

Advance Agent

By John August

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD McLEOD

The Story Thus Far:

CAPTAIN JAMES GARRETT, of U. S. Army Intelligence, has been engaged in uncovering the activities of a powerful German agent named von Weitbrecht. Posing as Erich Köchlin, a German spy, whose arrival was expected by Nazi agents in the United States, Garrett has collected evidence against all the plotters except the ringleader, von Weitbrecht. An ambitious American Nazi, Lynn Scovil, has promised to put Garrett, or Köchlin, in touch with the No. 1 German agent if Köchlin will make him, Scovil, the leader.

In the course of his duties, Garrett meets and falls in love with Gail Armstrong, a young widow who was formerly engaged to Scovil. Pledged to secrecy, Garrett is forced to keep silent while Gail's suspicion of his activities grows. She is deeply in love with him, but is horror-stricken by his Nazi connections.

Bill Jay, a newspaper reporter from New York, has nosed out the fact that Camp Ryegate is a hotbed of foreign espionage. Accompanied by his fiancée, Scovil's pretty daughter, Connie (who, hating her father, lives with Gail Armstrong), he confronts Garrett and accuses him of being a German flier, lately escaped from Canada. Realizing that Bill Jay must be silenced for at least twenty-four hours, Garrett orders the Nazi thug, Booker, to kidnap the newspaperman and lock him up for the night at Camp Ryegate. Booker agrees but decides privately to kill Bill Jay.

Garrett persuades the Nazi spy, Mathilde Winkler to abandon Scovil and to lead him, Garrett, to von Weitbrecht. The American inadvertently tips his hand to the woman (by snapping off the short-wave radio in the middle of a coded message addressed to himself). Mathilde telephones Booker at Camp Ryegate, asking him to come at once and deal with Garrett. When Garrett warily insists on leaving at once, Mathilde shoots but only grazes his arm. Garrett overpowers the woman and drives to Gail's house. Gail binds up his wound, helps him secure Mathilde tightly and lock her in a closet, listens to him feverishly put a call through to Army Intelligence in Washington. In a wave of relief, she drives him to von Weitbrecht's cabin where they pick up the German who is still under the impression that Garrett is Köchlin. . . . Meanwhile, Connie persuades a skeptical policeman to help her look for Bill Jay—and Bill Jay (realizing that he will not be allowed to live) is hurried into a car at the camp. When Booker arrives to pick up Mathilde and Garrett, he finds only a houseman who babbles about having heard a shot. That leaves only one likely place for the American to have gone, Booker reasons—Gail's house. He goes there, hears the muffled cries in an upstairs closet, and starts taking off the hinges.

Conclusion

THERE was a clump of hazel at the side of the old road, opposite the cut where Connie and Bill had watched the meeting of truck and car less than a week ago. Lyman—she had learned that that was his first name, that he was Trooper Lyman Sharp—had parked the car, Gail's coupé, just back of that hazel. They were sitting on the sodden ground and the hazel probably kept off some of the rain but rivulets of drainage from the road flowed around them. Huddled in her slicker, Connie clasped her knees and shook. She seemed to have been shaking for hours. Would she ever be warm again?

"You scared or just cold?" Lyman inquired.

"Both. Shut up."

Did he think she was cast iron? How simple and hopeful the world had been when she had lain here beside Bill! That midnight meeting had scared her, but the terror was nothing compared to this weight of despair. That night, the principal question had been whether Bill was going to kiss her! What might they have done to him by now? She bent her wet forehead down to her wet sleeve and tried to shut out the terrible images of what they might have done, but she

couldn't shut them out. And twenty-four hours ago he had kissed her good night, and had said, "See you in the morning."

"You better make good, sister," Lyman said gloomily, "or it will be me, not the state, that pays to have this uniform cleaned."

Her tortured nerves tried to explode in a laugh that would have meant hysterics but she managed to hold it back. But maybe that was the best thing to think of—a policeman's muddy uniform. Or how foul with mud she was. She was dry down to the waist but from there on she was water-soaked . . .

She dug her fingers into his arms. Headlights had turned into the road

from the end that was nearer the camp. "They turned them off, before," she whispered.

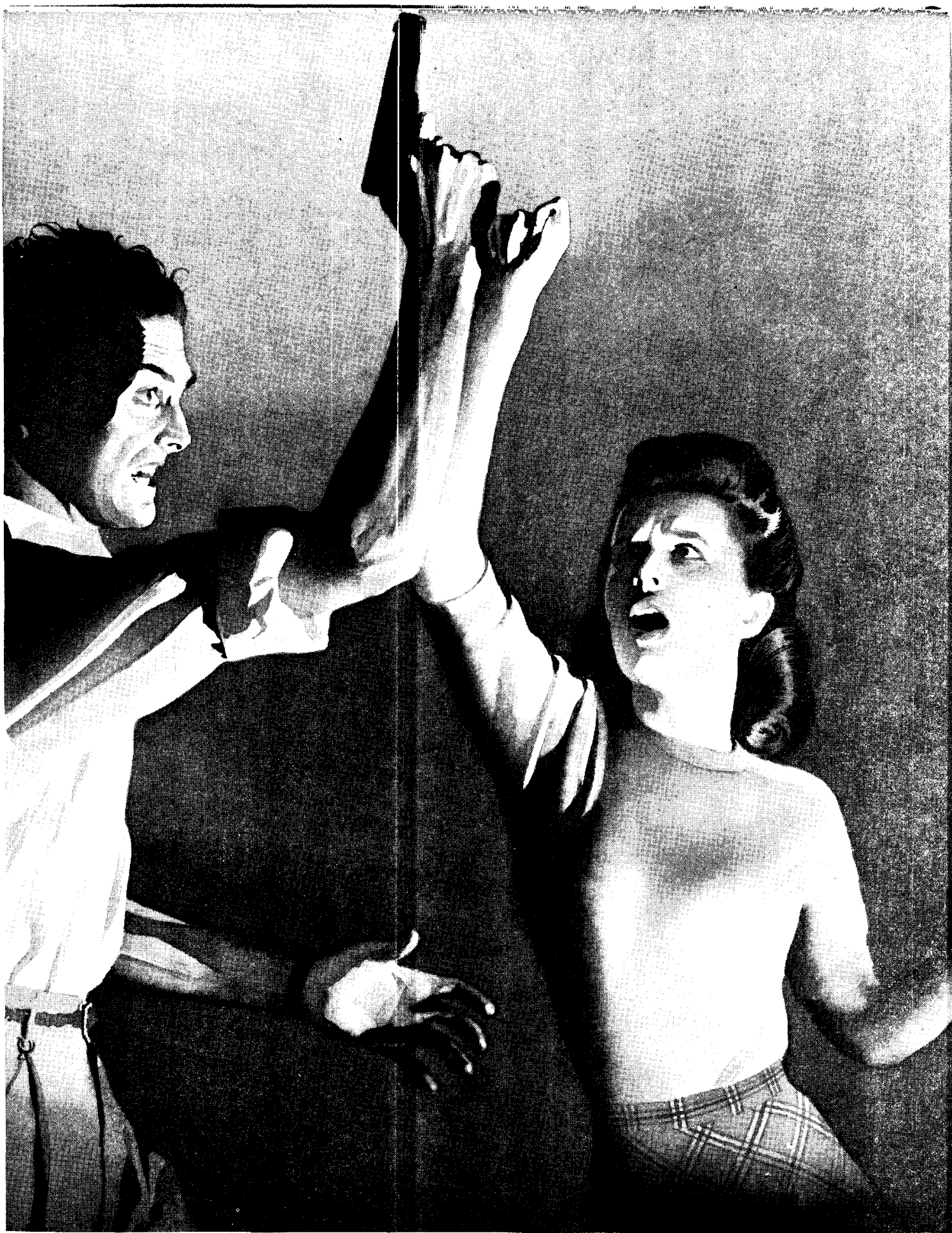
"Takin' a chance on the rain. Okay, sister, just don't move."

Move? What with? Brilliant light passed across the clump of hazel and the falling rain showed clear. The beam slid on down the abandoned road, tires passed not ten feet from her eyes, and the darkness was redoubled. The car went on, then stopped, hardly a hundred feet away. The lights went out. She couldn't see anything. She could just hear the rain swishing at the road.

Lyman was fumbling at his belt. He said cheerfully, "Just sit here. But if I yell for you, come a-hellin'."

He slid through the hazel to the road and Connie diminished to pure fear. Something was turning and twisting and, dazedly she realized that that was her stomach—and a light showed down the road and a shout came through the rain, "Come on, babe!" She was out on the road, stumbling, running.

It was a station wagon. The trooper was pointing a flashlight at two men who were standing by the radiator with their hands in the air. Her breath was coming in racking gasps, and Lyman said, "Hold this on them while I look for fleas." He gave her the flashlight, said, "Keep it steady," and began to whistle a tuneless note between his teeth. One of them, under a slicker, was wearing a



"He is an American!" she screamed. She knocked his arm upward and the gun went off in the air

A nurse can't afford to have BAD BREATH...



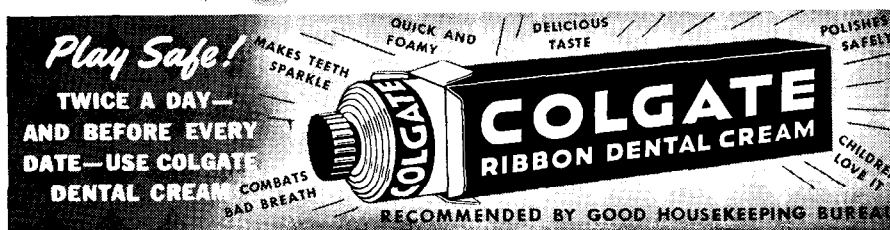
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Camp Ryegate uniform—and Connie's stomach twisted again when she recognized the other one as the thug with a cauliflower ear they had seen on the trail. Lyman came up behind them. "I threw a seven," he remarked, and took a revolver from the man she didn't recognize. "This is an Eagle Scout"—and he took an automatic from Cauliflower Ear. "That will do to ask questions about. Hold it steady, babe." He took his own gun in the other hand and got a pair of handcuffs from his pocket and clicked them around the wrists of the uniformed man. Connie managed half a scream but Lyman had seen Cauliflower Ear move too. He batted him over the head with the barrel of his revolver. The man's knees buckled and he went down in the mud.

CONNIE dropped the flashlight, fell on it, picked it up. Lyman got down on one knee beside the huddled figure and in the circle of light she saw that his face was angry. But he was still talking amiably: "We could use some rope. See if there's some in the car, sister."

