

# The Day the World Ended

By Sax Rohmer



Illustrated by  
John  
Richard  
Flanagan

As we bent over that wonderful panorama I suppressed an exclamation. The roads were animate with tiny figures! "Trouble!" Gaston Max announced laconically

## The Story Thus Far:

**BRIAN WOODVILLE**, an explorer, is sent to Baden-Baden, Germany, to investigate a report about giant bats. A bodiless voice warns him to leave.

He joins forces with Lonergan of the U. S. Secret Service and Max of the Paris Sûreté, both of whom are trailing a Madame Yburg.

Woodville falls in love with Marusa. He learns that the mysterious forces which oppose him are controlled by a secret cult headed by Anubis, who is about to destroy the world. Only his followers will survive. Of these Marusa is one.

The Voice speaks: "Gaston Max, you shall survive for a thousand years. John Lonergan, your reward shall be oblivion. Woodville, upon you the decision shall rest."

The three men are separately trapped and taken to Castle Felsenweir. Lonergan, apparently hypnotized, visits Woodville and urges him to become a follower of Anubis. Marusa appears and repeats this demand.

Woodville is admitted to the presence of the magnificent dwarf, Anubis. He learns how Lonergan was deprived of volition, how the weird creatures which guard the castle are fabricated, he sees Gaston Max motionless and naked in a crystal coffin and he is shown two members of the Corps of Pages. He is dismissed with the command that he make his decision within five hours. He has the freedom of the castle, and Lonergan, with will power restored, accompanies him. Herr Richter acts as guide. Woodville discovers a room filled with bat-like flying suits in which the followers of Anubis travel, supported by an energy wave.

He returns to his room. Marusa visits him. She tells him she is Madame Yburg's daughter. But she is willing to join him in opposing Anubis' design. When she is gone, Max appears—disguised as Dr. Nestor. He tells how he outwitted the dwarf by closing his eyes when subjected to the device for inducing hypnotism, how he acted as though hypnotized and how he was placed in the crystal coffin.

## XI

**THIS** coffin of a living death [Gaston Max went on] in which I lay was raised upright. It rested upon a sort of trolley with rubber-tired wheels. I was pushed out into some place of darkness. . . .

For the first time I closed my weary eyes and relaxed my tired muscles. There was air in this crystal coffin. It was possible to breathe. But every minute seemed like an hour, and the hours interminable. How long I lay there, *mon Dieu!* I cannot even guess. But suddenly—so suddenly that I had barely time to stare before me and become rigid again—I felt myself moving upward! I was in some kind of lift! The movement ceased. Curtains were parted before my glass tomb, and I saw a strange, dimly lighted room. . . .

You were in it, Woodville, seated on a low stool! Before you, on a platform, was Anubis. Two beautiful creatures, one of ebony and one of ivory, moved dimly within my plane of vision.

Vaguely, because of the glass box which surrounded me, I heard Anubis speak to you. . . . The curtains were reclosed. I was in darkness again. . . . I was returned to that small apartment adjoining the laboratory and my sarcophagus was lowered to the floor.

There was a dim light in this room. By his shadow, I traced the one who had moved me. I saw him go.

Then I ventured to relax, and to think—to think—to think! Plans I could make none, for I had no idea what would happen next! My greatest chance lay in a surprise attack. If such an opportunity presented itself, on me, I reflected, must rest the fate of the world!

I heard vague sounds—once, the voice of Anubis. That peculiar whining noise, too, which is made by the elevators. But no one entered the room. It was an ordeal which I cannot describe, which honestly, my friend, I did not think I could survive a second time. Hours passed—many, many hours!

Then, suddenly, I saw a moving shadow! I became rigid. I stared straight upward.

*Madame Yburg stood watching me!*

Except that she wore some white garment, I could not, dare not, learn more. She began to speak.

"Well, my brilliant friend," she said, "is it clear to you what occurred at Bagnères des Barèges? You come at a critical moment—for at dawn tomorrow it occurs to all the world!"

