheel and jabbed at the starter, as a formation of wasps headed viciously in his direction.

"I'm getting out of here," he said tersely.

Gravel spewed as he headed across the flat field, the jeep careening like a ship in a heavy sea. Sergeant Lederer, hanging on grimly, looked back. A dark cloud hovered over the flying platforms. In the middle of it, Jughead Simpson and Sergeant MacGillicuddy seemed to be doing some sort of a savage dance as they capered, flinging their arms about their heads. Then they streaked for the warehouse and the door slammed behind them.

Opie stopped the jeep a quarter mile out in the field—and sat, arms folded across the wheel, while he brooded in the last of the afternoon. The enormity of what had just happened was dawning on him now; it had already dawned on Sergeant Lederer.

"If we weren't dead ducks before, we are now," he said, his voice muffled by the thermal face-piece. "What Jughead is going to do when he gets his hands on us, shouldn't happen to a . . ."

"What about what'll happen when that major gets his hands on us for not showing up in his flying saucers?" Opie asked sadly. "Maybe I and you had better just head for Mexico, sarge."

Opie's cheerfulness was returning. "Maybe it ain't too bad, sarge," he said. "Why don't we hide the jeep in the bushes beside the railroad track. Then, if we jump out all of a sudden in our SOT suits, probably nobody'll notice we don't have the flying saucers."

"We can try it," Lederer said. "It won't work."

The last of the troops had left the parade ground as Colonel Spiller led the general and his distinguished guests to a point where they could

look down on Viceroy Creek. The stream, shallow but twenty feet wide, reflected the gold of the setting sun. The scene was marred a little, however, by a yard engine, pushing two box cars plastered with red stickers, which nosed out of a clutter of warehouses, a quarter mile away, to creep along the spur on the stream's far bank.

"What's that thing doing there?" Adam Spiller growled under his breath to Major Baggs. "Trying to spoil my show?"

"The ordnance people had some explosives to move to Magazine B, sir," Luther said unhappily—he had even worse news for the colonel. "I told them to wait until the demonstration was over but I guess they thought that the review ended it and . . ."

The colonel wasn't paying any attention. "And where in hell are those commandos of yours, Baggs?" he demanded.

"Sir, nobody answers the phone at the R and D ware . . ."

Luther stopped abruptly, his mouth falling open. The yard engine was opposite now, gathering speed on the gentle grade, but something was wrong. The engineer suddenly scrambled out of the near side of the cab and hit the ground running, yelling crazily as he went. The train was going on without him. Faster, now.

"Good God!" Adam Spiller said in a shocked voice. "That damned ammo train's running away with nobody at the wheel! It'll blow this whole confounded place to Kingdom Come!"

Opie had parked the jeep, and he and Sergeant Lederer crouched in the edge of a clump of brush as the yard engine came toward them. The engineer, a fat and red-faced man, leaned in the cab window at peace with the world; while waiting for the review to be over, he'd had a couple of small nips, and they soothed him now.

"Let's give him a show," Opie said on the spur of the moment. "The poor guy probably leads a dull life."

He squeezed the lever of his jump belt, and came up out of the bushes like a projectile—and landed beside the track while the engineer stared with his eyes popping. "Boo!" Opie said. "You're dead!" The engineer hadn't been expecting men from Mars. It unsettled him. He'd seen all he wanted to see and he left.

"Brother, you've done it now!" Lederer groaned as he came up beside Opie and stared after the retreating train. "The red stickers mean those are ammo cars—they could blow up the whole post running loose that way down the grade!"

"We got to catch 'em," Opie mumbled. "Come on!"

He squeezed hard on the lever of his jump belt and his first leap took him thirty feet down the track. Then he got the rhythm of the thing and took off after the fleeing train like a big jack rabbit going over tall sagebrush. He landed on top of the tender, Sergeant Lederer coming along close

behind. Together they piled down into the cab and began to pull levers—and after what seemed like a long, long time the engine finally wheezed to a halt.

Lederer slumped against the side of the cab, pulling his mask aside and mopping his sweating face with his sleeve. He looked back. People were running toward him, Major Baggs in the lead.

"We're dead now," Lederer said hollowly.

"You could be right," Opie agreed sadly.

Saturday came. Opie was back in the kitchen, finishing up the dinner dishes. Jughead Simpson had yanked his chevrons off last evening, sputtering maledictions out of a face that had been pretty badly swollen: Captain Herkimer had arrived to announce in a few hundred choice words that Lederer and McCall were again in arrest. The colonel, himself, was considering their cases.

Now, Lederer leaned gloomily against the wall while he watched Opie scrub at a pot. "Most likely they'll charge us with stealing that train, in addition to everything else," Lederer said.

Opie was trying to think of an answer to that when the door of the mess hall slammed and voices drifted back to the kitchen. One of the voices belonged to Specialist 3rd Class Schwartz.

"Talk about falling in a sewer and coming out like a rose," it said aggressively. "That McCall does it every time!"

"Like such as what?" a second voice asked.

"Like I'm in the orderly room waiting to type up the court-martial charges on him and Lederer," Schwartz said angrily. "Then colonel calls up Captain Herkimer—I listen in just in case there is something I ought to know to go into the charges."

"Was there?"

"No," Schwartz snapped in a peevish tone. "What the colonel said was that McCall was to keep his sergeant's stripes and he and Lederer were to get week-end passes all next month."

"Boy, week-end passes for a month!" the other voice said enviously. "How come, Schwartz?"

"It was for nothing but stopping that damn train," Schwartz answered vindictively.

Back in the kitchen, Sergeant Lederer looked at Opie McCall. Opie looked back. Then, with grave ceremony, he untied the towel he was using as an apron and heaved it into a corner.

"Well, what do you know?" he marveled. "It kind of looks as if us SOT's done all right, Sergeant First Class Lederer, sir. What say I and you go find us a beer?"

"That I'm for," Lederer agreed, a little dazed.

Opie offered his arm. "Shall us sergeants be off, sarge?" he asked. "Us SOT's got to stick together." •

## The Red, Red Flowers

*Continued from page 37*

back door, shove in a burning rag—which could have burned down the building—to draw away the guard just so you could make a grandstand play by breaking in here?"

"You want to play games," I said, "that's what you'll get. You never saw the day you could outsmart me. You tried it plenty of times when we were behind the lines together."

Any mention of the war always relaxed him. He leaned back in his chair and beamed at me. "It was a great war, wasn't it, Milo?"

"Save it for your memoirs," I said. "What kind of trouble are you in that you have to drag me back into this monkey suit?"