She jerked forward on leaden legs, turned the flashlight into the station wagon, and screamed, "Bill!" The bound figure arched and rolled. "He's here," she cried weakly; "he's alive," and climbed into the station wagon. "Darling! It's all right! I've got a cop." She dropped the flashlight again, and there was something tied over Bill's face, and she couldn't see and her hands wouldn't work. She clawed at that gag, and Trooper Lyman Sharp roared, "Get heavy on that rope!"

The thing came off. Bill grunted, "Do what you're told, Connie." But there wasn't any rope. Yes—there was one around his ankles and through tears she fumbled at that. Got it! She climbed over Bill, slid out of the car and gave the rope to Lyman, and the flashlight jiggled in her hand. "Hold it, babe," Lyman said with the sweetest reasonableness, and Cauliflower Ear had a bloody head, but she held the flashlight somehow and Lyman got his wrists tied.

"Get your guy," he suggested and stood up. Connie leaped to the endgate of the station wagon, and poor Bill was trying to get out without any hands. She managed to prop the flashlight in the corner but she had begun to cry and her fingers kept slipping at the knots. Bill said, "Heads up, Connie," and the rope came free. Instantly Bill was over the endgate. She followed, sprawling in the road, but got up and hung on to him. He put an arm around her. She heard the queerest sound. It turned out to be Connie Scovil, crying.

"A truck will be here any minute," Bill was saying desperately.

Lyman said, "Yeah," thoughtfully, "we better get back in the bushes—" The man with the handcuffs leaped for the side of the road. Lyman kicked his feet from under him, pulled him up by the collar, and hit him in the face. "Try that again and you'll come down sick," he said. "Sit down by your buddy and count sheep . . . You two check so far," he informed Connie. "We're on schedule, so we'll pile back in the bushes and hold hands—"

Bill shouted, "There's a handful of spies loose—"

Lyman said, "I can hear you." He stooped for the flashlight, which had slipped from Connie's hand. "State property, babe, I'd have to pay for it . . . You two got your story pat, haven't you? Well—"

"Trooper," Bill broke in, "up on Taylor Mountain there's a man that the United States Secret Service is looking for. There's half a dozen others on the prod in Windham this minute. We've got to notify—"

"I come for a car and a truck. I only got the car," Lyman sighed. "Well, you

take sister and her car and go notify. Stop at the first phone and call the barracks and tell them to send me a helper to hold my tools."

"Can you take that truck?"

"Sometimes I need a second bite," Lyman said modestly, "phone first. Then go right on in to the barracks and tell the sergeant what's on your mind. And look, brother, you stay there till I get back. All I know about you is what sister tells me."

Bill was just short of dancing with impatience. "That truck could turn in here any second. Look, I've got to have a gun—"

"Gun? What for?"

"These babies were wearing them, weren't they? You think it may not be lodge night for the others?"

Lyman said nothing. Bill's arm tightened around Connie and she clung harder. She became aware of the rain again and how black the night was. Lyman said, "Oh, well, I'm a setup for blondes. Here." He handed Bill something in the dark, and it must have been a gun. Bill said, "Where's that car?" Lyman said, "Wait a minute . . . Stop somewhere and buy sister a candy bar. She's got one coming to her."

Bill roared, "Where's that car?" and Connie contrived to say, "I'll show you." Even on his arm, she was staggering. Her mind went on and off like a light; she felt as if she were only partly on the ground—she seemed to be bumping off it into the air, like a child's balloon. Bill said, "This is Gail's car," in surprise, and left her to get into it herself. She managed to. He got behind the wheel, backed the coupé out into the road, and they were off with a skid.

They came out on the highway. Seven miles. Bill said, "It's not only the cops we've got to talk to. The F.B.I. will listen to me now. I know what's up—"

Connie crumpled. The road in the headlights began to revolve, then there wasn't any light at all. Somebody was speaking from a long way off and it turned out to be Bill. He was saying "Darling!" and she managed, at the far edge, not to faint after all. The car stopped, the headlights poking their long fingers through the rain, and Bill had his arm around her. She flung her arms around his neck and hung on. Nothing else was important. Here they were and the world had lost danger and despair. She pressed against him, she couldn't get close enough, couldn't hold him tight enough. She was crying and laughing and in the dark she could see part of his face. "I'm scared," she said, "I'm no good, darling, I'm letting you down. I keep going to pieces—I'm no darned good." Bill said, "Yes, you're a frail wench—that's how you saved my life." A sob shook her and she clung. "I think there's time to kiss me," she murmured. He kissed her.

SO SHE wasn't crying any more or even shivering. Her head was on his shoulder and their cheeks were together—let the rain fall, nothing bad could happen now, she had come back from the hopeless place.

"All right," she said, "let's go do what the professor said."

He got started. Also he began to speak: "We'll telephone Cottersville, all right. But there are things to do and no time for talk. We'll telephone everybody we think of, but it's up to me. Remember von Weitbrecht?"

"I remember everything you ever said."

"He was up on the mountain. That's why I got knocked down on the trail. It turns out to be a lot wilder than my wildest guess—"

"My father—"

"He was in it, all right. And Römer. I figure out that the whole thing is Römer and von Weitbrecht getting to—"

gether. Something big is going on. Big enough to take a lot of stopping. The first thing is, locate Römer. If I'm right he's around here somewhere still; he hasn't got away, that's why I was grabbed—"

"He was at Pinnacle Manor tonight. I saw him. I went there before I went to the police. Mathilde Winkler was there too—"

"If I was bright, I'd have spotted her too. Well, we'll try to get Pinnacle Manor looked into. Maybe we'd better—"

"I don't know where my father is. I went there looking for him. He wasn't there. At least, they said he wasn't."

"He wasn't there." Bill's voice softened with something grave and compassionate. The tone made her wonder. But Bill stopped the car long enough to gather her in his arms again and kiss her. So it wasn't worth while to wonder about anything. The impossible turned out to be possible after all.

THEY had fatally lost time at the bookshop and they went on losing time. Mathilde knew that it must be Booker whose voice reached her through the door. She heard him working at the hinges and at last the door came off. He pulled her out on the bedroom floor, got her gag off, got the ropes off her. She gasped, "He is gone. Both of them," and lay there. Booker lifted her to her feet but she toppled over on the bed.

"What has happened?" he kept demanding. "Why did you not shoot him? Where did he go?"

She managed to say, "I shot him." She rolled over on her back. Her jaw hurt unbearably. There was an aching bruise on her breast. "But he hit me and brought me here. They have gone. He will reach von Weitbrecht. Where is Lynn?"

Booker seemed stunned. "How long was this? How long ago?"

"Ten minutes. Hours. I can't tell. But he will have to go to the mountain-top to get von Weitbrecht. You can still stop him—"

"No. All afternoon von Weitbrecht has been at the lodge. If the American has been gone even fifteen minutes, he can already be there—" He stopped, then said, "Camp!" and ran out of the room. "I will telephone."

Mathilde's mind careened and almost slipped into the dark. She fought down the faintness. She must think—think now, think fast, and think right. Something could still be saved. She got off the bed and tottered, dizziness billowing in her. Stop it! She saw that her dress was torn—in fact, was almost torn away. A glance in the mirror dissipated her faintness and brought back intelligence. Her face was swollen out of shape and her hair was wild. There was blood—not her blood!—on her face and throat, and on the torn bodice of her white dress, and on her slip. She had only one shoe, and her stockings were in shreds.

Booker must do what he could about the American. She must tell headquarters. And . . . she must get away. She took off the ruined dress and slip. She washed rapidly, sat at a dressing table to comb her hair and powder her cheeks, took a dress from the closet she had been locked in and put it on, found stockings in the bureau and brogues in the closet.

Downstairs she found Booker prowling in the bookshop, a pistol in his hand. "Neither Fritz nor Josef is at camp. That means they have gone to meet the truck. I could not talk to anyone I trust. But at least the police have not been—"

"The police will come here," she said, able at last to think coldly. "Two women live in this house. Neither is here. One of them went with him—"

"You hit him." Booker pointed to squares of gauze and a bloodstained shirt.

"In the arm, it seems," she said curtly. "This has finished us, Carl. He has had time to notify anyone he cared to. Watch all the doors." She sat down at the telephone and put in a call to New York.

She wasn't afraid. All that counted was to warn the company. She could see Booker pacing in the hall, leaning forward on the balls of his feet, he moved like an animal and there was a brutish quality in his face. "No one must come in while I am telephoning," she called to him.

It took a long time to complete that call . . . How swift the overturn had been! For a few minutes she had held success in her hands. All she had needed was to kill him. She had failed. It

How's your "Pep Appeal"?

—by Williamson



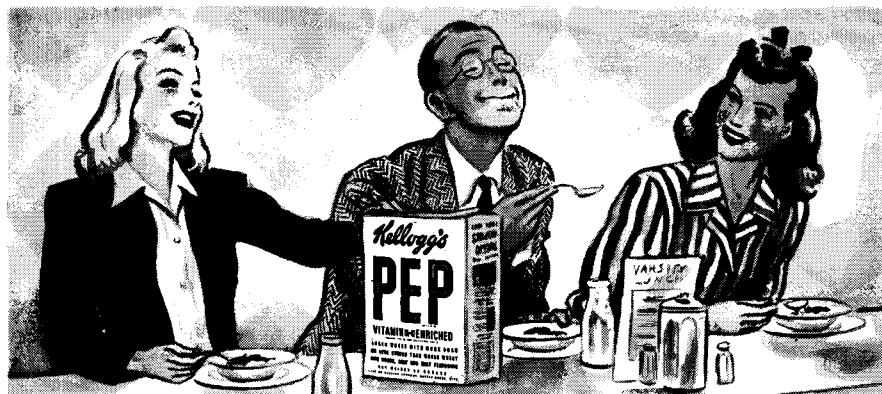
Professor: Look here, you two, why didn't you attend my lecture? A fascinating subject: "The function of vitamin B₁ in the optimum dietary."

Dolly: But professor! We *know* our vitamins and all about "pep appeal"! Come join us for lunch and see!



Professor: What do you mean, *pep appeal*? It sounds like utter nonsense to me.

Sue: Why professor, you've said yourself we couldn't have pep without vitamins. You know, *pep, oomph, zip-zip, whiz!*



Dolly: There, professor, you have vitamins de luxe. In crisp, toasted curly flakes of wheat—that scrumptious cereal called KELLOGG'S PEP. Rich in the two vitamins that are least abundant and thus most needed in ordinary diets—vitamins B₁ and D.

Professor: But what a taste! What a flavor! And to think that all the textbooks in the library hadn't told me about KELLOGG'S PEP.



Professor: (sometime later) Well, I'll see tonight how your *pep appeal* idea works.

Dolly: You know what the philosopher said, professor: "Where there's pep there's hope!"

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"I hate to take your money, young man, but I hope this will teach you not to gamble in the future!"