**I** BEGAN to wonder! Had she detected my trickery? How far could I trust her?

"Short of joining us, there is only death," she mused on. "How strange! If it were otherwise I would help you. . . . Stare, my friend—and accept. . . ."

*She knew!* She fell silent. . . .

M. Nestor entered. . . .

"Ah, good evening, my dear Chief!" he exclaimed. He spoke in German. "This pleasure was unforeseen. I expected Richter."

"Herr Richter is with Anubis," Madame Yburg replied—so coldly. "I am standing by until he is free. Your watch ends, Dr. Nestor, when you have given the patient his first shot. Good night."

I saw, from her shadow, that she was going; then:

"May I hope," said he, "when the anxieties of tomorrow are ended, that you will think over—"

Madame Yburg laughed.

"You are very persistent!" she replied, and went out.

It was clear. M. Nestor found encouragement. He hummed a song—a popular dance melody. Yes, he was happy. It was sad. At all costs I must avoid the "first shot!"

Quickly, and in a workmanlike manner, M. Nestor removed the lid of my glass sarcophagus. He raised it upright. He rested it against some place which I could not see, since I did not

dare to move my eyes. An itching, a tear, a sneeze—any of these must betray me—ruin me!

He came presently into view, his back turned in my direction. He wore a dinner kit. I looked at him. He was charging a hypodermic syringe! . . .

I acted.

Silent, in my nakedness, and in spite of my cramped muscles, I rose from that glass coffin and hurled myself upon M. Nestor! We, of the French police, are trained in jiu-jitsu. (So also is Mr. Lonergan!) I threw the unsuspecting Greek without difficulty. . . .

Let me make my meaning clear; for that which followed was horrible. I had secured a stranglehold—you understand? It was necessary that he should be not only helpless, but *silent*. Apparently he did not understand the nature of these circumstances. And—how shall I express this thing . . .

My friend! . . . the unhappy M. Nestor *strangled himself!*

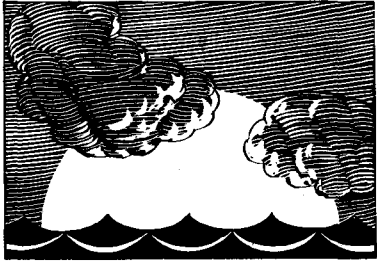
Realizing what had occurred, I looked down at him. . . . I listened. All was silent! I crossed to the table at which he had been charging the syringe. This syringe lay upon the floor. On the table were surgical implements including those very scissors which he had employed to cut my garments from my body.

**I** USED them for another purpose. I cut off his black mustache! Much stubble was left—keen though the blades were. Myself I was now unshaven for many hours and the difference between us was not great.

His garments I removed while yet it was possible to stir his limbs. I shudder when I think of it! . . .

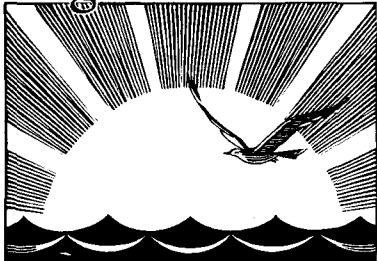
The dinner suit fitted me badly, but well enough. I broke one of the studs in removing his shirt—although this shirt was (Continued on page 36)