"You're right about it being trouble, Major," George Hillyer said. "The three of us discussed it and decided you were the best man for the job. . . . Yesterday the Russians got another of our U-2 planes."

"I read about it in the paper this morning," I said. "I thought those were the planes that flew so high no one could shoot them down. Do the Russians have a new type gun?"

"No," the general growled. "The first plane had a jet flame-out and went down to thirty thousand feet. They couldn't have touched him at seventy thousand. The second plane had gone down to twenty thousand feet, under orders, when the Russians hit his plane."

"Why so low?"

"To make a drop," Hillyer said. "The pilot was supposed to drop ammunition, money and information to a resistance group inside Russia. They got him before he succeeded in making the drop."

"What does this have to do with me?" I asked.

It was Hillyer who answered. "You've heard of Narodno Trudovoi Sojuz, Major?"

I nodded. "The National Alliance of Russian Solidarists. It's a group of anti-Communist Russians."

"Right. Their headquarters is in West Germany, but they have thousands of agents inside Russia. No one but Russians are permitted in the group. They have been very successful, mostly because of what they call the molecule system. It's something like the old Communist cell. Each group of agents in Russia consists of three persons, and those three do not know any other group. If one is captured and tortured he can only inform on two other members. These NTS people have been very valuable to us in providing information. In return we have supplied them with money and materials. Our pilot was making a drop to an American agent in Russia who was then to contact a number of these underground molecules."

"Wasn't it dangerous having a man there who knew the different

groups?"

"He didn't know them. The drop included a coded message to him giving him the location of the groups. The message was concealed behind a map of Russia which would be part of a regular U-2 pilot's equipment. If anything happened to the plane and pilot we wanted the Russians to think it was a regular flight."

"Did they?"

"So far they have. But the map is one of the things they have on display in the Hall of Columns in Moscow. And the pilot knows there's a message on the back of the map. We don't believe he's being brainwashed, or anything like that, but there's always a chance that he may try to use the information during his trial or later in prison to make a trade. If the Russians get the message, hundreds of agents will die, and we will lose a valuable source of information."

I was beginning to get the idea and I didn't like it. "You mean you want the pilot and the message snatched out of the Russian's hands?"

"Exactly."

"I could smell that one coming," I said. "I don't like it. You know, I've been in East Germany twice and Russia once. They have my fingerprints and considerable information about me. It won't be easy even to get into the country."

"We have that problem licked," the general said. It was the first time he'd spoken in several minutes.

"How?"

"It is not yet known," he said, "but we have a U-3 plane. Same as the U-2 but it will carry two men. We fly you over Russia at seventy thousand feet and you parachute in. Perfectly safe."

"For everybody expect me," I said.

"It's fairly safe," Hillyer said. "We have a few days time. We're going to have you brush up on your Russian and see that you get all the other information you need. We're providing you with clothes and identification, everything you need to prove that you're a Russian. We know you speak Russian well enough to fool them. We can give you one more bit of help. There will be one underground molecule—that is three persons—who will assist you and be under your orders. For the rest you will be on your own."

"From fourteen miles up in the air?" I said. "That's really being on your own."

When the Army gets an idea that's it. You'd think ideas were invented at West Point. Anyway, it went the way they said. I spent the next several days polishing my Russian. I took special classes each day and even went to sleep at night plugged into sleep lessons. In between I was fitted out for a pressure suit for the parachute jump, and given a complete set of clothes that had been made in Russia. I was given all kinds of identification cards, including a Party card and proof that I was a worker

from Rostov who was spending two weeks in Moscow. I was even provided with a short-handled shovel, to bury the pressure suit after I landed; the shovel also had been made in Russia. Five days after reporting for duty, I was on an Army plane headed for Pakistan.

Three more days went by after we landed there.

I was introduced to the pilot who would fly me over Russia—a tall, blond boy from Indiana—and stuffed into a pressure suit. I felt, and probably looked, like an invader from Mars. I was led out to the plane, a stubby-winged, sleek-looking black plane with a needle nose. I climbed into the rear seat and hooked my helmet into the intercom. I checked to be sure that I had the knapsack that was going to parachute in with me.

“You plugged in, Major?” the pilot asked. His voice coming through the earphones in the helmet had a hollow sound.

“I seem to be,” I said.

“All set, Major?”

“As much as I’ll ever be,” I grunted. “But I have a feeling that this is one thing which will never become habit forming with me.”

“There’s nothing to it,” he said cheerfully. “You don’t even have to pull a ripcord. Your chute will open automatically when you’ve fallen about eight miles.”

“They didn’t tell me that jokes were a part of this or I wouldn’t have come,” I said. “Where are you dropping me?”

“About ten miles southeast of Moscow. That’ll give you the rest of the night to walk into the city.”

“How can you be sure that’s where you’ll drop me?”

“Major, in this weather, I could drop you from this height and make you land on a dime. I don’t even have to do any guessing about it. The whole thing’s worked out mathematically.”

We flew along in silence the next few minutes. Then he spoke again. “Better start getting ready, Major. Be sure you’ve got everything you want to take with you. It’s hard coming back after something you forgot. There’s a lever in front of you. See it?”

“Yeah.”

“When I tell you to go, disconnect your communication cord and pull that lever. It’ll drop you through the bottom of the ship and you’ll be on your way. Okay?”

“Okay,” I muttered, but I wasn’t sure it was. I felt the way I had the first time I had a serious date with a girl—lightheaded. I checked to be sure the knapsack was fastened to my shoulders. I would have liked to check the rest of my equipment but I didn’t know anything about it, so I waited.

“Go ahead, Major,” the pilot said quietly. “And good luck.”

“Thanks,” I said. I reached up and pulled the cord from my helmet. I took a deep breath and pushed the

lever in front of me.

After what seemed a very long time, I felt the tug of the parachute as it opened. After that I was vaguely aware of swinging like a pendulum from it, but it was a pleasant sensation. Then almost before I knew it, the ground came up to meet me and I went tumbling across it until the chute collapsed. I managed to un buckle it and then take my helmet off. There was a gentle breeze and the smell of earth, but there were no lights.

I rested for a couple of minutes, then took the knapsack off my back. I removed my gloves and opened the pack. There was a small flashlight at the very top. Shielding the light, I looked around. I was in the middle of a plowed field.

I took the other clothes from the knapsack, and quickly undressed and put them on. I took the shovel and dug a hole in the field. I gathered up the parachute and folded it, dropping it and the pressure suit into the hole. I checked the knapsack to be sure that everything was out of it, then dropped it in too and shoveled the dirt back. When I was sure that the spot looked like the rest of the field, I used the light to check my compass and headed off in the direction of Moscow. About a mile on the way, I threw the shovel into a ditch, after first wiping the handle clean so there would be no fingerprints on it.

