

MY UNCLE Edward shut the rod box angrily. "Diana," he said, "I offer you a week's fishing on the Spey, and instead you propose to go off by yourself on some fool idea of catching your first salmon in the Pyrenees. Don't be silly!"

I was sorry for him. These dyed-in-the-wool conservatives go purple at the wattles at the mere thought of doing anything unusual.

"As a writer," I retorted, "what I want is copy and experience."

"I'd hate to tell you what you want, Diana, but if you were a boy, I'd love to demonstrate it with the back of a hairbrush."

I turned my back on him, and he produced a fearful cliché about finding some man who'd sit me down with a bump, and show me what was what.

"At the moment I'm less bothered about finding a man than borrowing a few rods," I said coldly.

"Why?" he came back. "You haven't a hope of catching anything. These Pyrenean rivers are fished, poached and netted to blazes. You'll get nothing."

But he lent me a spinning outfit, and sent me off with the assurance that he had no intention of deserting the Spey to attend my inquest.

Determined to prove that he was wrong, I did not go direct to the people with whom I had arranged, through an agent, to stay, but drove my car to the village of Peyrehourade, where the *Inscrits Maritimes* have government authority to use nets. I thought the experience might prove instructive—and it was.

Ignoring the fact that there would be no salmon unless a reasonable number were allowed to run the river for spawning, a procession of nets, night and day, swept the river from bank to bank. They caught nothing, but that was not the point. The principle was all wrong, and I said so to some of the fishermen. But they took no notice. I returned to my car in a huff.

The forty-mile journey could not have been lovelier. The river ran through a gorge on my left and to the south the snow peaks of the Pyrenees pricked a

sky of Sevres blue. But in every likely pool the water was being combed by rod-and-line fishermen, and nobody had caught a thing.

From the agent's description I had expected to be fishing private water, and the discovery that anybody who could afford thirty-five francs for a fishing permit was entitled to fish sixty kilometers of water was infuriating.

I solaced myself with the thought that my host, Monsieur Ruysant, had been declared a salmon fisherman of great renown, and in imagination I expected to find him a sort of French edition of Uncle Ned. A fresh shock awaited me when a small, tub-shaped man, with three chins and a garlic breath, careered into the courtyard and wrung me warmly by both hands.

"I am glad to 'ave you," he declared, in cockney but fluent English. He introduced me to his wife, an elderly woman with gay eyes, and to his small son, Girond, a serious little fellow who was so determinedly polite that he wore his hat in and out of the house for the purpose of sweeping it off his head whenever I appeared.

MONSIEUR RUYSANT piloted me up an outside staircase to my room. I asked him what the chances were of getting a fish. His answer was oblique. I was very little for fishing, but the sunshine was lovely, soon I would be as brown as a carrot. . . .

"And eat? You shall eat so much that you do not have room for him all. And you shall enjoy every minute. I have from England two other guests—a doctor very eminent, Sir Henry Chalmer, and his friend Feathers."

"Feathers?" I repeated.

"It is the name they nick for him, Feathers Conway."

"Have they caught anything?"

Monsieur Ruysant bounced his hands up and down on the spring mattress of an enormous bed.

"Very, very comfortable, indeed," he said. "I am born in this bed, also my son Girond. Ah, I smell the dinner. We shall not stop to wash."

But it was twenty minutes before I had changed and made my way to the salon.

My host and hostess and the two guests were already at the table. The boy Girond was sitting at the end of the room reading a magazine. His cap was on and he sprang to his feet and whipped it off as I came in.

Madame introduced me to Sir Henry and to Feathers.

An eminent surgeon once told me that successful doctors are divided into two classes—the pseudo aristocrat and the vet. Sir Henry belonged to the latter category. He was dry and had no suggestion of polish. My arrival interrupted a story he was telling. His greeting was a frown and lifting his lower portions about two inches clear of the seat of the chair.

Feathers, who looked like a very bad drawing of a staff officer, was quite a different cup of tea. No sooner had his eyes settled upon me, and in one of them was a blue glass monocle, than I knew I had clicked with him. Don't ask me how I knew it, for the creature was completely inarticulate. In lieu of conversation he made grumbling, sighing noises, such as you might hear in a cow barn during milking hours. He was, however, stiffly polite, and knocked his chair over in coming to his feet. Little Girond sprang up to set it on four legs.

"Wa-ah-unks!" said Feathers, in appreciation of the service.

I was given a place between him and my host. After which Sir Henry remorselessly picked up the thread of his story. It dealt with his experiences in the South African war, and I marveled that anybody could remember anything so dull.

In an interval for mastication, Monsieur Ruysant got out the fact that I wrote stories for American and English magazines.