LAWRENCE LARIAR

meant a mortal wound to the system. Last week's losses would be trifling compared to what would happen now.

"What is keeping you?" Booker shouted.

She could not share his desperation, for what mattered now? Two minutes, two hours, two days—with the end certain, the exact time mattered little. But the fragments of what could still be saved depended on this telephone in the house of the enemy . . . It was taking an abnormally long time. There was always someone to take calls at the company, and at this late hour the circuits should be clear. Now York operators murmured from time to time, silence succeeded them, finally a brisk voice said, "Interoceanic Forwarding Company."

Mathilde put back the phone. "He got there first," she said, for that was not the way phone calls were to be answered. They had held up the call long enough to put someone on the trail here. "Come on, Carl," she said.

He ran out. She followed, not knowing what to do. What now?

But Booker must make the attempt. She must set him to find—well, what was the American's name? John Page, Friedrich Römer, Erich Köchlin—all false names. But they had done the job.

BOOKER took the road toward Camp Ryegate. "There is enough at camp to hang us all," he said. He was hunched over the wheel, his gun on the seat between them. Poor simple soul! It didn't need whatever might be at camp. They were lost.

But Lynn! Lynn had got away! he was free. He might even have got von Weitbrecht away before Köchlin got there. He had started out to do just that. The American might, even now, be kept from his goal.

"If von Weitbrecht is at the lodge, go there. Turn around, Carl, at once. We've still got a chance to save the most important thing."

"No," he growled, "the camp!"

"Lynn went to get von Weitbrecht more than half an hour before—before I found out about the American. Lynn may have—must have—got him away."

"I had just come from the lodge when you phoned me."

His voice went guttural with a harsh violence. Alarm woke in her. "Lynn had not been there? He didn't get to von Weitbrecht?"

"There is no point in going there," Booker said. "Scovil is dead."

"Dead?" she repeated stupidly, ice closing round her.

"What did you expect? Only today you told me he was not safe." Booker was bellowing: "Scovil threatened us both this afternoon—von Weitbrecht and me. Tonight he came back, flourishing a gun. He ordered von Weitbrecht to go with him. Well, we had made up our minds. I was waiting for him. I shot him."

Mathilde lay back, spent and without sensation. Of course that was what he had wanted to do, the American, to turn them against each other. He had succeeded. Lynn was dead. The last hope was dead too. But Lynn was dead.

Booker stopped the car. This was where the road led off the highway to Camp Ryegate and a neon sign burned red in the rain. He stared at it. Mathilde lay back in the seat, indifferent to anything. She shuddered at the thought of rain falling on Lynn's body. Suddenly the car shot off down the highway at full speed. "I don't dare go in," Booker said. "They may be already there. We must save ourselves."

She could afford no time for grief. Her mind came awake. "Where are you going?" He said, "Where is there to go? There is nothing we can do." She said quickly, "We can go to Lynn's and burn things. We can cover up."

"Yes. That will be safe for a while."

Oh, very far from safe! It was the irony of this total defeat that only she was able to estimate the resourcefulness and quickness of the American. She did not know his name but he was up to his job . . . Booker turned the car around and began the long drive to Lynn's. She sat nerveless, estimating expedients, calculating chances. The job now was to survive as long as possible.

Fifty yards short of the stone gateway, she made him stop. "I represent the company, Carl," she said. "I will wait here. I will stop anyone who comes. Go through Lynn's desk and safe. Burn anything you recognize—no, burn everything. My bags are packed. Bring them here."

She saw him, in the headlights, turn through the gates. She waited for a moment, then got behind the wheel, swung the car around, and drove away. Perhaps the American would be waiting for Booker. So much the better. If only

in complete belief, an enemy of the United States was pouring out the secrets of his trade to an officer of the United States Army. Now, in this car.

At last he leaned over to say, "All right—go back to the bookshop." He was finished then, he had what he wanted. His voice was calm but had the same tone of triumph she had heard when he met von Weitbrecht.

She swung the car in a wide arc, and whispered, "How is your arm?"

"It hurts like hell."

HIS lips touched her ear and passed across her hair. She was more alive than she had ever been before—the rain was the rhythm of a love song, and while he sat beside an unsuspecting, outmaneuvered and defeated enemy, he had time left over to think of her.

Fifteen minutes later they reached Windham. She turned in to the square and Garrett said, urgently, "Stop!" She stopped, and excited alarm had been

good hand . . . How long had she been driving through the rain?

"Steady," he murmured. "This is just the final sprint."

He was so obviously calm that she could not be afraid, but her muscles were tense and senses were honed to a sharp edge. Time was extinguished again; there was only rainy road flowing into the headlights . . . Till the stone gateposts at the entrance of Lynn's drive were silhouetted against shrubbery, and Garrett said, "Stop here."

He leaned over and spoke to von Weitbrecht on the floor, forbidding him to show himself, no matter what happened. "You'll have to take care of our two-cent Hitler," he whispered to Gail. Then he got out and stood on the running board, clamping the elbow of his wounded arm over the window sill. "Drive slowly . . . All right, roll the bones."

She let in the clutch. They rolled through the gate and took the curving, uphill drive. She could hear the soft murmur of the engine and the lights picked out trees, clumps of shrubbery, stretches of lawn. Then she could see the house—lights on the veranda, on two floors, at the stables. He said, "Wait," and she stopped. Nothing happened, and presently he said "Okay," and they crept forward again. The drive divided where the circle in front of the veranda began, and he said "Stop," again. He was staring at the house and there was neither sound nor movement. The light from the veranda reached the grassy circle and diminished toward the wings. "Go on around," he said, and she put the car in motion. It came around the circle and she stopped it at the steps of the terrace, the headlights pointing down the drive.

"Well," he said, "someone had better check up."

HE STEPPED off the running board. His shoulders hunched as if he were facing a high wind, he stepped into the light. Nothing happened. He moved fast at an angle across the terrace and disappeared down the near wing. At once the fear she had not been feeling overwhelmed her. He had gone and she was alone with—the two-cent Hitler. She grabbed for the pistol at her side, got the door open, and got out. She stood there while moment added itself to moment intolerably and nothing whatever happened.

The front door opened and Garrett came out on the veranda and the blood in her veins could move again. He crossed the steps and started down them. "All clear," he called, "not even a servant . . ." At that moment he reached the terrace and at that moment flame spurted from the arborvitae at the far corner and the night was cleft open by the thunder of a shot.

His mind registered everything in slow motion. Garrett dropped behind the granite balustrade and was shouting, "Lie down, Gail!" She saw his gun come round a curved stone pillar, and he fired in the direction of the shot. A voice came out of the arborvitae, "Von Weitbrecht! He is an American!" Again that flame bloomed in the arborvitae.

Gail turned toward the car—too late. Powerful arms pinioned her. She managed to drop the pistol before von Weitbrecht could wrench it from her. She hung on to him, clawing and kicking. He tried to throw her off but she would not let go, and as she spun she saw Garrett stand up in the yellow light, fire into the dark, and step forward across that level space, from which another shot came as he started. Her head rocked and an elbow locked under her chin. There was a new glare from somewhere and she beat an unavailing fist against the strength that was overwhelming her. She heard a shout and the arm round



"It was very brave of you to keep the show going, Mr. Simco, but you can stop now"

GREGORY D'ALESSIO

one of them were to be killed, on the whole she would rather have it Booker, who had killed Lynn. But maybe luck would be gracious, just once, to the woman who had failed in everything and would fail in the flight she was now beginning. Maybe luck would arrange to have them kill each other.

GAIL made out little of the talk in the seat behind her. Most of it was in German, all of it in whispers. It went on and on. It seemed as if she had been driving down rainy roads forever—but all excitement, pressure, and apprehension was gone. A steady exhilaration had taken their place, that John Page, whose name was James Garrett, had done what he had been sent to do. Von Weitbrecht's gun was on the seat beside her. Garrett had explained to him that she must be on guard while they talked and had passed it to her. She had murmured, "I don't know how to use it," and he had touched her shoulder and said, "The point is, he does." It was in harmony with this incredible night—this night of nightmare or fantasy—and, like other parts of the night, showed the prompt ingenuity of James Garrett. And the most incredible part was that,

brought back by his tone. He said, "We left no lights."

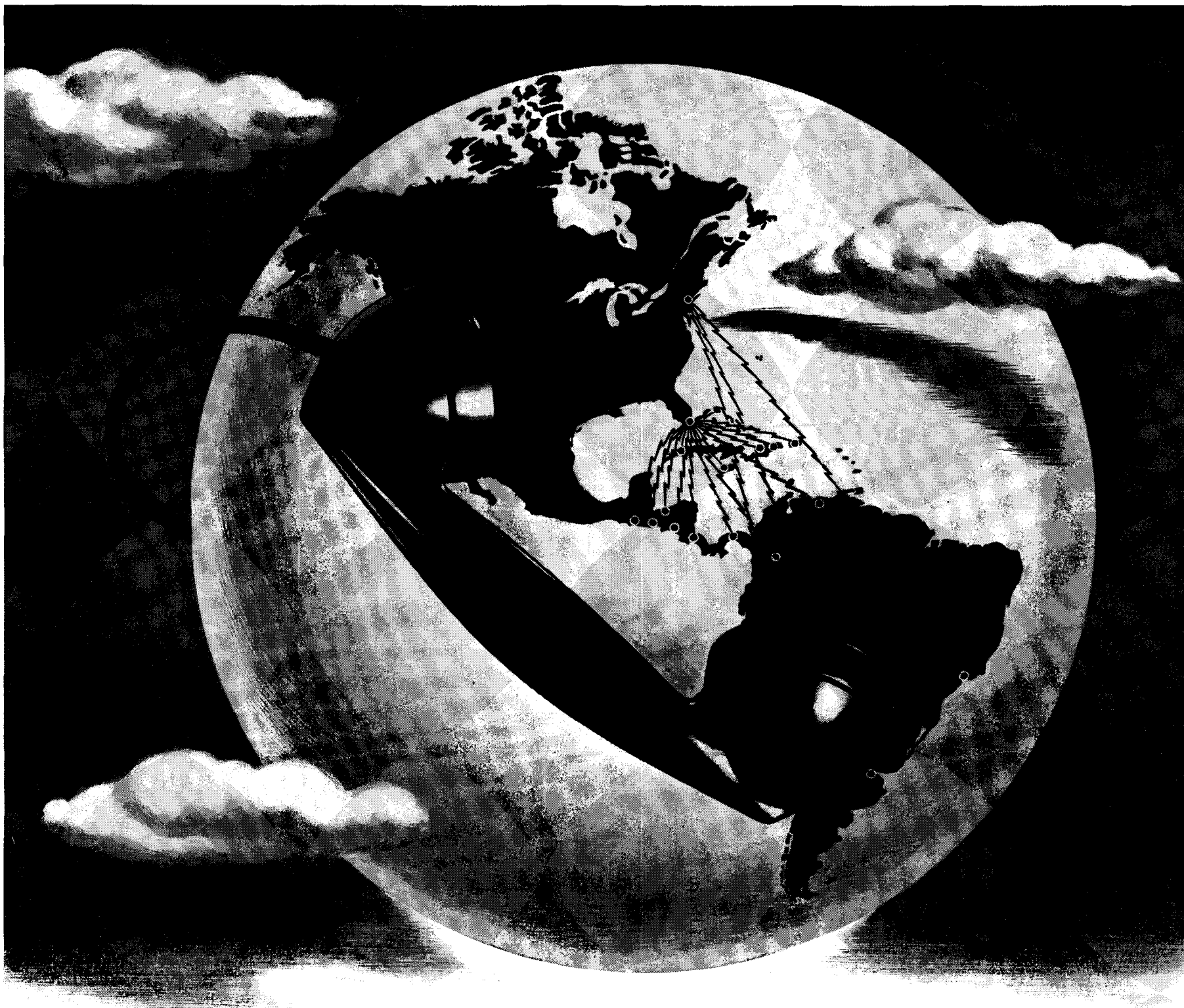
Yes, there were lights upstairs and down . . . He was out of the car and she was alone with the spy. Von Weitbrecht flopped down on the floor of the car. She heard him breathing hard. She clutched the pistol and her alarm ranged ahead of James Garrett, who had not hesitated to investigate the unknown hazard of that house. Mathilde, she thought, or Booker! But it might be, it had to be, Connie. Her fingers gripped the cold steel of the gun and she strained to see what might be happening a hundred yards away. In this quiet town! No policeman walked his beat, no householder's window opened on the dark.