It was just four o’clock in the morning when I approached the edge of the city. I had already decided it would be foolish to start marching through the streets at that hour in the morning, so I found a field with some bushes in it and curled up and went to sleep.

It was shortly after eight when I awakened. Now there was some traffic on the road, mostly trucks. No one paid any attention to me as I walked into the city. I soon reached a bus stop, where several workers were waiting for a bus, and I joined them. I was dressed a little better than the other men—because I was, after all, on my vacation—but no one looked at me twice. I rode the bus into the center of Moscow, and began to breathe a little easier.

It didn’t take me long to find the address I’d been given. It was one of the new apartment buildings on Kotelnicheskaye Embankment. It was in Block D, Entrance C. I worked my way through the corridors until I found the apartment. I knocked on the door, and hoped someone was home.

The door was opened by a girl. She was small, dark-haired and pretty. Even the loose-fitting clothes couldn’t conceal that she had a full figure.

“Dobroe utro,” I said. “*U vas est mesto dlae menae?*” It was part of a recognition code.

“Prihodite v luboe vremae,” she answered. “It is lovely in Moscow this time of year.”

“Yes,” I said. “I have been admir-

ing the red, red flowers that grow around the Kremlin.”

She smiled and stepped back opening the door wider. “Come in,” she said.

I entered the apartment and she closed the door. I looked around. There were two rooms, small but attractive. I turned back to the girl.

“We were expecting you today,” she said. “I am Natasha Naristova.”

“I’m Milo March,” I said, “but here I will be known as Mikhail Mikhailevich.” I showed her my identification.

“It is well done,” she said, after looking at the papers. “You had no trouble in finding the apartment?”

“No. I’ve been in Moscow before.”

“I know,” she said. “I remember reading about the capitalist spy, Milo March. But your country proved that you couldn’t have been here, didn’t they?”

I nodded. “Do you live here alone?” “No, with my brother. He is one of us. He is at work now.”

“You don’t work?”

“Oh, yes. I am on the staff of *Pravda*. This is my day off. What are your plans? All we were told was to expect an agent, and to give him any help he needed.”

“I want to go to the opening of the trial of the American pilot tomorrow. I have to get him and part of his possessions out of the country. Both are a threat to your group.”

“That will be difficult,” she said gravely. “I do not see how it can be done by only four of us.”

“I will try to do most of it myself,” I told her. “I don’t want to risk you more than I have to.”

“We will do what is needed. Tonight, the third member of our group will be here, and it can be discussed. You will stay here as long as you need to. Is there anything you would like now?”

“Some sleep,” I said. “I had only three or four hours in a field this morning.”

She led the way into the second room, and indicated the two beds. I stretched out on one and was soon asleep.

I was awake by the middle of the afternoon. The girl was in the other room, reading. She made tea, and we spent the rest of the afternoon talking. At about five o’clock, her brother arrived. He was a big, blond fellow about my own age. His name was Ilya. He seemed even more pleased than his sister to learn that I was an American agent. During dinner, which Natasha cooked, he plied me with questions about America.

Shortly after dinner, there was a knock on the door. Ilya went and opened it. The man who entered was short and dark, with what seemed to be a perpetually-scowling face. He was introduced to me as the third member of their NTS molecule. His name was Yuri Mogilev. Natasha brought out a bottle of vodka and filled four glasses. When they were passed around, she lifted her own.

“To a free Russia,” she said, and

we all drank. Then she brought out a chessboard and set it up between her brother and Yuri. They began to put the pieces on the board.

"We always bring out the chessboard," Natasha said. "Everyone believes that is the reason Yuri visits us so often. So if anyone comes while we are having a meeting, there is only a chess game."

The men moved the pieces around a few times and then settled back. "Now," said Ilya, "we are ready to discuss your problems. You have papers?"

I nodded. "I am Mikhail Mikhailovich, from Rostov. There I am a minor clerk in the offices of Internal Affairs. I have a two weeks vacation, which I am spending in Moscow. I have all the necessary papers."

"Good. You will stay here, of course. If there are any questions, you and I were in the army together and that is why you are visiting me." He turned to Yuri. "You know the American pilot who goes on trial tomorrow? The task is to get him out of the country."

Yuri pursed his lips and scowled even more. "It is a big order. They will make the most of him for propaganda, and he will be well guarded. You have a plan?"

I shook my head. "I'll try to make it up as I go along. Will I have any trouble getting into the trial tomorrow?"

"No. That will be open to the public."

"Do any of you know where the pilot is being held prisoner?"

Ilya glanced at Yuri, who nodded. "The Voldovna Prison. It is where they take important political prisoners before their trials."

"Can I get any sort of rough plan of the prison, and the location of the pilot's cell?"

"I can get that for you," Ilya said. "By tomorrow night, I think. Anything else?"

"I don't think so . . . I have considerable money with me, most of it in American dollars. I'll probably need to spend most of it in getting out. Will the dollars be better for bribes?"

"I do not think so," Ilya said. "I think you should change the dollars in the black market. Yuri can take care of it."

The four of us sat up talking late into the night, mostly about America, before we finally went to sleep. When I awakened the next morning I was alone in the apartment. There was a note from Natasha telling me where to find things for breakfast, and how to get to the Hall of Columns. I had some rolls and tea, and left.

A crowd was already gathering for the trial. I entered the building with three or four others dressed pretty much as I was. Out in the corridor, there was a long, glass-covered case and a uniformed MVD man on guard. We filed by and looked at the things that had been taken

from the captured pilot. There were a good many guns with ammunition, several watches, a big stack of ruble notes, a small bottle with a card identifying it as poison, all of the pilot's personal things, and the map. The latter was all I was interested in. Under the guise of gazing at the collection, I studied the case. It was locked as well as being guarded.

I followed the others into the large room, which had once been the grand ballroom of the old Noblemen's Club, where the trial was to be held. It was flooded with lights, and there were several television cameras set up. About half the room was filled with newspapermen, many of them from the Western countries, including America. Fortunately, I didn't see any who might recognize me. Not that they might anyway, for this was going to be a big show and all eyes would be riveted on it.

The trial was quickly called to order, and the prosecutor faced the prisoner. "What is your name?" he asked.

"James Cooper," he said, when the question had been translated into English.

"What is your nationality?"

"American."

"What is your profession?"

"Pilot."