Just Beyond the Fighting

By Roland Pertwee

Uncle Edward's niece Diana hooks herself an adventure



My arrival interrupted a story Sir Henry was telling. His greeting was a frown



"A fiver." It was a lot, but I was in that kind of mood.

Sir Henry shook his head.

"No. Though it would serve you right, for you are a very unpleasant young woman."

"Huh! Yellar," said I, out of any gangster film.

"Wahwahwah! Easeas!" Feathers subscribed as a general protest.

But Sir Henry had more to say.

"If I thought you could stand up for five minutes in that river I might take you on. But you couldn't. If you tried you'd be washed away and become jetsam, and a good job too."

It was no fault of mine that I happened to be little but to have a joke made about it was more than I could stand.

"All right," I said, "if you won't risk any money I'll take it out in doctor's fees. But I'll get a salmon in the Pyrenees, and I'll get one before you do. What's more, I'll make you eat it from the tail first."

I know it sounded like an idle boast, but it wasn't. What he had said about the power of the river had given me an idea. I would go up to one of the little mountain streams and get my fish there. The fact that I had paid the Ruysants for a week's board and lodging didn't influence me. I was willing to let the money go.

SIR HENRY, who was not impressed, returned to the house without a word. But Feathers lingered.

I won't attempt to reproduce our conversation. No ordinary alphabet would supply the sounds. Yet, somehow, he managed to convey a willingness to help. He was deeply shocked at the idea of my going off alone into the mountains, but whether on account of fears for my safety, or disappointment at losing me, I couldn't really say. His one constructive act was the loan of a tent, of the kind used by Boy Scouts. He even volunteered to show me how to pitch it, but it finished up by my showing him how it was done.

"Mademoiselle," said he, "I too see the card you show the guard. It is for mademoiselle, not for madame. You are a very, very naughty girl!"

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DE ZAYAS

Sir Henry, who had been steadily approaching Pretoria, was annoyed by the interruption. He said:

"My life is too busy to bother with magazines."

"Ah mouf-wouff!" Feathers protested, rather charmingly, I thought.

Perhaps Sir Henry felt he had been hitting too hard. His next remark seemed to suggest it.

"I very much doubt whether I could write a short story."

"I don't see why not. You can tell a damned long one," I threw back.

Trying to score off important people is very idiotic, but he'd asked for it and got it. From Feathers came an eruptive choke, the result of a piece of lamb going down the wrong way, and the wink that Madame flashed me was a medal for valor. I much preferred it to Monsieur Ruysant's investiture, carried out by a roaming foot under the table.

I flattered myself that I had got away with the first engagement pretty well, but I had underestimated Sir Henry as an antagonist. He looked at me through a pair of steel spectacles.

"One of the few ailments over which medical science is powerless," said he, "is the enlarged ego. You, young lady, suffer from it in an advanced stage." Then, without giving me time to reply, he resumed his march through the veldt.

OF ALL the people present I was inclined most to pity the luckless Feathers. He was in the unhappy position of having to support a friend against a girl who had hit him a nasty smack over the aorta. And being without words, he had no machinery for doing it.

Dinner over, I went out into the garden in an amethystine dusk. The hour was too late for fishing, but I put up the rod Uncle Ned had lent me to practice a few casts.

I did not anticipate much difficulty in casting a

spinner, and, taking up a position near the house, I chose a clear patch ahead to cast at. The reel had a brake and appeared foolproof.

"Now," I thought, "I mustn't forget to give it a nice easy swing and a good follow through."

The swing was perfect, but something went wrong with the follow through, for the weight I had attached smashed one of the windows of the house and hit Sir Henry in the nape of the neck as he was settling down with a copy of the British Medical Journal.

With a yell of agony and surprise he leaped to his feet and his eyes fastened upon Girond, who had followed me out with the intention of putting in a little brisk hat work.

It was natural for a man of Sir Henry's type to assume that small boys spend their lives throwing stones and, bent on vengeance, he plunged into the garden.

"Hoi!" I shouted, "let him alone. I did it."

He stopped, a hand raised and his brows down.

"Deliberately?"

I would liked to have replied "Yes," but hadn't the nerve.

"No, and I'm very sorry."

Because it went against the grain to apologize to him I looked down and saw that I had let the line overrun and there was the most unholy tangle round the barrel of the reel. Sir Henry saw it too, and smiled sourly.

"Then might I suggest you try your 'prentice hand in a less populated area."

A "Wa-wa, starstarstar," behind me proved that Feathers had come to my rescue.

But I was boiling.

"You can leave out that 'prentice hand stuff. I bet I'll catch as many fish as you do, and that won't be difficult, as you haven't caught one."