blue



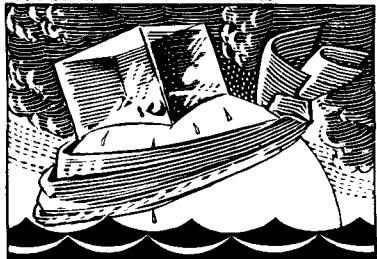
mornings

bright



mornings

dark brown



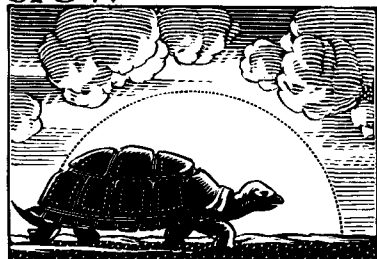
mornings

play



mornings

slow



mornings



# mornings

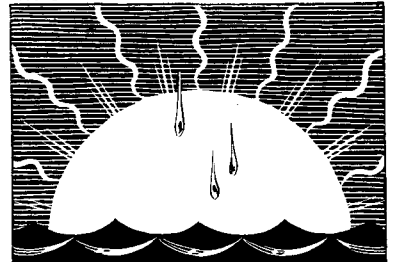
THERE'S the dismal morning when the hot water faucet runs cold—and the dark brown morning after the party when your face is taut and sensitive from lack of sleep—and the hurry-up morning when you have to make the 7.45—all kinds of mornings, all kinds of shaving conditions, but only one kind of Gillette Blade—the one constant factor in your daily shave.

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a different face to  
shave* ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲

hot



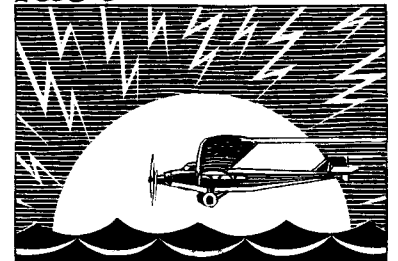
mornings

cold



mornings

fast



mornings

pay day



mornings

work



mornings

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unstarched and of an impossible pattern. No one disturbed me. Only my own movements broke the silence. I wondered . . . but went on. I placed him in the coffin from which I had escaped and returned the lid, crossing his stiffening arms upon his breast, as mine had been crossed. One hand concealed the identification disk he wore. I ruffled his hair.

Yes! It was ghastly! but it was *his* life, or the life of *millions*!

Roughly I arranged my own hair in the manner which he had affected. There was a washbowl on one side of this small room and a mirror above it. The mustache, you understand, was tiny, like that worn by M. Charles Chaplin. I had cut a lock from the head of the dead man. I laid it on the bowl and in despair plunged my hands into the pockets of his dinner jacket. . . .

This gesture saved me! What do you think I found? . . . *Chewing gum*!

It was enough! My mustache was attached. I trimmed it with the surgical scissors.

I HAD become M. Nestor . . . except that I did not talk Greek!

In the pockets of this unhappy man's garments I found several significant things. In order of interest they were:

A very neat and unusual folding headpiece, having tiny caps to fit the ears. (The purpose of this was apparent.) A case of good cigars—quite full. In the case a photograph of Madame Yburg. A visiting card of one Dr. Schreiber, upon it penciled "9:30 Regal garden." And, as I have already stated, a packet of chewing gum.

In a little lobby I discovered a light overcoat and soft gray hat, also a gold-mounted malacca cane. Upon a side table lay a pair of gloves.

It is at such moments, my friend, that one calls upon one's experience. I had no clue to the hour. But it was safe to assume that as M. Nestor had worn evening dress it was night. Nevertheless, the appointment with Dr. Schreiber might not be for *this* night.

I was in a quandary—and for more reasons than one. The poor Nestor's spectacles not only fitted me badly but contained such powerful lenses that, wearing them, I saw everything through a fog! Supreme problem: How was I to get out of the laboratory—and what was M. Nestor's behavior in departing?

The anteroom, as well as that containing my glass coffin, was dimly lighted. This, by heaven! was fortunate!

As I stood before the little mirror, endeavoring to adjust those spectacles, I heard footsteps! I turned. . . .

A stout man, a German, in white overalls—and who also wore spectacles—was approaching. . . . He was blond, half blind and good-humored. . . .

He smiled.

"Forgive me, doctor," he said, speaking in English, "if I have detained you. But you know how particular *he* is at his rest hours. He insisted upon a last word with the English journalist before retiring. Then, 'Herr Richter,' he said, 'it is death for anyone to wake me before midnight.' Thank God, he is asleep now! The Chief stood by. She is a darling. I know you agree."

Swiftly, I became M. Nestor.

Herr Richter glanced at the crystal coffin.

"Another injection at midnight? Is it so?" he asked.

I nodded. I recalled perfectly the speech of M. Nestor, and:

"Sure," I replied—"right arm. Don't move him."