There followed the reading of a long indictment of his crimes against the Soviet Union. I breathed a little easier when I realized that it contained no mention of his intending to contact the underground. It did list the guns and ammunition but merely charged that he'd had them in case of crashing inside Russia. When the indictment was finished, Cooper asked how he pleaded.

"Guilty," he said in a firm voice.

Lieutenant General Borisoglebsky, the presiding judge, leaned forward. "Weren't you aware that flying over Russia was a hostile act?" he asked.

"I didn't think about it," Cooper said.

"Didn't you realize your action might bring about a war?"

"Things like that were for the people who sent me to worry about."

And so it went throughout the day, the questions and answers droning on evenly. Cooper wasn't volunteering any information, although it seemed to me that he was being more cooperative than he had to be. But then, he may have been ordered to do so in case of capture.

Ilya and Natasha were already at the apartment when I got there. We had dinner together, and shortly afterward Yuri arrived. He brought a newspaper with him and we took turns reading the story of that days trial. They were milking it for everything they could.

Ilya had brought a hand-drawn map of Voldovna Prison, with the location of Cooper's cell marked on it. I examined it carefully but the more I looked at it, the more impossible the job seemed. There were three outer

doors to penetrate before reaching the cell blocks, and each one of those doors was locked and guarded.

"It looks difficult," I admitted finally.

"I think it is impossible," Natasha said. She'd been leaning over my shoulder, looking at the map with me. "We are told that even a regular visitor, with an official pass to visit a prisoner, must go through questioning by the three guards, and each guard communicates with the next one before you pass through the door. It is almost certain that they will be even more careful with an American prisoner."

"The biggest problem is time," I muttered. "How long do you suppose the trial will last?"

"Exactly two more days," Natasha said.

"Exactly? How do you know that?" I wondered.

"The hall is reserved for only two more days. And the writers and cameramen from *Pravda* are assigned for that time. They already have other assignments for the third day from now."

"At least, it lets us know how much time we have," I said. "There is one other way. I don't like it, but maybe we have no choice. Ilya, is there any way we can get complete details on the transportation of Cooper to and from the trial? I mean routes, time, method of taking him and the number of guards."

"I think so," he said slowly. "There is a man with whom I sometimes play chess at lunch time. He would know, and I think he could be bribed."

"I'll give you the money," I said. "Try to get it tomorrow. Can you take extra time at lunch or take the afternoon off?"

"I can take the afternoon off."

"Then bring whatever you get here, and I'll meet you. There are a couple of other things I want to ask you about, but first there is something I want to do. I'll be back soon."

"Where are you going?" Natasha asked.

"Out," I said with a smile.

"Let me go with you," she said. "I can be of help."

"Not this time," I told her firmly. "I'll be back within an hour." I smiled at her and left.

It was still early in the evening, but there wasn't much traffic. I hit the small side streets and began walking and looking. I'd been searching for more than a half-hour before I found what I was looking for. I was on a narrow, dimly-lighted street. There were two or three small restaurants and a few shops along it, and the rest were apartment houses. There was a man walking ahead of me, as he reached a street light I saw he was wearing an MVD uniform. I quickened my step.

I timed it carefully so as not to get too near until he was in between street lights. He started to cross a narrow street angling off to the left, and I hurried forward.

"Comrade," I called, just loud enough to reach him but not enough to attract the attention of anyone in the apartment houses.

He hesitated and looked back, peering at me. "What is it?" he called. He sounded irritable.

"I need help," I said. I was almost up to him.

"I am off duty," he said, his tone clearly indicating that he didn't want to be bothered.

"I will take only a minute," I said. I reached him and looked around. There was no one on the street within two blocks of us. "It is only that I need some advice about something I found on the street."

"What is it?" he asked.

I reached in my pocket and pulled out a piece of paper. I held it out. "This," I said.

He took the paper and held it up, trying to get enough light on it to see it. I chopped my hand across his neck as hard as I could. He grunted deep in his throat and started to fall. I caught him and dragged him into the deep shadows of the alley. I went back to retrieve the paper I'd handed him. Then I went back and quickly stripped off his uniform. I rolled it up into a ball with the gun inside, and tucked the whole thing under my arm. It had taken no more than three or four minutes, and he was still unconscious as I stepped back to the street and walked away.

The uniform looked like any bunch of clothes under my arm and I didn't draw a second glance from any of the few people I met on the way back to the apartment. Even so, I felt better when Natasha opened the door in answer to my knock. I stepped inside and she closed the door.

"I am glad you are back," she said. "What do you have there?"

I unrolled the uniform, and smiled at the surprise on all three faces.

"What is it for?"

"I also have to do something to repatriate that paper Cooper was carrying before they find out about it. That comes before anything else tomorrow. I won't need help. This will either work simply and quickly—or not at all. Let's return to the second operation. If Ilya can get the information tomorrow, I will need two things. One will be easy, the other not."

"What do you want, Milo?" Natasha asked quietly.

"First, some old clothes. They should be working clothes and the older the better."

"We have some of Ilya's that should fit you," Natasha said.

"Any way they could be traced to him if anything happens?" I asked.

She shook her head. "They came from the government store here, and there must be millions like them in Russia."

"All right. Now, the hard one. I want to know where I can steal a car. But not any car. This should be an old one that looks as if it's about to fall apart. Maybe the kind of car that a man who was a good mechanic

could recover from a junk heap and fix up."

"That's Yuri's department," Ilya said.

The short, dark man was lost in thought for a minute. Then he smiled. It was only the second time I'd seen him smile. "I know just the car," he said. "It would even be well if it were traced later, for the man who owns it is an informer on his neighbors. I can steal it any evening."

"Tomorrow evening? Or tomorrow afternoon?"

He scowled. "Tomorrow evening for certain. Perhaps in the afternoon. Sometimes he is home by three o'clock."

"All right," I said. "We'll see what happens. Everything will depend on the information Ilya gets tomorrow. If it looks possible, then tomorrow afternoon you will show me where the car is, and I will steal it and make the try."

"If you try to rescue the pilot tomorrow," Natasha said, "what do we do?"

"You will have already done it," I told her. "The plans, the car, advice, that's about it."

They all three started to protest.

"Wait," I said. "I was sent to do this job. The way I'm planning it, everything will have a better chance if I do it alone. More people would only make them suspicious and we might even get in each other's way. And there's another thing. The three of you have important work to do here. My orders are to use your assistance as much as I have to, but not to risk you unduly. But there is one other thing you can be putting your minds to."

"What?"