He was back. "Drive to Scovil's."

"Was it Connie?"

"I had forgotten Connie! No." He leaned close, whispering. "The door is down and Mathilde is gone. Booker got here. I can't let von Weitbrecht out of sight."

He spoke over the back of the seat, to the man who was lying on the floor, admonishing him not to be seen. He seemed to be staring through all windows at once and she saw the gun in his



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her throat slackened. She saw von Weitbrecht slump and—incredibly—Bill Jay was here. He had smashed a gun down on von Weitbrecht's head. She was free and Bill leaped past her raising his gun.

She had strength enough to turn to him. "He is an American!" she screamed. She knocked his arm upward and the gun went off in the air. "He is an Army officer!" She hung on to Bill, crying, "Help him!" Then she slumped away—and Garrett fired again into the arborvitae and the edge of it was shaken, and he turned back, shouting to Jay:

"Don't shoot, you fool! Gail, are you all right?"

Something was crawling on the grass, almost at her feet. It was von Weitbrecht, inching forward. Then Garrett came running back and flung himself on the German. Bill Jay hesitated, then followed him. Into this crazed scene came a flying figure from a car at the edge of the circle. It was Connie. Connie stopped short and faced around. There was a shrill sound—a siren. A motorcycle slithered across the grass, then another one. Behind them was the car of the state police, half a dozen figures in uniform, and someone shouting, "Garrett! Is Garrett here?" Figures were running to the veranda, to the cars, to this little group clotted in the light.

Garrett stood up. "I'm Garrett. There's no one in the house—but make sure. I've shot someone in the shrubbery."

Another siren screeched and more figures were coming on the run. Connie had reached Bill. It was probably Connie whose voice came crazily above the confusion: "This must be the marines."

Then they were all in the house, and her mind rocked with motion and uproar. State troopers were sweeping through all the rooms, voices clashed, someone was at a telephone. People swirled around Garrett, who was giving orders. Chaos stopped short for a moment when a sergeant came back and said, "No one anywhere in the house or on the grounds. The guy in the hedge isn't dead." Garrett ran out and then came back again.

"That is Booker—from Camp Ryegate. It leaves Winkler. And Scovil... Lieutenant, you must get on to the camp. Get the roads out of town blocked. We want Scovil most of all."

Bill Jay came out of the corner, where he had been trying hard to get Connie quieted. "Wait!" he said, "has anybody been to the lodge? There's a car there." He took Garrett off to one side... Gail leaned over in her chair and quietly fainted.

IT WAS two-fifteen when Garrett first thought to look at his watch—when Jay told him about the shooting at the lodge. Half an hour later a detachment of F.B.I. men arrived. It was just three-thirty when Garrett came out of the library, all arrangements made. The F.B.I. had taken von Weitbrecht away. The state police had sent Booker to a hospital. Scovil was unquestionably dead. Mathilde had got away—but not for long. A series of telegrams had been sent and he had talked to Major Spence in Washington, on the phone.

And the thing was done.

He went downstairs to the drawing room. Logs were burning in the fireplace—that would be Jay's work—and the two women were sitting close to them. Jay had got food and whisky.

He sat down more abruptly than he had meant to and his head swam. "Give him a drink," Gail said quickly. Jay filled a tumbler with whisky and held it out to him. He gulped half of it. Steadiness came back. "We're into the king row," he said. "This is the end of it. You won't be tossed into any more riots."

Jay said, "Can I take Connie home now? Can we go... sir?" He had a little trouble with the last word—still. "There's something—you understand—"

Connie stood up. The fire was bright behind her; she looked frail but unconquered. "Why don't you say it? Is anything likely to scare me now, after tonight? I don't have to have anything prettied up for me. You mean my father. It's not only that they're looking for him. You mean—something has happened to him."

Jay hesitated but Garrett said, "We aren't sure yet. We think so."

"He's—dead?"

"That's what we think."

HER cheeks were the color of ash. She looked square at Bill Jay. "You aren't dead. Remember, I thought you were." A single tear rolled down her cheek. "Would I want him to be alive?" She walked over to Jay. "But don't ever leave me alone again. Not for one night, not even for the rest of tonight."

Jay stood with an arm around her waist. "Let me take her home."

Garrett stood up. "After I've thanked her." He touched the thin shoulder and shook her hand. He turned to Jay. "You get thanked, too. I had to work fast—I had to have you grabbed, you were too bright. It worked out better than I deserve. Thanks. Your girl gets a good deal of a man."

Jay shook his hand. "Not very bright. I just had a phobia of being pushed around."

"It's a useful phobia."

"You're pretty useful," Jay said wryly. "Come on, Connie. You need sleep."

They went out. Gail yawned suddenly in the firelight. "Sleep! That was last month, wasn't it... Is it true that Lynn has been—killed?"

"We'll know pretty soon. They had Jay locked in the cellar of the lodge. Before they took him away—which must have been a few minutes before we got there—somebody was shot near the lodge. That was his car we saw there. Either Booker or von Weitbrecht could have done it. I don't know why."

So that while Gail and he were there, the body of Lynn Scovil had been somewhere near, dragged into the underbrush or hidden at the lodge. The man she had been engaged to, the man she had been fleeing from when she stopped to pick up a fugitive from the police on a Vermont road. He looked at her with a hard scrutiny. She met his gaze.

"He won't be telling any more Bunds that the Americans are the aggressors!" she said. She could not possibly have spoken more coldly. Her eyes darkened with a momentary horror, then cleared. "Tell me what's happening now, James." The faintest premonition of laughter warmed her voice: "If I have a little trouble with your name, remember you've had difficulties with it too."

"It will settle down to Jim... Why, they're busy in New York gathering in the headquarters these people were directed from. They have taken over Camp Ryegate and are going through it to see what they can find."

"You're going straight to Washington."

"I'm ordered to report by noon. And I'm going back to my job... I told you the truth yesterday. A man's fiancée should know his trade—I'm a metallurgist. I'm in the Ordnance Corps for the duration. I'm better at it than I've managed to be at Intelligence. I've had to make too much of this up along the way."

"For an amateur," she said, "you seem to improvise fairly well." There was more warmth in her eyes. "By noon! That doesn't leave you much time. Surely, you'd better stop at a hospital somewhere."

"Not if your medicine cabinet runs to another bandage. But I'll take you home—if you'll drive me there again. Put on your shoes."

The current of silent accord between them was running free. She slid her bare feet into the sneakers. "They're Connie's . . . I'm all she has for parents now. She'll need kindness."

"Will she need anything more than Bill Jay?"

Gail yawned widely, with sudden forthrightness. "We'll all need sleep. I'd forgotten there was sleep in the world. You have the most astonishing knack for disturbing my nights."

In the hall he told an F.B.I. man that he would be back in an hour, and took her upstairs. The door of Mathilde's room was open. Her bags were in an orderly row on the floor. "If you want dry clothes," he said, "this is Mathilde's baggage."

She shook her head. "Thanks, I'll wait. But you need a shirt, my dear."

"I've got several and they aren't Scovil's." They went on to his room. "I bought them with Forwarding Company money."

He could get into one of them though his arm was stiff and fiery, but found that he could not knot the tie. Her lips gentle, Gail said, "Let me." She tied his shoes too and helped him into his coat. Her eyes were expectant . . . But not in this house!

THEY went downstairs and out to the sedan. The rain had stopped but the shrubbery dripped heavily. Troopers were coming in. He waved to them and Gail drove away. The dark closed around them, except for the glow of the cowl light on her grave face.

A mile or so down the highway she pulled off the road and stopped. A faint gray had begun to show in the east and the outline of the window had sharpened. He turned to her but she said, "No—wait!" took his hand, and lay back, musing. "So much of this has been in an automobile! And so much of it late at night . . . Wait, my dear, I'm feeling very expectant, and I was the first night, too, from Manchester on. That was extremely forward of me—or farseeing. But this time it's morning. We've driven all night, we've spent the night together. What a wedding night, Jim! When I went to bed I thought I

wouldn't see you again. Then when I woke up, there you were . . . bleeding." She choked on that word, snatched her hand away, and covered her face. "Your blood fell on me! . . . I've waited long enough."

She fled into his arms, her breast arching up, her face raised . . . After a while she had stopped sobbing and was alive in his arms.

The grayness grew, the window showed more plainly, and in a few minutes he would be able to see her plainly. She turned her cheek away to whisper, "Before noon! Then the latest you can leave Springfield is the nine-o'clock plane—"

"We were talking plane schedules that night," he said. "Have you any idea how lovely you looked? Almost as beautiful as now—"

"There was a highway patrolman, at the window. That was the moment when it all began. But"—she yawned again, "I had had more sleep the night before."

He said, "This is the continuation," and kissed her . . . Ever since he had reached Windham he seemed to have been calculating schedules. "Can you make that plane by nine o'clock?"