Herr Richter nodded comprehendingly.

"A and B Zones are down," he

said, turning away. "You will require your crown."

I understood. "Crown" was their name for the headpiece!

AT WHAT point of the journey was it usual to attach one's "crown"? More urgent—in which direction should I proceed? This Richter was half blind, but I might meet others who could see too well. . . . Name of a good little man! it was nervous work!

"Elevator waiting!" the German called over his shoulder as he passed from the room.

I followed him.

At the farther end of the great laboratory, I saw a gap in the wall—the car of an elevator! My unsuspecting confrère was bending over a table on which were a number of books and papers. I hoped he would not ask me to explain anything; I hoped I should not meet Madame Yburg. As I passed Richter and had nearly reached the elevator:

"Doctor!" he called.

I paused—afraid to look back!

"Well?" I spoke over my shoulder.

"Crown!" he said. "Always put it on before you leave, doctor, when the Zones are down. You know what happened last week!"

Relief drew a great sigh from me.

"Sure!" I replied. "Thanks. Good night!"

I stepped into the lift. Immediately, it descended. It stopped. I saw before me a great hall supported by square pillars and having in the middle a monstrous statue. In a corner, beside an open doorway, stood a giant figure, black-armored, a mace upon his shoulder!

No other opening was visible. My heart in my mouth, I advanced in the direction of this one. . . .

I was some ten paces off, when the figure in mail lowered his mace to the floor with a crash! I nearly choked. But he remained motionless. I continued to advance. I passed through the doorway, glancing back as I did so. The man-at-arms had replaced his mace upon his shoulder.

It was a salute!

Now I found myself upon a winding stair of ancient stonework. Above, it was in shadow; below, illuminated with what seemed to be bright moonlight. But there were no windows! I descended.

Presently I reached a great iron gate. Everything was silent—deathly silent! Here at this gate stood another of the gigantic black figures—dreadful to contemplate in that artificial moonlight. I was six steps above the gate; but the figure reached out a mailed black arm and opened it. I passed through and continued to descend. The gate closed with a clang behind me.

Down I went, at last reaching a low, arched doorway. I stepped through—and found myself . . . where do you think?

Clearly, in the ancient guard-room of the castle! It retained many of its original features. But new and strange ones had been added. Behind a table near the great open fireplace, a table which contained a number of extraordinary-looking switchboards and other paraphernalia, a man was seated.

This room, alas! was more brightly lighted—as I had observed from the stairs. I now wore the headpiece and carried the hat, coat and the cane of M. Nestor.

The man at the table, an ascetic-looking creature who might have been a monk except that he wore quite ordinary and shabby clothes, stared at me hard with light blue eyes. He was, I think, a Swede. I did not care for his appearance, until:

"I am glad to see, doctor," he said, speaking in English but now his Swedish accent was unmistakable, "that your experience of last week has taught you wisdom." He tapped his ear.

I nodded. That stare had been harmless. He had merely wished to learn if I wore the protective "crown"! Evidently M. Nestor was notoriously absent-minded. . . .

So far, very good.

THE Swede took up a bunch of keys, crossed and opened a heavily iron-studded door—part, one could see at a glance, of the old fortress. He stood aside as I went through, and:

"If you return by road," he advised, "use the zone path after midnight. But go out by the main gate. The Watch will open. Good night."

"Good night," I replied.

I walked out to find myself in an ancient courtyard.

Before me, at the foot of a declivity, were twin towers joined by a gateway above which projected the teeth of a portcullis. The night was perfect. I proceeded.

Clear of the castle and before trees obtruded, I turned, looking back. My friend, Felsenweir from that point presents a wonderful spectacle in the moonlight! Its silhouette against the sky took me back into the Middle Ages. From that point of view, nothing seemed to have changed.

This road upon which I found myself presently plunged into a perfect tunnel of pines. I pulled up, unable to proceed. Moonlight failed to penetrate; and I wondered why the lamented M. Nestor carried no torch.

Then, my stupidity became apparent. . . .