"If I succeed in rescuing Cooper, I'll need some place to hide him until we can make a break for it."

"We could keep him here," Natasha said.

I shook my head. "Too dangerous, unless we have no choice. It should be somewhere else."

"There might be another place," she said. "There is a girl I know slightly, who has a one-room apartment on the next floor. She is away on vacation now. If we could get into her apartment in some way . . ."

"I can get in," I said. "So that's settled."

"But how will you get him out of Russia?" Ilya asked.

I grinned. "More theft," I said. "My idea is to try to get to some field where we can steal a plane. A fast one. Then Cooper can fly us out. It's risky, but probably safer than anything else. Once I've gotten him, you can be sure of one thing—the bloodhounds will be over every inch of Russia."

"I like the way you think," Yuri exclaimed. "Perhaps I could go with you."

"No, Yuri," I said. "Your job is here, and, believe me, it's a much tougher one."

"Milo is right, Yuri," Natasha said

"But in the meantime," I said, "you can be thinking about where we might have the best chance of getting a plane, and the best way to reach it." Yuri nodded, trying not to show his disappointment.

We talked generally for another hour or so, then Yuri left, and the three of us went to sleep.

I was up early the next morning, and back at the trial as soon as the building was open. While I was waiting for everyone to file into the trial room, I took another look at the cas. the MVD man was guarding. The map was still there. I didn't want to attract attention by too much interest in the case, so I strolled around the building. There were several offices around at the other end of it, mostly filled with either MVD men or what seemed to be Russian VIPs. I got a couple of questioning glances, and soon retreated to the trial room.

The hearing was much the same as the day before. It was clear that they were more bent on making the United States look guilty than in bringing out anything on Cooper.

Just before the midday recess, the defense attorney got up to answer one of the prosecutor's blasts. He painted a glowing picture of Cooper as a simple Middle-Western boy, with an honest, peace-loving family, who never knew what he was getting in to. He said that these were the kind of Americans the Russians understood and liked. And he wound up by saying, "To show the world the true meaning of socialist humanitarianism, this boy's father and two brothers are on their way to Russia right now as guests of the government. They will arrive in Moscow tonight, and be here by his side tomorrow when he once more faces this court."

There was a burst of applause from the audience, and then court was adjourned until afternoon. I hurried back to the apartment. Ilya was already there. To my surprise, so was Natasha.

"I decided to take the afternoon off, too," she explained. "It is not difficult in my job."

I nodded and turned to Ilya. "How did you make out?"

"Fine," he said. He brought a piece of paper from his pocket. "But it cost fifteen thousand rubles."

"It's worth it," I said. "Let's see."

The three of us bent over the sheet of paper. Ilya had made a crude drawing of the route between the prison and the Hall of Columns, with all the streets marked. The time of departure, both morning and afternoon, was written down. And the other information I had wanted. He was transported in an official MVD car with three guards, one of whom drove. The driver was an MVD man, the other two were KGB. That made it a little tougher, but it still looked possible.

"I think I can do it," I said. "We'll talk more about it when I come back."

The three of us had lunch, and

then I went into the other room and changed into the MVD uniform.

By the time I reached the Hall of Columns, the trial was already underway—which was what I wanted. The corridor was empty except for the glass-covered case and the solitary guard. I entered the building from the other side, and walked down the corridor to the front. This time no one paid any attention to me as I passed the offices. I was only another uniform.

The guard at the case looked up in curiosity as I approached. "What is this?" he asked. "Am I being relieved early?"

"For a few minutes," I said. "I will stay here until you return—if you do."

"What do you mean by that?"

I shrugged. "Perhaps they will give you another assignment. All I know is that I was called into the office and ordered to come here. You are to report there at once to Colonel Sergeiev."

"Who the devil is Colonel Sergeiev?" he demanded.

"From the Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Besopasnosti," I said.

He paled at the mention of the KGB. "What do they want to talk to me about?"

"How should I know?" I retorted. "Do you see any decorations on my uniform that they should take me into their confidence? I only follow orders as you do. Any yours are to go at once to the office and see Colonel Sergeiev. I will guard the spy's things. Although I do not think he will be trying to get them back."

"That is true," he said, but his mind was on other things. "Well, I suppose I should be going . . ."

"I think so," I agreed solemnly.

He started off with a worried look on his face, then looked back. "What is your name, comrade?"

"Chernicov," I said. "Good luck, comrade."

He nodded absent-mindedly, and walked on. I watched impatiently for him to disappear around the bend in the corridor. Then I would have two minutes, three at the very most, before he discovered there was no Colonel Sergeiev, no Chernicov, and no orders for him to report at the office. And within one minute after that there would be several men pounding down the corridor looking for me.

He moved out of sight. There was no time for niceties, such as picking the lock. I lifted my gun and smashed the butt down on the glass. It broke with a crash. I reached through the jagged spears of glass and grabbed the map. I moved swiftly toward the front entrance, stuffing it into my pocket. Even as I went through the door, I thought I heard a shout somewhere back in the corridor.

I went down the steps to the street level, and looked around. Immediately in front of the hall a number ZIM limousines were parked with no one

in them. Farther down to the left a Pobeda, something like a small Chervolet, was parked in front of a tobacco store. A man was sitting behind the wheel. I turned and strode quickly down to it.

"Move this car out of here," I ordered, "and make it fast."

"But I'm waiting for someone in there," he said, gesturing toward the Hall of Columns.

"I don't care who you're waiting for," I snapped. "Khrushchev is arriving here any minute, and the street is to be cleared. Drive out of here as fast as you can—or I may take you off the street myself."

He looked startled, but he obeyed. He started the car and pulled away, gunning the motor as much as he could. I turned and stepped into the tobacco shop. And none too soon. As I stood at the counter, I saw seven or eight men come running out of the Hall of Columns. They stopped to look around and caught sight of the Pobeda speeding away. They all piled into a ZIM and gave chase as soon as they could get it started.

I bought a package of cigarettes, walked down to the first block, and turned left. Another block away, I caught a bus. I rode it for about fifteen blocks, and got off. I caught another bus going the opposite way and stayed on for five blocks. Then I took a taxi.

Yuri was already with Ilya and Natasha when I reached the apartment. They all three looked relieved as I came in.

"You got it?" Natasha asked excitedly as she closed the door.

"Yes," I said. I took the map from my pocket and went immediately to her stove. I took a dish from the cupboard above, and then held a match to the map.

"Give me another minute," I told them. I went into the other room and changed back to my own clothes. I returned to them carrying the uniform.

"This must be destroyed as quickly as possible," I said.