She sat up out of his embrace. "It would be disgraceful if I couldn't—after the speed we've held to. But there's a lot to do. You said fiancée—I'd rather spell it, *bride*. We'll certainly have to stand up with Connie before you leave. We might as well save time—"

"Connie too? Today?"

"Wouldn't you?"

"Neither of you will have so much as a trousseau."

"All Connie has ever needed was a skirt. I have a skirt." She glanced at its wrinkled disorder. "All I need is a bath."

He went on calculating minutes: "G-2 is staffed with stern men. If we get Connie launched, there may not be time for us. You may have to remain a widow till we get to Washington—"

Gail was laughing. A state trooper had shot past them on a motorcycle, had stopped down the road, and was turning around. He started back.

"Back to the beginning," she said. "He thinks we're necking. What a suspicious mind!" She started the engine, leaned over to kiss him, and murmured, "For that matter, I could skip the bath."

(THE END)



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"Annabelle is faithful to you, Wilbur—she refuses to go out with anyone but an Army man"

SALO ROTH

Dina Cashman

Continued from page 18

"That was it," she said aloud; "you see, I didn't tell him. I thought I told him; I thought he understood. But he didn't! I said did Aline tell him that 'I had to marry someone?' And that might have meant anything; it might have meant that I was poor and Rogers was rich, and I just 'had to marry' someone!"

She had on her old brown coat now; she was walking fast through the bare orchards where the plows had left shining surfaces on the deep-cut clods. Sun was shining everywhere on the frosted roads, and steam was rising here and there from the farms and the barns. The air was fresh and wet. Underfoot the ground was heavy and Dina's shoes were immediately thick with mud.

"No, but I told him about Margaret!" she said. A jay, perched on a fence, gave a hoarse cry and mounted in a flash of blue to a young redwood. "But even that," Dina's swift thoughts ran, "even that needn't have meant what it did. It might have meant that Rogers knew I hadn't loved him, that Rogers didn't feel she really belonged to him. I thought I was telling him! It was so hard for me to tell him! And all the while he thought I was just saying that I hadn't known Rogers very well, and had married him just because I was poor and wanted to get a rich husband!"

"Oh, Andy, it wouldn't have made any difference to you if you really loved me! Nothing you'd ever done would have changed me—not if you'd forged checks or been in jail. You needn't have written me that. You needn't have said, 'Of course it makes a difference!' Oh, if I could only walk so fast that I could walk away from it!" Dina said loudly in the woods now, climbing over fallen logs and scrambling through wet ferns. "If I could get lost, if I could die up here!"

SHE sat down on a stump to catch her breath, took the letter from her pocket and read it again.

"I hate you," she said. "I won't keep you."

She tore it into tiny pieces, pushed them under a great rock. Then she began to cry. She kept her head down on her arms a long time.

"Bad as all that?" a woman's voice asked her lifelessly.

Dina looked up and saw the speaker—a woman perhaps twice her age, in an old blue dress and heavy sweater. They looked somberly at each other for a full minute. The woman had a rake and was leaning on it, studying Dina.

"Lord, Lord, I wish I could cry like that," she said.

"I don't especially enjoy it," Dina gulped. She got to her feet. "You—aren't you a long way from home?" she asked.

"Twenty feet," the other said laconically. "I've a week-end place here below the Skyline Boulevard. I was clearing my path."

Dina walked along beside her toward a shingled brown cabin, a small garage, a length of rustic fence with "Getaway" burned upon the gateposts.

"Getaway," Dina said. "That's what I've been trying to do!"

"And that's what I've been trying to do. My name's Martha Morse," the woman told her.

"Mine's Dina Holland."

"Come in," said the woman, opening the door.

Dina followed her into a cabin exactly like a thousand, ten thousand others strewn along California beaches and hidden among California hills, and yet so individually precious and unique to its owner that the cost of every plank

and brick, kitchen hook and striped cotton curtaining had been an investment in content.

This particular cabin consisted of a fair-sized room with a blackened fireplace into which dust and rubbish and redwood sprays had been recently swept and where they were smoldering in mid-morning leisure, and two adjoining strips of rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. The main room held four bunks with screening burlap curtains, a brown bare table; mismatched, comfortable chairs; a cheap, worn rug whose colors melted into the general scheme; and a high tide of books and papers, magazines, pamphlets, manuscripts.

"What I'm trying to forget," said Martha, "is a boy. Fourteen days after tomorrow; New Year's Eve was his birthday. I was to pick him up after football practice, but I telephoned him to come home with another boy. It happened on the way home. Only one of thirty thousand last year in this one country," she added in a firm, hard voice

spoke with sudden definiteness. "I gave up my job in November and moved out to a district I knew on the fringes of the city. You see I was at the city hall for seven years," she said, "since Tad's father and I were divorced, and I knew where our local crop of gangsters is coming from. So I moved out there, took three rooms, furnished them, and began to make friends with the neighborhood's little boys. This year I'm going to get them a playfield. Some day we'll have a branch of the Scouts out there."

"THAT'S brave," Dina said simply, her eyes shining.

"It's not a cure but I have times of being happy, and I'm always tired, always busy, glad to get to bed at night," Martha said, without enthusiasm. "I had a sick baby to care for right up to Christmas day; then they took her to the hospital and I came down here."

"I loved a boy; we were on a week-end party," Dina began, as unexpectedly to herself as to the other woman, "and

"And do you think you will keep all these boys from becoming gangsters?" Dina's tragic young eyes were very earnest when she spoke again.

"No. But I may keep one. If I'd had a family that I could have done something for, I'd have done that," Martha said, always in the same unemotional tone. "But I didn't. I didn't have anyone. If I can give some boy a push in the right direction that'll be my monument to Tad. I won't have any fun doing it; I don't expect to. But it's something."

Dina stood up.

"Thank you very much," she said simply.

"For not much," the other said with a brief shred of laughter. "I thank you for stopping in. It's done me good to talk a little. You said your name was Howard?"

"Holland."

"Well, Mrs. Holland, just remember that we women have got to bear things sometimes that there's no bearing."

"I know." Dina came out under the redwood again and took the wet trail down the hill. A heavy blanket of fog had blotted out the sunshine now; the morning had turned dark and the leaves dripped.

But though she felt no lighter of heart, it was with a braver spirit and a more unselfish courage that she made her way home through the bare orchards and over the rutted roads, and Rogers at luncheon noted nothing amiss.

SHE and Rogers had taken Margaret and Margaret's nurse to Stockton on Christmas Day, in a car laden with presents, but the visit had not been a success, and Dina never thought of it without a conscious reddening of her cheeks and a sensation of shame in her heart.

They had found Donny and El'ner just recovering from chicken pox, and Dina's special little favorite, Lou, wretched with a fever and cold. Margaret, therefore, had been sent away at once with Hall and Ida, and had spent her Christmas Day in a smiling circle of friendly black faces. Dina's father had been discovered unshaven and haggard; he had at once disappeared, to return after an hour clean and dressed and with a bottle of Bourbon from which he continually offered Rogers a drink.

Upon Rogers good-naturedly saying that he would have his with plain water, Art had exclaimed that that was all he would get. The joking remark had somehow missed fire; it had sounded rude and cheap in Art, and although Dina had known that her brother was only trying to help them carry off a difficult situation she could not apologize for him. Art's laugh had said, "Ha! These rich people think we have carbonated waters in the house as a matter of course!" and took the attitude of all attitudes that Dina hated to find at home.

Then her presents had been much too handsome. She had not thought that they would have presents for her, too, and that the small girls' new coats, with bags and hats to match, and something in the way of a paper bill lining the bags, must stand in contrast with the family's feeble little offerings of handkerchiefs and five-and-ten perfume. El'ner and Lou had not felt any self-consciousness; with the divine aristocracy of childhood they had presented their gifts. But Dina's mother had cut her to the very heart with love and loyalty and shame by apologizing, and Myrna had dashed away and returned with red spots in her cheeks and defiant eyes to say that she



"I wish they'd wash these pots before they reconvert 'em!"

HERB WILLIAMS

as Dina did not speak, "but it happened to be my own. We built this house together; we gathered the stones for this fireplace; he burned the name on the gate. This was our Shangri-la."

"YOU are his mother," Dina stated it rather than asked it.

"I am his mother. And I have to come here and face it just so often," Martha Morse said and Dina knew that she was talking to herself, that she was thinking aloud: "I have to sit here without any clods of mud on the floor or any guns left lying around in the bunks or any books face up on the kitchen table, and face it."

"I can't face it," Dina said simply.

"I've had two months."

"You were alone here, Christmas?"

"I couldn't be anywhere else. Yours—your trouble—what you were crying about—wasn't a child?"

"Oh, no. My little girl's fine. But I've made a horrible silly mess of my life," Dina said, "and I just can't bear it."

"It is hard to have to bear what you can't bear," Martha observed dispassionately. "I can't bear life without Tad and sometimes I have to."

"You're all alone?"

"No, I'm not all alone." Tad's mother

afterward I found I was going to have a baby. Another man, much older, but very kind and generous, wanted to marry me and for the baby's sake I said yes. My own people were poor, migrant labor and on relief, and I couldn't see any other way out. Now he wants to divorce me and marry another woman, and the baby's father—the man I loved so much a year ago, wants to marry me."

"Hm! And you're in love with the man you married?"

"No, I love him, but not that way. No, I love someone else," Dina explained. They were both seated now on a shabby upholstered window seat. The boy had spooled here, Dina thought, chewing apples and reading pulp magazines.

"But they think you ought to marry the first man? Your mother thinks that would be wisest?"

"No, my mother doesn't know, nor my father. No. But you see," the girl went on with a little difficulty, "the man I care for—didn't know either. So I told him. And—and it makes a difference to him. He says it does. He says I would think of it and he would think of it."

"Hm!" Martha Morse said again. "Well, that's hard on you." And there was a silence.



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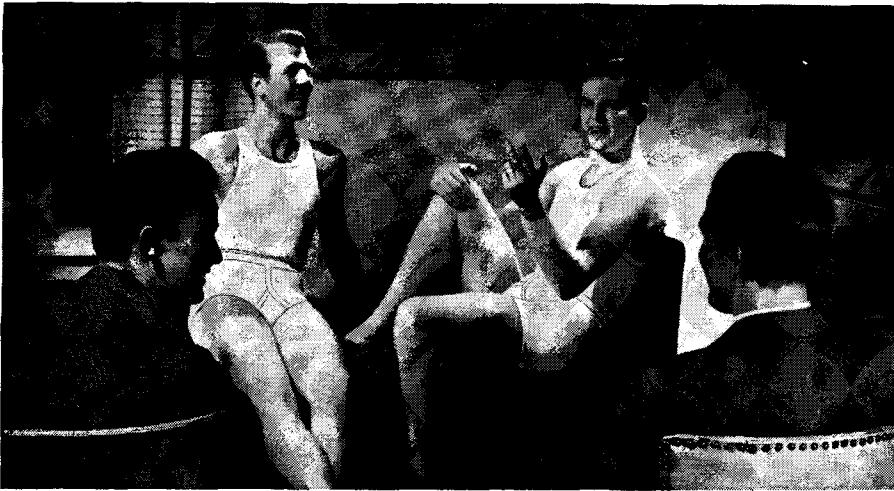
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had not finished her presents for Dina and Rogers but would send them before New Year's.