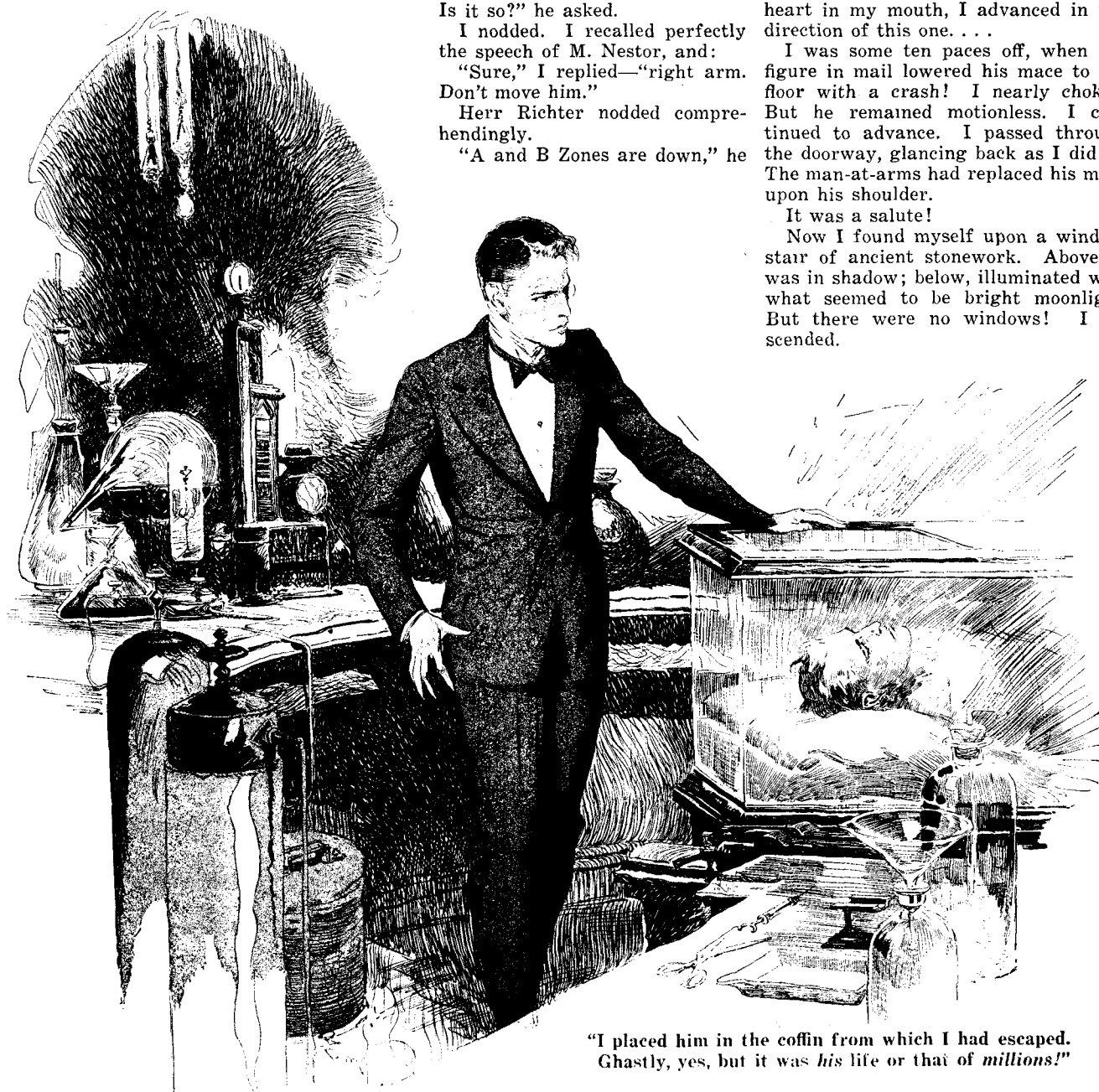
Some heavy object contained in the pocket of that light overcoat I carried, and which had been bumping against my legs, proved to be just the torch which I required!