"There is an incinerator in the building," Natasha said. "Just down the hall. I'll put it in there."

"Good girl," I said, handing the uniform to her. She took it and hurried out the door. She was back within a couple of minutes.

"The gun may still be a risk," I said, "but I'm going to need it, so I'll take that one. I think I got away all right, but they're going to start a big hunt, and I think I may have made one mistake." I told them about the taxi I'd taken, and they confirmed my guess. MVD men usually did not pay when they wanted to ride in cabs.

"But it may be all right," Yuri said. "The driver may be so pleased at getting paid that he will keep his mouth shut. And you did leave the taxi three blocks away."

"Maybe," I said. "But once he hears about the search for a phony MVD man, he may be frightened enough to report it. But the time it will take for

that to happen may be long enough. What about the car, Yuri?"

It is there," he said. "To take it will be easy."

"And the clothes?" I asked Natasha. "In the other room. I should have told you so you wouldn't have to change twice."

"It's all right," I said. "I have a little time. Ilya, describe the streets on that route again."

"Yuri knows them even better than I do," he said.

We brought out the diagram that Ilya had made, and Yuri looked at it. He then gave me a minute, almost photographic description of the route of the car as it would take Cooper back to the prison. I finally settled on what looked like the best place, the last six blocks before the prison. From Yuri's description, it sounded narrow enough for what I had in mind. Yuri had said that two cars could barely pass. I put my finger on what looked to be about halfway along that stretch.

"What is along here, Yuri?" I asked.

"Workers' apartments," he said. "Perhaps one or two small stores. That is all."

"Are the people who live there apt to interfere?"

"If they see uniformed men fighting with another man, they'll lock the doors and pull the blinds down. They know that, in such a case it is better to be completely ignorant."

"In this case, I approve," I said. "Well, we'll leave in about an hour and a half." I went into the other room and got the gun. I wanted to check it over thoroughly, and be sure that everything was in perfect working order before I started.

"You will shoot the three guards?" Yuri asked eagerly.

"I don't know," I confessed. "I hope I don't have to shoot, but I may not be able to avoid it. I'll have to see how it works out."

I think Yuri looked disappointed, but we turned to other details. Natasha had checked and verified that the girl upstairs was still on her vacation. I would bring Cooper back to this apartment, then go up and pick the lock and move him there. Yuri had looked into airfields not too far from Moscow, and thought he'd found a small one that had possibilities. He was going to try to find out more. Ilya suggested that the best way of getting to the airfield would be to buy a small car on the black market, and drive as near there as possible. He thought that mere boldness might get us through, especially if we used a popular small car that many families used for their vacations. All the suggestions sounded possible, and we still had some time to decide on the best.

I changed into the old clothes, transferred my papers and other possessions. Then Yuri and I left. We took a bus, transferred to another one, and finally ended up in a section of Moscow I had never seen before. We walked three blocks after getting off

the second bus. Yuri finally stopped on a street corner, and pointed in the direction we were facing.

"There it is," he said proudly.

There was only one car parked on the street, so there was no chance of making a mistake. Yuri had certainly followed my instructions to the letter. I had never seen an older or shabbier car. It evidently dated from the time when the Russians were copying our Fords, and it looked as if they'd also copied the idea of repairing it with baling wire.

"Are you sure it will run?" I asked.

"Oh, it runs very good," Yuri said. "You want me to go show you?"

"I'll steal my own cars, Yuri," I said. "Where is the owner?"

"No the next block. Drinking vodka. He will be there for two hours or more. Nobody else will pay any attention. They hate him. So much that if the car doesn't start at once, they may rush out and give you a push." "Now, how do I get to Nevka Street?"

His face lighted up. "You see, I told you that you need me. The way is very complicated, but I will show you."

"All right," I said, giving in. "But as soon as we're near the place, you'll have to get out."

He grinned, and we started down the street. We reached the car and climbed in. I hadn't really believed Yuri, but certainly no one made an outcry or paid any attention to us. I reached under the instrument panel, disconnected the ignition wires and wired them together. I stepped on the starter. I don't think I expected anything to happen, but the motor started at once. It didn't sound too bad. I put it in gear and we moved off.

We reached a spot near my destination without mishap. I stopped the car and told Yuri to get out. He put up a little argument, but finally did.

"I'll see you back at the apartment," I told him, and drove off. I had a few minutes to spare and drove slowly. I finally reached the spot about fifteen minutes before the car with Cooper was due to arrive there. Yuri had described the street perfectly. By turning and backing I finally got the car directly across the street. There was no room for another car to get by on either side. I killed the motor and got out.

I went around to the front and lifted the hood. Then I reached down and ripped the wires from the carburetor. While I was at it, I got some grease, and smeared it around on my hands and a little on my face. I put the hood down and went back to sit behind the wheel. I waited until I knew the car was about due, then began stepping on the starter.

I was aware when the car arrived, but I didn't look up. The starter whirred with a dismal sound. The horn blew on the other car. I looked up, waved hopelessly at the car and continued to press the starter.

The driver leaned out of the window. "Get out of the way," he or-

dered.

"I can't," I said. "It will not start."

"Then push it out of the way," he said.

I shrugged, and gave up with the starter. I made sure the hand brake was partly set, and climbed out. I got behind the car and pushed, but nothing happened. I saw the men in the car exchanging words, then the driver got out and came over to me.

"Come on," he said roughly. "We have to get this junk pile out of the street. We are on government business."

I gave him a sickly smile, and gestured futilely at the car again. He muttered under his breath but put his own shoulder against it. We both pushed, but I didn't work too hard and the car still didn't move. We struggled for a couple of minutes and finally the driver straightened up, looked at the other car and shrugged. There was some more conversation there, while I held my breath, then the rear door of the car opened and one of the KGB men got out. He left the door open. Inside I could see the other guard and Cooper.

The KGB man came over and scowled at me. "This time we'd better get this car out of the way, or we will arrest you. Understand?"

"Yes, sir," I said.

One of them got on either side of me, and put his shoulder to the car. I did the same, facing the one who had his back to me. As I pushed, I reached for my gun.

The car began to move slowly despite the brakes. I straightened up, and turned to face the man back of me. The gun barrel raked across his forehead before he even knew what was happening. Without waiting to see him fall, I whirled on the other one. He had already guessed that something had happened, and he was trying to turn and get his gun out at the same time. But he was at a disadvantage. He was off balance, and his back was toward me. Before he could make it, I brought the gun down on his head. He grunted and collapsed.