"Why, Myrna, you have, too!" El'ner had said, round-eyed. "You tied them in silver paper!" To which Myrna's only answer had been an angry, "Mamma, make her shut up!"

Dooley, now thirteen years old, a bold, handsome gypsy of a child who was incapable of the finer sensitivities, had saved the situation for the moment by saying boldly, "Well, I made you and all the girls candy, Dina, but it didn't harden. It always hardens but this time it didn't. So I'm not going to put it in the boxes because it'll smear them all up, and I can use 'em some other time!"

There had been a general laugh in which Dooley had joined with no sign of embarrassment. On the whole the day had not had much happiness in it nor much mirth. There had been no effect of a happy, spirited big family living a comfortable harum-scarum life; Dina had written her mother that she and Rogers would come up for dinner, and was accordingly disappointed that at half past twelve o'clock no table had been set, no meal was ready, and the beds had not even been made.

Her mother had explained that she had thought, of course, "dinner" to Rogers and Dina meant seven at night; Myrna had been sure they would expect an evening meal.

Dina had been cheerful and resourceful about it. Art had taken her in the car to find the nearest open delicatessen store and they had returned with enough cheese and rye bread and doughnuts and candy for three meals. Rogers had eaten with great gusto; indeed both he and Dina had been ravenous after the long cold ride but the feast had been spoiled by her mother's apologies, by the constant running back and forth of Dooley and Art, and by Myrna's proud, hurt excuses that she had an engagement, and immediate disappearance.

WHEN the long day was over, Dina sank back into the stately, old-fashioned comfort of the Holland house gratefully. But even here there was no sense of permanency. All this was not to be hers for long. Aline would supplant her here, and she must make other plans.

Aline did not let her forget this, and as in Rogers' infatuated eyes Aline could do no wrong, Dina could make no protest, and could only try to keep Hinz and Mrs. Bucket, who bitterly resented the usurper, from open mutiny.

No day passed without a reminder from Aline that she expected soon to be mistress of the old house. She brought Caroline to lunch and they completely ignored Dina as they walked about appraising the old Chinese cabinets and discussing the history of the rugs. Aline asked Mrs. Bucket how many of the old crystal goblets were left, who was Mr. Holland's butcher? One day Dina found her and Caroline at the linen closet, Mrs. Bucket standing in sulphurous silence near them while they admired the heavy old sheets and old-fashioned banquet cloths.

"I think we will see how we get along without our dear old housekeeper—" Aline murmured airily to Caroline when Mrs. Bucket had gone. But with Rogers she was always gentle and hesitant. "Let's not change anything, Toppy. I love the darling old place just as it is! We used to have some of our happiest times here, and I want everything to be just the way it was," Aline would say.

On a certain day when Rogers was away, however, Aline came to the house with a keen, handsome young architect she introduced as Sanford Smith, who she explained was going to do some old-fashioned rooms for a museum and would love to see the Holland place.

"Rogers is not here, you know," Dina reminded her.

"I forgot! But I spoke to him about it and he said Mr. Smith could go anywhere he liked," Aline said quickly.

"Oh, that's all right, then." While Aline took the newcomer through the downstairs rooms Dina went up to explain to Mrs. Bucket.

"So that's the way it's going to be, is it?" the housekeeper said. "She'll not leave one thing the way it is, and when she's got it all torn up, then she'll decide she can't stand it anyway, and they'll take a place in town. Well, I thought this was coming a year ago, and perhaps I'm lucky that it's been put off so long. There doesn't seem to be any end to the way that men can mess up the lives of women!" she went on, getting up to fuss with the litter of souvenirs and treasures that covered her old-fashioned bureau. "I'll miss you and I'll miss the baby. We'll never see you again. She'll see to that!"

SHE moved picture frames, vases, trays, glass and silver jars, and Dina knew it was to conceal and control the tears she could not hold back.

"I'll miss you—and the house—and Mr. Holland," Dina said hesitantly, "but I knew from the beginning that this might happen, and that this is what he wanted to have happen."

"Men are crazy!" Mrs. Bucket muttered, going to her big wardrobe, opening one of the heavy doors, fumbling among dresses and coats, and with her head well concealed vigorously blowing her nose. "I looked at the two of you, you and her, the other night at dinner," she said, "and I said to Hinz, 'It must be God made men so blind for some purpose!'"

There was a knock at the door. Aline and her architect stood outside.

"There are some doors locked out here," Aline complained. Dina went hastily to join them and they crossed the upper hall.

"Ida sometimes locks the nursery door when Margaret is asleep," she explained, "but all these doors are open."

"Could be turned into one?" Aline murmured to Sanford Smith.

He walked to the fireplace in Rogers' room, hammered lightly with a beautifully groomed long clean hand on the wall, stepped out to the upper balcony.

"Could be," he admitted; "but, my dear Mrs. Havens," he presently said, "I doubt if it's worth it. The place is hopeless, really. These clumsy old houses were built like forts; tear off the cupolas and porches and you've not made even an impression. You can't lower ceilings and narrow doors!"

"I know, I know," Aline agreed. "Mr. Smith has a very similar house he has to remodel and he wanted to get some ideas from this one," she said to Dina.

Dina felt the subterfuge somewhat obvious, but there was nothing she could say. She opened the door of her room; Aline walked about it rapidly, clucked in despair over the bathroom.

"How many people does he keep in the house?" she demanded.

"People?"

"Servants."

"Oh? Oh, yes, servants. Well, there's Chong and his boy and Lily and Hinz and the outside ones, Hall and Mr. McPherson and Porty Joe."

"And Bucket."

"But she," Dina protested, a little shocked, "isn't a servant."

"Oh, isn't she?" Aline asked, raising her eyebrows. "What I'm trying to work out is where I'll put my maid," she added, turning an indifferent shoulder to Dina and speaking now to the architect. "I had to let the woman I had go but she's not got another position and she wants to come back."

"You must have a dozen unused

rooms up here." They went about, peering and murmuring, and Dina perceived not only that Aline was planning the complete reconstruction of the cumbersome old mansion, but that she was carrying on a brisk flirtation with the personable Sanford Smith.

Anger rose in her heart. But why be angry? There was nothing she could do. If she were uncharitable enough to describe the whole scene to Rogers he would only laugh.

"That hell cat!" he would say with relish. "She told me she wanted this place to be our home forever and forever and she evidently meant it! Didn't give you any trouble, put you out, did it?"

To which Dina would have to reply only an amiable, "No."

Aline and her escort finally went downstairs. Dina remained in her own room, unable any longer to act the part of agreeable guide. She went to the window and stood there, looking down at the gardens and the drive, the ache of parting already strong in her heart. Evidently women like Aline could do pretty much as they pleased; for some inscrutable reason the laws of morality and decorum never closed down upon them. In a few weeks Dina would have to leave all this dignity and comfort and security and Aline would be mistress here.

While she watched, Aline and Sanford Smith came out to the man's one-seated open car, parked down by the entrance. He went around it to open the door for his companion, who got in with some little flourish of settling and getting comfortable. When he was in his seat they put their arms about each other for a long kiss, and his arm was still encircling her as they drove away.

Dina stood immovable for a long time. No use to tell Rogers this either; it would merely sound catty and feminine. But it deepened the cloud that hung so darkly over her in these days.

IT HAD been upon this mood of doubt and uneasiness that Andy's letter had fallen with shattering force. Her friend, the stronghold of all her thoughts in these last weeks, was gone now, and she and Margaret would have to face the world alone.

What made it harder was that Rogers was sure that she shared his new mood of happiness and confidence. He was seeing Aline constantly; he would come back from a luncheon engagement as absorbed as a boy in his own felicity, willing to give Dina occasional glimpses of it, occasional fond quotations from Aline, but almost entirely oblivious to Dina's gathering problem. She knew, from hints that he had dropped almost unconsciously, that he felt sure she and Vere would presently straighten out the whole affair by a quiet marriage.

"That boy's tremendously improved," he said more than once. When one morning he and Dina and his lawyer had a short session, and Dina signed various papers and was handed a formidable

brown envelope that contained all the documents necessary to the transference of the Stockton property from Rogers to herself, he quite innocently betrayed his attitude by saying to Dina after Callaghan was gone: "Of course, that doesn't mean that I won't keep an eye on you and Vere."

Vere was constantly at the house. Usually his calls were short, and he was always much quieter than he had been. Sometimes if Margaret was out on the lawn in the sunshine, he and Dina and the nurse were together for an hour, but on these occasions Dina never sent Ida away, and she received any comment Vere made about the little girl without response.

Vere had a job. He was working as a clerk in the office of a San Francisco attorney who was a friend of his father, and at the same time was being coached for the bar examinations which he would attempt again to pass later that spring. But on Saturdays and Sundays he was free, and on other days he might drop in late for a drink and a game with his uncle before dinner, or stay for dinner and make a fourth at bridge afterward.

Only once or twice in the first weeks of the new year did he remind Dina in words that he was longing for complete forgiveness but in many little ways the evidences of it were inescapable and she knew that Rogers thought it would be the natural and most advantageous solution of her problem.

IT WAS late in January. She was with Rogers in the library just before dinner when he suddenly said to her:

"Look here, I want to talk to you, and I don't know that I'll ever find a better time! Sit down over there," he added, taking his own fireside chair; "a lot's been going on, and I don't know how much you know about it. You know, I suppose, that Aline has gone to Reno? She gets her divorce about the first of March, and she wants me to go up to Reno about the first of May."

May! A respite! But wasn't it the plan that Dina was to be the one to go?

"She didn't want me to be there when she was there," Rogers explained, with the indulgent air he always used when mentioning Aline's vagaries. "Now she doesn't want me to go too soon, so that everyone will draw the inevitable conclusion."

"But everyone will!" Dina exclaimed scornfully.

"Personally, I don't care what anyone thinks," Rogers observed mildly. "But there's more to it than that. Aline wants to go east in March, get some clothes, see some people, sort of break her friends in to the idea of marrying again so soon. I'll be back in mid-June, and then I suppose—" He tried for an indifferent, a casual tone, but ripples of pleasure broke through the expression of his face and pride sang in his voice. "I suppose the big hawk will light," he finished.