I continued my journey.

It was a longer journey than I had anticipated. But at last it brought me to the foot of the slope. Ahead, I saw an iron gate. As I moved the ray of the torch right to left, presently it rested upon another of those gigantic black figures. . . .

I doubted. I wondered. . . . Name of a little dog! Since I had left, *everything* might have been discovered!

This one's orders were perhaps to dash out my (Continued on page 53)



"I placed him in the coffin from which I had escaped. Ghastly, yes, but it was *his* life or that of *millions*!"

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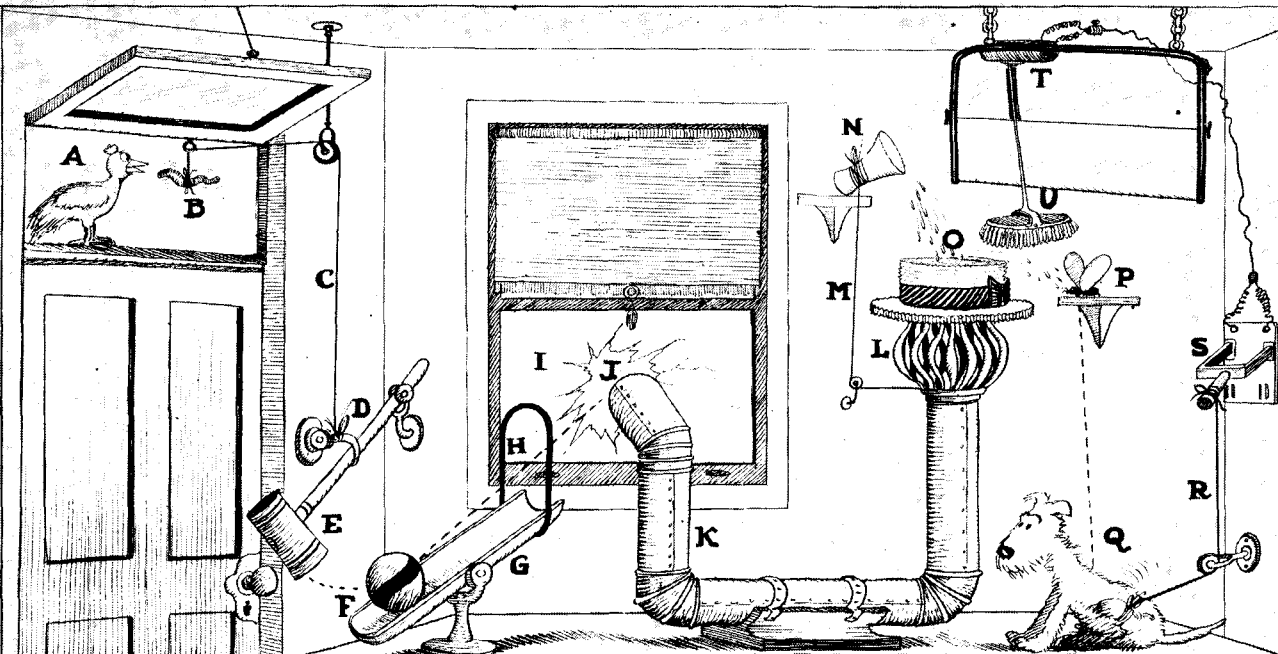
# The Inventions of Professor Lucifer G. Butts, A.K.

By RUBE GOLDBERG

A NEW MACHINE FOR CLEANING STRAW HATS SLIDES OFF THE NOTION COUNTER OF THE PROFESSOR'S BRAIN.