Two down, I muttered to myself, and looked at the car. The other KGB man had his gun out, and was lining it up on me. I dropped to the ground behind the MVD man. The other gun went off, and I heard the bullet over my head. By then I had him in my sights. I pulled the trigger gently, and saw him slump back against the seat. His gun dropped out of the car.

I jumped to my feet and ran over. The guard wasn't dead, or even unconscious. He was leaning against the back of the seat, one hand clutching his shoulder, the blood coming out between his fingers. He glared at me and tensed his body.

"Don't try it," I told him in Russian. "I can't miss you this close."

He struggled with himself and lost the battle. He stayed where he was, watching me closely. I turned my attention to Cooper. He was sitting there, looking as if he didn't believe what he saw.

"What is this?" he said as though

he didn't expect an answer.

"It's what they used to call the arrival of the U. S. Calvary," I told him in English. "A modern version of an old-fashioned rescue. Come on, Cooper, let's get out of here, fast!"

"I don't believe it," he said. "You read stuff like this in books but it doesn't happen. I'm only a sky jockey. Nobody is going to send to rescue me."

"Somebody did," I said impatiently. "Come on. We don't have all day. This place will be swarming with cops any minute."

He was shaking his head. "It was mighty nice of you to make the effort, but I'm not going with you!"

I had expected almost anything but this. "What?" I asked.

"I'm not going with you," he repeated.

"Why in the hell not?" I demanded.

"My dad and two brothers are landing here tonight," he said slowly. "What do you think would happen to them if I escaped?"

"They wouldn't dare do anything to them," I said.

He was shaking his head again. "I ain't going to risk it. My lawyer says I won't get more than seven years. I can do that and still find my family alive when I get home."

I looked at him with speculation.

"You can't do it," he said, guessing what I was thinking. "If you try to knock me out and drag me, you'll never make it. . . . You may not anyway unless you leave at once."

He was right. I knew it, but I hated to be cheated after everything that had been done. But I didn't have any time. I kicked the guard's gun under the car and looked at the other two guards. They were still out. I turned and ran.

"Give my regards to the Statue of Liberty when you see her," Cooper called after me.

I didn't bother to answer. I knew I was going to have my hands full for the next few minutes, at least until I could get back to the apartment and change clothes. I ran swiftly for two zig-zag blocks, then slowed down to a fast walk. I threw the gun away. I wanted to keep it, but it would be too damning as evidence if it was found. Two more blocks away, I saw a small car parked with no one around it. I slipped into it, tore out the ignition wires and put them together. Then I drove away. As I left the curb I heard a shout behind me but ignored it.

I left the car at the curb a good ten blocks away from the apartment house, and went the rest of the way on foot, keeping a sharp eye out for cops. I was about two blocks away from the apartment when I suddenly saw Natasha on the street ahead of me. At the same time she saw me, and started for me as fast as she could walk. Her face was white with tension and I knew something had happened.

"What's wrong?"

"We can't stand here. We must walk away from here." She led the way along the first cross street. "They

arrested Ilya and Yuri. A half hour ago."

"Who?"

"KGB, I think. I was out and came back just in time to see them being led into the streets."

"Do you know why?"

"No. One never knows. We may have been on a suspicion list, or someone may have made a report about us. Anything. And there are still guards on the apartment. Did you leave your papers there?"

"No."

"Then you can get away. That's why I waited on the street. I hoped I would see you before they found me."

"They won't find you now," I said.

"They will," she said. "No one can live in Russia without papers and now I have no papers I can use."

"We'll find a way," I said. "But first we've got to hole up somewhere. There's probably already a description of me around. Do you know of a hotel where they don't frown on a girl visiting a man in his room?"

"The Molenka, I think. I believe I heard Yuri talking about it once."

"All right. First, let's go somewhere where I can buy clothes."

We took the subway, getting off at a stop Natasha knew. She led the way to a small clothing store, and I succeeded in buying a suit that wasn't too bad. I bought a few other things and some clothes for her. There was no place for me to change there, but we went back to the subway and I changed in the men's room. I stuffed the old clothes under some paper in a trash basket and we went on to the hotel.

She was right about the hotel. The clerk looked at my papers and I signed the register. I explained that the girl wasn't staying long, and for a minute I thought he was going to wink at me.

"We'll be safe here for a while," I told her when we were in the room, "but we'd better not stay too long. The hunt for me will probably be overshadowed by the one for you, but there's always a chance someone will want to see your papers. And in the hunt for me, they may eventually get down to checking all the guests in hotels. I'll be all right until they make a call to Rostov. So we'd better put our heads to getting out of Moscow."

"How can I get out?" she asked. "And where would I go if I did get out?"

"To America with me," I said.

"America?"

"Why not? You're a member of the Russian underground, and you should be very welcome. You'll probably get a job right away. You could be valuable."

"You think so?" she exclaimed. Then her face fell. "It is awful to think that I might get out just when Ilya and Yuri have been caught."

"I don't think we can do anything about that," I said gently. "If I hadn't created such an uproar, I might have been able to—but not now. We'll have to go, Natasha. I'm sure that Ilya and Yuri would agree."

Then she came in to my arms and

cried until she was exhausted.

We stayed in the hotel for two days, while I thought up ways of escaping and discarded them. The search was too big for either a black market car or another stolen one. The papers were full of the story of the American agent who had tried to rescue Cooper, and it had even started Khrushchev off on another tirade of threats against America. In the meantime, everyone there had denied knowing anything about an agent.

Finally I hit on an idea I thought might work. Leaving Natasha in the hotel room, I spent two nights down at the trucking center in Moscow. Most of it was spent in little cafes, drinking vodka and listening to the truck drivers.

The third night we both went down. By this time I was familiar with which trucks were which. Standing in the shadows we watched a big six-wheeler being loaded for Leningrad. When it was loaded, the two drivers went into the cafe for a last drink. We slipped out of our shadow and quickly climbed in the back. We made ourselves as comfortable as we could on the boxes, and a few minutes later we were on our way.

All through the night the big truck roared along, and well into the next day. I had been watching the time and when it seemed we should be nearing Leningrad, I slipped to the rear and began to watch through the tarpaulin. When we finally reached Leningrad, we looked for our chance, and as the truck went around a sharp corner, we dropped off.

In Leningrad, we took a trolley to the center of the city, and I found a bus terminal. I bought two tickets to Tallin, just south of Leningrad, getting them one at a time and from different windows just in case someone wanted to see papers. But nothing happened and we were soon on the bus heading south.