"Now, what about the rest of it?" he presently resumed, as Dina made no comment, merely watching him with

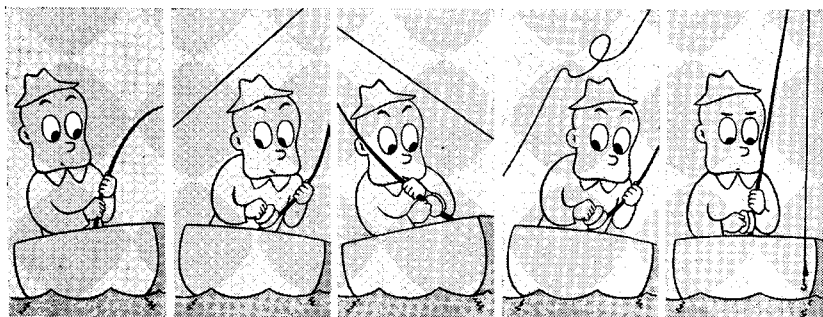


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wide-open, serious eyes. "This is what I want to say and then you can speak up if you like. If you prefer to go to Reno in—say March or April, that's all right with me. It's only a matter of six weeks and it's a fascinating little city. But if you don't, I go. The reason I've taken it for granted that I'll be the one to go is that I know the town and I know the ropes. Then again, I thought it would be tougher on you; you'd have to get settled, find a place for yourself, the baby and Ida; I thought you'd be more comfortable here with Bucket. However, suit yourself."

"The thing I'm going to ask you straight out is this: what are the chances of your patching things up with Vere? I know he is more in love with you than ever. I've seen that ever since he's been dropping in here so often the last few weeks. In every way it seems a sensible arrangement. And I can tell him that he's getting one of the sweetest companions any man ever had!"

He added the last phrase with his big, brotherly smile. Dina did not move her eyes nor speak.

"You know he's very anxious for it, Geraldine? The boy seems to have steadied, and seems to be really in earnest. There's no question he loves you very deeply."

She cleared her throat. "Yes, I know," she said faintly.

"He told you so?"

"Well, yes. Yes, he said so."

"WOULDN'T it be the natural arrangement? For the baby's sake, and everyone's sake? Oh, I know," Rogers added, smiling into the fire as he stuffed his pipe. "I know Vere's young. All boys his age are fools; it's a callow time. But he's a nice kid, as boys go, and he's had his lesson. He got poisoned by Caroline's ideas for a while, and acted like more or less of a fool, imagining that there wasn't anything to marrying the Worthington girl except wanting to, but he's sobered down now. He told me the other night that he'd never really cared a snap of his finger for Kit Worthington. Now he's talked his mother over to this idea of marrying you. At first Caroline raised particular hell, but I had a talk with her, too, and she saw how the boy felt—We've all spoiled him, Geraldine, but he's a decent enough fellow at bottom!"

"Aline was all against it, too," he went on, thinking aloud now, his half-smiling eyes on the fire. "She's not—never has been—a particular admirer of yours. She resented my marrying you—well, you can't blame Aline! Now, I suppose she doesn't like the idea of your becoming 'Mrs. Vere,' as you'd still be in the family. However, I've convinced her it's all for the best."

"How about it?" he added, surprised at Dina's silence and glancing at her curiously. "Anything to prevent?"

"If—if he had stood by me last year there wouldn't have been anything to prevent it," Dina said in a not quite steady voice.

"Well, too late for that," Rogers murmured, frowning in faint disapproval.

"Yes, too late to make that right," she agreed, looking thoughtfully down at the red embers in the grate.

Rogers continued to eye her, puzzled and not quite pleased. "Wouldn't it be something to make it right?"

"I don't know," she said drearily.

"Why, what's the matter with you, Geraldine?" he said, in the affectionate tone of one reproving a child. "After all, Margaret is as close to him as to you—"

"Oh, not as close!" she interrupted him warmly, as he hesitated, trying to meet her mood. "Not as close! Not close at all. The Vere I knew a year ago," Dina pursued, not looking at her companion, "doesn't seem to have anything to do with this Vere."

"But you like him?" Rogers argued. "Come now, you like him. Why punish him longer than you have to? It would mean so much to me, Geraldine, to have you still a member of the family, and to have little Flyaway upstairs coming to visit me sometimes. Isn't it exactly what you were thinking about a year ago?"

"Thinking!" she echoed, still not moving her eyes to his. "Praying, lying awake nights, crying for! Wishing every time there was a telephone call that it might be him, waking up every morning wondering if there might be a letter!"

"YES, I know, I know," Rogers murmured soothingly, for there was a rising storm in her voice. "But that's past, Geraldine. Here you are, the same boy and girl, with no reason in the world why you can't be happy together."

"There are reasons, Rogers." She was trying to hold her emotions in check, she had laid one hand on her breast as if to keep down the feeling that shook in

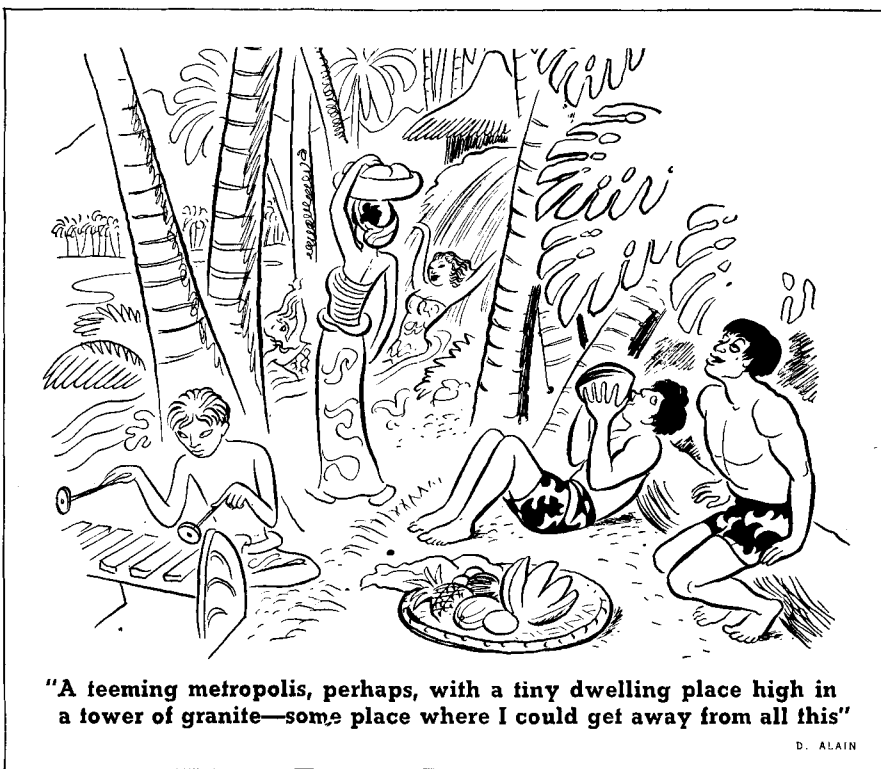
"And I'm not that sort of girl," she began again vehemently, silencing her companion with a quick movement of her hand, "I never have been that sort of girl, to have Caroline and Aline discuss, for you to talk to Vere about! 'It would square her, Vere, and after all, it's your child, and she's a dear little friendly thing—'"

"Oh, shut up!" Rogers interposed, almost asfroused as she was, "nobody ever said anything like that!"

"No, I'm not that sort of girl," Dina repeated feverishly, her nostrils dilating and her breast moving quickly. "I never was. I was poor and I lived in a dirty house and I never had much training, but I always knew better than that! I always looked at the girls who ran with boys and stayed away nights as being different from me! Even Fran, who'd been married, and who didn't care much what she did—I never felt she was like Nellie O'Connor and me—"

"I ask you not to talk that way!" Rogers put in grimly.

"I will talk this way because I don't



her voice and smoldered in her eyes. "I am not the same girl," she began quietly. "Never the same girl again! I killed that girl who danced and worked in Meyer's and cooked dinners and thought that if ever she married it would be someone who thought she was the most wonderful person in the world! I killed her," Dina repeated feverishly, getting up to stand with her back to the fire now and looking down at him with blazing eyes; "she died in those nights when I lay awake, tossing and wondering, looking at my little sisters and thinking how ashamed they would be of me! She died when I waited and waited, and everything that had been young—young in my love for Vere—"

She was crying now and stammering, and Rogers, his face all concern and sympathy, put out a hand toward her.

"My dear, my dear, don't feel so bad! There isn't any need to remember all that!"

"I don't have to remember it!" Dina went on, uninterrupted. Her face was wet with tears, but sheer anger kept her voice steady. "I don't have to remember it because it was me," she said. "It is me, burned into me, burning what used to be me away. Nausea and cold mornings and thinking, 'Oh, why doesn't he send me some word? Why doesn't he say he loves me?' Weeks of it, and no money, and having to come here to you begging, whining, one more girl who couldn't say 'No!'"

think it's fair," Dina went on breathlessly. "Aline and Caroline can discuss me, can say, 'Oh, why not let him marry the poor girl; it'll steady him!' Vere's father can write from New York, 'Go ahead, you're the best judge!' You can sit there and decide what I shall do. Who thinks about me? Who realizes what it is for a woman to be frightened and lonely and sick—for weeks and weeks—with no one to turn to! Or how she feels when she has to marry a man she's seen only twice, just to protect the child"—her voice broke—"the child she loves more than anything in life! The child she doesn't want anything ugly or shameful ever to touch! A lot of men, a lot of divorced women deciding what she shall do, men taking care of her when her whole body is torn in two having a baby, men coming to tell her that she can't walk for months, everyone pitying her and trying to help the poor little fool who's gotten herself into this mess!"

"GERALDINE," Rogers said quietly. He had given up his attempts to silence or calm her; he was lying back in his chair, fingers locked on his stomach, bulging gray eyes regarding her from behind the strong glasses.

"No," she said at white heat, "I'll not stop! I want to say that I'm not the same girl all this happened to. I've studied; I've read books; I've thought! And I'm not going to marry anyone, not for years. I'm going back to my mother, and if

anyone follows me there I'll go farther! I'll get away! I've got to think it all out! I've got to be by myself with Margaret! I'm done!"

"I see now how you feel," Rogers said mildly, after the long moment of silence that followed. "I'll not try to stop you, my dear."

She broke suddenly. She was on her knees beside him, one arm locked tight about his neck; he felt her cheek wet against his own.

"I'm—I'm a woman, don't you see, Rogers?" she sobbed. "And I've got to know—about myself and my baby and what's right for us, without anyone else telling me anything again! You helped me so once, won't you help me now?"