THE EARLY BIRD (A) COMES TO EAT WORM (B) AND PULLS STRING (C) WHICH RELEASES HOOK (D) ALLOWING CROQUET Mallet (E) TO SWING AND HIT BALL (F). BALL PROCEEDS UP RUNWAY (G) THROUGH WICKET (H) BREAKING PANE OF GLASS (I) AND ENTERS FLUE PIPE (K) CAUSING VENTILATOR (L) TO REVOLVE, WHICH PULLS CORD (M), UPSETTING GLASS OF LEMON JUICE (N) ON TO HAT (O). FLEA (P) GETS A DROP OF LEMON JUICE IN HIS EYES WHICH BLINDS HIM AND HE FALLS ON PIFFLE TERRIER'S BACK (Q). WHEN TERRIER SCRATCHES HIS BACK HE PULLS STRING (R), TURNING ON SWITCH (S) AND STARTING AUTO WINDSHIELD WIPER (T) WHICH MOVES SCRUBBING BRUSH (U) BACK AND FORTH ON ROTATING STRAW HAT.

IF THE EARLY BIRD IS LATE AND YOU'RE IN A HURRY, WEAR A DERBY.



Twice he was almost impelled to turn back and risk following the pavement below to some easier point of attack but thought of the danger drove him on.

The rattle of a motorcycle, driven rapidly, came to him, tossed up, magnified by the narrow walls below. The sound was like a whiplash to a tired horse. In a frenzy he pulled himself upward, heedless of the need for silence, ignorant of the dribble of loosened dirt and pebbles that brawled noisily down to the road below. His knees dug into solid, level earth. Still clinging to the bending sapling, he hauled himself erect and was aware at length that the noise of the cycle had ceased. Dizzy and breathless, he stupidly looked downward upon the upturned faces of Tarleton and Conway.

In the instant's paralysis of astonishment, York saw surprise turn into the excitement of recognition. Conway swung a leg out of the side car. Tarleton, astride the cycle, called sharply: "Don't move." One hand deserted the handle bars and reached toward his belt. Winded and weary though he was, York turned and half scrambled, half ran up the wooded, gentler slope of the hill itself.

FOR what seemed an eternity he pushed forward, ignoring caution in his haste. Stones stirred noisily under his legs with malicious fingers. A rotted log gave way beneath him. He pitched on his face and heard, behind, a shout, wordless but peremptory.

Fresh, helped by each other and guided by the trail he himself had blazed, it had taken the troopers only a fraction of the time and effort he had needed to scale that bank. As York rose, he could see their gray uniforms flickering upward through the tree-trunks. The imminence of his peril steadied his mind. Further blind flight would only leave a trail of sound along which they would follow and overtake him.

Twigs snapped dismayingly close at hand as he rose on all fours behind the log over which he had fallen. He crept away at right angles to his recent line of flight, placed a fallen tree between him and the men that followed and rising, stole no longer upward but along the breast of the hill. The woodcraft of Central American jungles returned to his aid now. He slipped noiselessly from tree to tree, avoiding brush that would betray him by its rustle, stepping carefully over dried branches.

Thrice, behind him, he heard shouts

but these were tentative rather than triumphant. He knew that his pursuers had not seen him again.

Yet the soft, wet earth of the woodland would disclose his tracks. The rustle of disturbed leaves, the floundering of footsteps were growing closer. An expedient flashed into his mind, so sudden, so daringly plausible that he gave a wan grin. Before him, the mountainside suddenly fell away, and through the narrow valley below a brook brawled. He laid hands on a lichened stump, wrenched it free by a series of back-and-forward tugs, rolled it downward.

With a crash and a multiple thumping it bounded over the steep bank, tore through the underbrush and splashed into the stream. A yell rose from behind and the sound of feet stumbling forward in haste. York turned back, slipped behind a mass of laurel and threw himself down. Through varnished leaves, he caught a glimpse of two men in gray who hesitated an instant on the bank where he had stood and then hurried down into the valley. Rising, the fugitive ran back in the direction he had come, regardless now of the noise of his flight. In a few minutes he stood once more above the cliff up which he and his pursuers had scrambled.

Below at the roadside stood the motorcycle. With a gasp of satisfaction and a grin, York slid down the bank, reached the machine, straddled it, tramped on the starting pedal. The engine whirled. He eased in the clutch and moved away.

SPEED and success for a moment intoxicated him, so that he opened the throttle wide and whooped his exultation into the mounting wind of his passage. Then forethought again possessed him and he chugged along more soberly, with a wary eye on the highway ahead. A rutted wood road branching off to one side attracted his notice and stirred memory.