For the first time I saw a twinkle of amusement in Sir Henry's eyes. "How much?" he asked.

The poor fellow must have got me badly, for when, at the crack of a lemon-and-gray dawn, I came downstairs with a handbag, I found him mounting guard over the car. He had brought, as a parting gift, a sleeping bag and offered it with the words:

"Betaveis. Coluperenites."

Then he sighed and watched me drive away.

I couldn't help wishing that I liked men better. But try as I would I could not avoid seeing their stupid sides. . . .

At Oloron I bought three cans of pâté de foie gras, some sardines, tea and condensed milk and packed them in a haversack, which I left on the seat beside me. I already possessed a little primus stove and a saucepan. I felt delightfully independent as I jumped back into the car and continued my journey eastward—and upward.

I MUST have traveled over an hour, mounting higher and higher, when I came to a picket of French troops. One of the sentries signaled me to stop and asked where I thought I was going. I told him fishing.

"Not this way, Mademoiselle," he said. "This way leads to the Spanish frontier."

Very sulkily, I reversed the car and drove back by the way I had come. It was the first time I had been interfered with on account of a war, and I resented it. As a British citizen I felt I had a right to go where I liked.

I am not quite sure where this contretemps took place, but the country thereabout was wild and deserted with a few scattered farms. I had gone back perhaps a mile when I saw a track leading to the left. In a spirit of pique I took it, and I hadn't been going ten minutes before I regretted the decision. The track rose with alarming steepness and fell away precipitously on the right into a gorge through which a river boiled frighteningly. I (Continued on page 35)

It's the Way You Say It

By Ruth Seinfel

Helen Traubel of the Metropolitan, one of many great singers trained by Boghetti

COLLIER PHOTOGRAPHS

Lisa Sergio, N.B.C.'s only woman announcer, has a natural voice for radio

IN 1940 you will be casting your vote for a President of the United States. You may think you'll be voting for a platform, a party or a man. More likely you'll be voting for a voice.

A newspaper columnist wrote words to this effect recently, and nobody contradicted him. Instead, those eccentric people called voice coaches, who used to be ignored by any but stage-struck and opera-bitten boys and girls, have suddenly become the objects of a lot of flattering attention. Firms like Standard Oil have hired them to take the vocal kinks out of their sales staffs. Governor Alf Landon turned to one of them for help in repairing the unfortunate effect of his radio voice, but too late.

"You can't put make-up on your voice," says one of the trainers of human vocal organs. "You can grow whiskers on your lip or chin, trick your face up with eye shadow and lipstick. But if you want to do something about your voice, be prepared for honest labor. Voices are the most important reason why so many beautiful girls are waiting on tables in Hollywood restaurants."

This particular expert happens to be Giuseppe Boghetti, who has rendered a number of Philadelphia debutantes easier to listen to. He has also trained some notable singing voices, among them Helen Traubel of the Metropolitan and the Negro contralto Marian Anderson whom Maestro Toscanini considers to have one of the great voices of the ages, and who incidentally has one of the most beautiful speaking voices that ever thanked an admiring public from a concert platform.

That same speaking voice used to be rather guttural, Mr. Boghetti remembers. What happened was that while Miss Anderson was practicing to get her singing tones up into her head she managed to get her speaking voice up there, too.

"Aw-ee" and See What Happens

Getting her voice up into her head is what Cousin Ella, who sings in the choir, is trying to do when she goes around holding her nose and humming "M-mmmm, n-nnnn, mind, none." But what's Cousin Ella going to do when there isn't an *m* or an *n* in the word she has to sing? That's why, says Mr. Boghetti, it's better to practice with vowel sounds. Purse your lips and sing "Aw-ee" and see what happens to your voice.

What you've done is to coax the sound waves into bouncing against the bones of your face, the sounding board Nature gave you. You've made your voice resonant, and resonance is one of the elements of a good voice. But only one.

Well, what makes a good voice? President Roosevelt has one of the best we're likely to hear on the air, the experts are almost a hundred per cent agreed.

But if you asked them why you would get about a hundred different explanations. His range isn't remarkable; he hits about the same number of tones the average American baritone is likely to use. He doesn't pull the organ stops the way silver-tongued Bryan or Billy Sunday used to do. He doesn't tremble with emotion like Hitler or leap from a whisper to a roar like Mussolini. What he seems to do is just talk naturally, using the tones that come most easily, with their rich overtones unmarred by strain, and he always manages to have enough breath to finish strong when he comes to a period.

Breath control, vow the singing teachers, is what does it. Remember Governor Landon, they say. Not only did he use only about one fifth the normal range of a male voice, not only were

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