Tallin was a little more of a problem. We were there two days and nights, and getting a little nervous, before I found a fisherman I could bribe to take us across the narrow neck of the Baltic to Finland. It wasn't the most ideal place to go, but I had little choice. That night the fisherman took us, and a couple of hours later we were at the American Embassy.

It took a little more doing to get them to awaken the Ambassador, but it was finally accomplished, and a handsome, gray-haired man, in a fancy bathrobe, was peering at us curiously.

"I'm a major in the United States Army," I told him. "For security reasons, I can't tell you any more than that at the moment. I want to make a phone call to General Sam Roberts, in Washington."

He must have heard of the general, but he didn't even blink. "That's a most unusual request, Major. Would you mind if the call was made in my presence?"

"No, sir."

"Then come on," he said. He led the

way to his office and indicated the phone. I picked it up and put in the call. It took a while for it to get through but, finally, there was General Roberts on the other end.

"General," I said, "this is your favorite chestnut puller. Have you been keeping up with your reading?"

"I'll say I have," he said. "We were worried about you, boy. I see where things didn't go quite right. How bad is it?"

"Not too bad. The first problem went off fine; the second didn't because the prize pupil didn't want to play."

He whistled. "Where are you now?"

"The American Embassy in Finland. And I'm homesick. Incidentally you remember the three friends I was to look up?"

"Yes."

"One of them is with me. The young lady. The other two were unable to make it."

"I see," he said. He was silent for a minute. "I guess maybe the best way is the simplest. Less possible complications. Tell the Ambassador to expect a call from the State Department. We'll see you soon. Got any money left?"

"Enough to get back on."

"Okay, boy. Goodbye."

He hung up, and I told the Ambassador about the expected call. He had some brandy brought in, and we all sat and waited together. The call came in a half hour. I don't know what he was told, but it seemed to cheer him up. "Well, Major," he said, slapping me on the back, when he'd finished, "why didn't you just tell me your troubles? No problem at all. We find a couple of rooms for you and the young lady, and everything will be fixed up in the morning."

I didn't know what he meant by that, but I kept my mouth shut. And I found out in the morning. Right after breakfast, we were handed two passports good for passage one way from Finland to America. The names on them weren't ours, but obviously the Ambassador didn't know that.

"Anybody can lose his passport, Major Johnson," he said. "No need to call Washington about that."

"I'm the cautious type," I said, and let it go at that.

That afternoon Natasha and I boarded a regular jet liner for America. When we'd unbuckled our seat belts and leaned back, I lit a cigarette. "Well, honey," I said, "you'll soon be in America."

"I know," she said. She sounded excited. "Will I see you again after we are there?"

"Definitely."

"It will be wonderful. Still—I think I may miss Moscow in the spring."

"And the red, red flowers?" I asked, quoting from the password I had used when I first met her. "Well, there will still be flowers blooming there, and maybe one day the whole country will bloom."

She smiled and put her head on my shoulder. A few minutes later she was asleep.



# Blue Notes

Some assorted background facts  
on who wrote what, and why, in  
this issue of *Bluebook*

Readers of modern aviation fiction will need no introduction to Hank Searls, author of "Last Flight," which appears on pages 12-13. Hank is the guy who wrote the very popular "The Big X," a selection of The Readers Digest Condensed Book Club, and the even more widely-read "The Crowded Sky," chosen by The Literary Guild. In a word, Hank knows his flying, and that's all we have to say about "Last Flight" or its creator. After all, you want cream on your strawberries?

\* \* \*  
"Obituaries," says Brigadier General Edwin William Chamberlain, "are easier to write than autobiographies, so I'll just stick to facts."

The author of "The Grasshopper Commandos," which appears on pages 28-29 (as well as "Last Man On Luzon," in our previous issue), then goes on to say he's from Idaho, was a student at the University of Idaho, was graduated from West Point, and served all over the Pacific before being retired for physical reasons right



after WW II. He started writing in the early 30's, has drawn checks from most of the top magazines in the business, and he concludes by saying that "I write mainly about the people I know best—soldiers. . . . I hold the hundreds I've known in deepest respect."

Anyone who's ever read a line he has written knows the General's sticking to the facts on that one.

\* \* \*  
Tom Bailey claims to have written some 30 book-length yarns in his day and many more shorter pieces, but he admits he never had half the trouble selling *anything* that he did with "Ordeal In Paradise," the fantastic and true tale appearing on pages 32-33. He confesses that he is unable to understand this at all, and he seems to find nothing unusual in the story of Ernst Nordensen's idyll on that desert island with a naked beauty.

Our guess is that the story has appeared in so many fiction magazines (as well as in so many young men's dreams) that, when it actually happens in real life, nobody will believe it.

We didn't either—until Tom came up with the proof.

\* \* \*  
John D. MacDonald is a lad who spends six months of the year in Florida, six months in New England, and twelve months turning out the best damned suspense stories ever spawned. And we say that knowing that everybody who owns a typewriter has tried the suspense bit in recent years, and most of them pack about as much suspense into their manuscripts as you'll find in the average grocery list. To all of them we say, buy yourself a MacDonald yarn, and learn yourself a lesson. And while you're waiting for your change, read "A Dark People Thing" on pages 30-31.

\* \* \*  
Another guy who has played around in his day with the stuff dreams are made of is Pat Frank, author of "The Man Who Told The Truth" (pages 40-42). Pat will be remembered as the celebrated writer of "Mr. Adam," the best-seller of some years ago which concerned a chap who turned out to be the . . . er . . . last man on earth who could produce young. As you can imagine, Pat's hero in that one was a guy who could be said to have it made.

Andrew Robin, who's responsible for "Epitaph For A Fast Gun," the western on pages 18-19, once managed to get as far west as Gary, Indiana, and it was that which started him to write epics of the plains. Since then, he's written scores of them, three of which have been made into Hollywood films, and a half-dozen of which have galloped across the 21-inch screen in your living room. In his spare time, he collects sleeve-garters.

\* \* \*  
Like William Chamberlain, Bob Bristow (writer of "Death On The Loose", pages 22-23) is appearing in *Bluebook*, modern version, for the second time. You'll recall he penned



"Patsy" in our second issue, and, good as that one was, it's the Child's Garden of Verses compared to this dandy little thriller, which makes us wake up screaming even now—and we've read it twice.

Bob is an Oklahoman, which probably explains why he looks like another gent from that state, name of Mickey Mantle. A full-time writer, Bob's hobby is rattlesnake-hunting, which may be better than staring at pretty girls and then again it may not, depending on your point of view.

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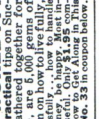
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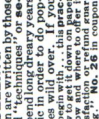
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