A few rods further the highway forked. He dismounted there, leaving the machine equivocally between its branches, ran back to the wood road and hurried away up it, self-satisfaction and a gleeful, boyish zest lending power to his strides. Presently, the stiff up-

grade wearied him. He yawned again and saw with a renewed apprehension that the track along which he climbed was scored deep with new ruts, pocked and trampled by horses' hoofs. He hesitated a moment, then drove himself on, but these evidences of activity in what he recalled as solitude troubled him. The spring had left his gait and he flinched nervously at the stir of wind through boughs that met above his head. Overhead, the wind rode, mocking the humid stillness of the glade. He paused, wiped his streaming face and listened.

A RED-EYED vireo called with lonely persistence from his treetop and York caught, between its pipings, the creak and clatter of an approaching wagon.

He had more than ample time to leap from the road and conceal himself in the brush before it came into view, far down the leafy corridor. It strained by, laden high with cordwood, mud-splashed horses slopping through the spongy soil, blue-jeaned men lurching somnolently on its seat.

Not until even the sound of its passage had died did York heave himself out of his hiding place. It required all his will to move even then, for his weary body had relaxed and yearned for sleep.

He forced himself on, stumbling half blindly over ruts, careless of mosquitoes who fed full on his face and wrists, discharging caution in his longing to reach his journey's end, and lurched at last out upon a clearing, part of it studded by ancient blackened stumps, part of it freshly cut. Chips gleamed in the approaching noontide and stacks of cordwood gave a pleasant smell of drying timber to the hot air.

Above, on the hill reaching skyward from the plateau, gleamed the rock ledges he had sought; and across the clearing, squatting before a giant maple, a decaying cottage stood. His eyes, marking it, quickened and grew tender with reminiscence. To this one-time farmhouse, sagging, decrepit, gray with years, he and Desire had fled for shelter when a thunderstorm had thwarted their intention of climbing the peak now sharp against the blue of noon. There in the dwelling that earth was slowly pulling back to herself they had first known that they loved each

other. How long ago it seemed! It had been barely three months before.

In that brief space, even this far-off seclusion had altered. Axes had doubled the clearing the cottage faced. He scowled, surveying their destruction and then stiffened with sudden interest. The woodchoppers had restored the ancient dam and recreated the vanished pond. When last he was here, a brook had run through the rotting timbers of an ancient sluice. Now the little stream had been backed up by a new-built barrier into a long narrow arm of water, stretching far across the plateau and he saw with puzzled interest that the trees at its far end had been cut away.

Ingenious chaps, these lumbermen, he thought as he walked toward the cottage. They were employing a water route to float their timber to the loading stage. The ardent sunlight relaxed and wilted his weary body still further. He heard, far away through the bright stillness, a noon whistle in Aristides. His one craving now was for sleep until dark.

Uneasiness stirred again beneath enveloping fatigue when he saw that the windows of the little building's ground floor had been blindfolded by planking and that a stout door with hasp and padlock blocked the entrance. He paused, startled, but observing that the padlock hung open from a staple, advanced again with sudden recklessness and thrust the portal afar.

FROM the gloom, the familiar musty smell of the cottage came to him, mingled with a taint of recent occupation, a trace of stale cigarette smoke, the faint reek of human sweat. He lit a match with fingers that trembled a little and pushed the door shut behind him.

The chamber was bare. The flickering light shone on the cracked and blotched plaster of the walls, where lath showed here and there like the ribs of a long-dead creature. The floor, sagged and splintering, was barren, save for fresh bits of mud, cigarette stubs, bread crusts, a sausage skin. The match burned out. York kindled another.

Above his head gaped the square hole through which the long vanished staircase had ascended. He raised the light and saw its corners blurred by cobweb. There at least no one had ventured during the clearing's puzzled revival of activity. He dropped the match, caught the edge of the upper floor with both hands and heaved himself aloft. Here beneath the eaves was the dust and un-

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