LITTLE Lou Cashman, feverish and weak, opened her eyes at twilight to find a dream come true. Here was Dina back again, with an apron over her cotton dress and a tray in her hands. The room was dim with sweet, dying spring light; there were violets in a glass cup on the table, and here was Dina, without her hat or furs or any of the beautiful clothes that made Lou feel she was a stranger but just her old self.

"Hello, mosquito, how do you feel?" Dina said, sitting down beside the bed. "Oh, Deen, Deen, did you come?" Lou faltered, wide awake.

"I did, and I brought Margaret, and Mamma's giving Margaret her supper in the kitchen, and you've got to eat yours!" Dina answered.

"And are you going to stay all night, Deen?"

"I am. And for lots of nights. Now, sweetheart," Dina said, in a suddenly urgent and lowered tone, "if you cry I'll go right out and wait until you stop! Mamma tells me you've not been to school since Christmas."

"I'd be well one day and then all wab-bly and coughing the next," Lou confessed, one small thin hand locked tight in her sister's. "I won't cry, if you'll just stay," she pleaded.

"She's going to stay," Myrna said from the doorway. "Her husband's going on a trip, and she's going to stay weeks, aren't you, Dina?"

"I certainly am," Dina agreed. She was spooning chicken soup carefully into Lou's obediently opened little mouth. "Dooley's being a darling, and she's going to sleep on the couch in the back parlor with Margaret's crib next to her, and Ida goes home to her own family at night, and I sleep right here where I can keep an eye on you!"

"Oh, Dina, I can't help crying a little, but I'll eat, truly I will—milk and everything," Lou faltered gallantly, "and I'll stop coughing if you rub me with that giggly stuff; I'll stop tonight!"

"You needn't be ashamed of crying," Dooley, who had come in for a sight of Dina, reminded her little sister generously, "becuz we all cried when she got here, didn't we, Dina? Mamma began to cry and Donny grabbed hold of Dina's skirts and began to cry and then little Mar'grit cried and I did, too. Becuz Dina's going to stay with us and we'll have fun—and games at the table, like we used to have, won't we, Dina?"

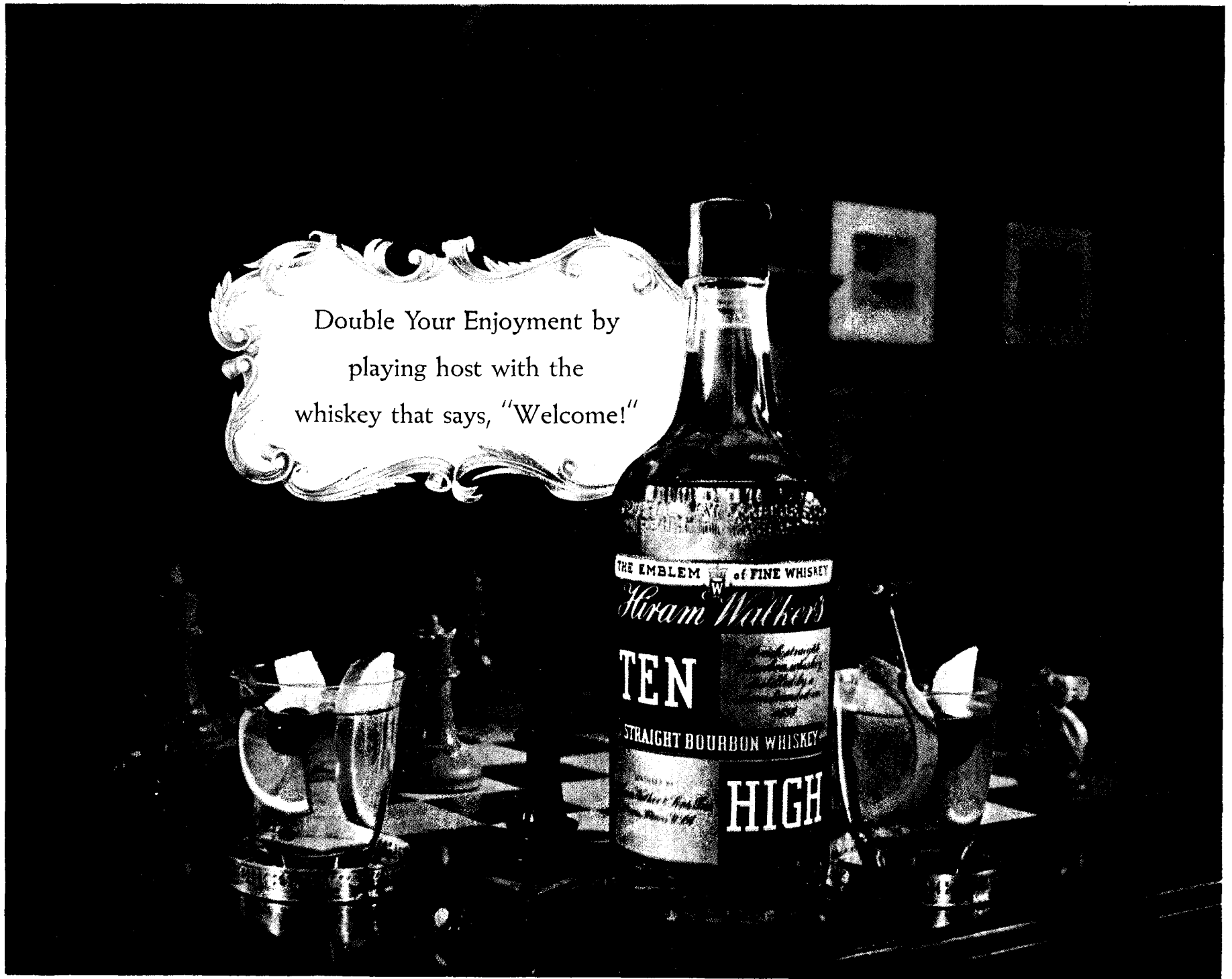
"We'll have everything," Dina said. "But now all of you clear out of here and let Lou finish this. Chong made that for you, Lou, because Mamma'd written me you loved the soup I brought up last time. But tomorrow I'm going to get three big chickens and make you some better than that!"

The door closed on the others. She was alone with Lou. She sat steadily feeding the invalid and Lou looked at her with eyes that could never drink their fill of the adored face. And deep in Dina's heart there was at last a certitude, a something like content.

(To be continued next week)

"THE RIBBERS"

by *Not Sickles*

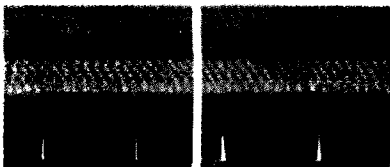




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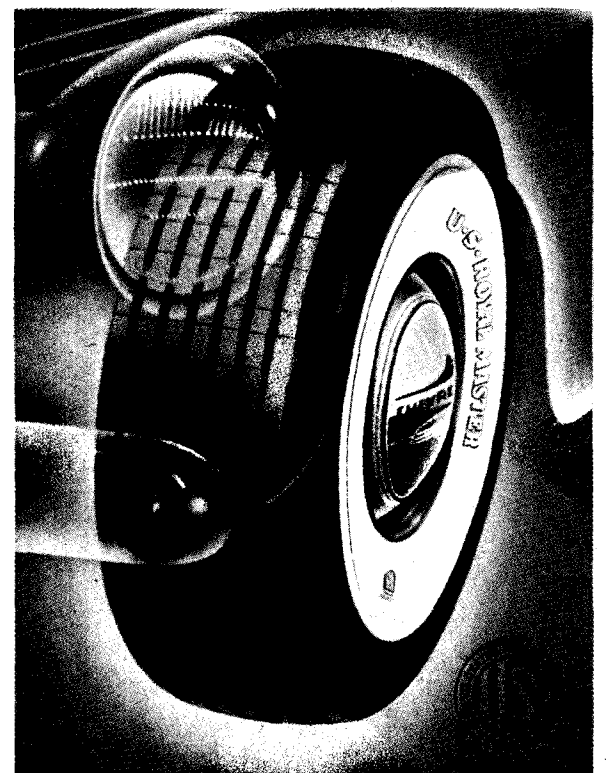
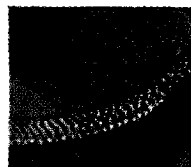
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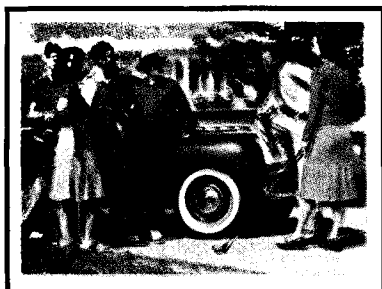
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Our New Army

Continued from page 19

some more of those divine, delectable and toothsome greens." The sergeant, being human, just couldn't take it.

IT WAS hot and dusty and Pvt. Addison T. Landwehr, HQ Co., 148th Infantry, on maneuvers in the woods near Shelby, was thirsty. Approaching a refreshment stand near the maneuver area he asked the woman attendant for a glass of water, please. "Sorry, soldier," she said, "but the health department says we can't serve water because there's bacteria in it." Pvt. Landwehr regarded the woman carefully for a moment as he worked on a plug of chewing tobacco, then, "How big are they?" asked he.

ARKANSAS



CAMP JOS. T. ROBINSON, Little Rock. After a month of Tennessee maneuvers, a lot of 35th Division soldiers found tent life too soft. Noncoms of one regiment got up before reveille one morning and found most of the men sleeping under trees and in company streets. "The beds aren't lumpy enough," they explained. Because of the heat, the top was removed from the big tent theater and the place was full one night when a young cloudburst came along. The men, used to rain and engrossed in the antics on the silver screen, didn't budge.

One thing that gets them, though, is the bug blitzkrieg. Chiggers seem to come from nowhere to settle on ankles, legs and around the waistline; and ticks, lying in wait in the woods, take hold of anything into which they can sink their fangs. Chiggers don't like sulphur and some of the boys have taken to eating powdered sulphur with their salt tablets so it'll ooze out of their pores. This keeps the chiggers away, all right, but it makes a guy smell like rotten eggs and raises heck with his social life. Ticks are bigger and easy to find but removal from the epidermis leaves the insect's head under the soldier's skin. A flight surgeon of the 110th Observation Squadron at near-by Adams Field finally solved that one. With the glowing end of a cigarette he gives the invader a hot foot, which so annoys the bug that he backs out and turns around to see what's going on. From then on he's a dead duck.

BATTERY E, 127th F.A., includes members of thirty-six Indian tribes and it's going to be an all-Indian outfit as soon as their peace pipe and other ceremonial apparatus arrive from home. To keep the record straight, the Redskins are going to adopt, into one tribe or another, Sgt. George Wright and Pvt. Francis Gearhart, the only palefaces in the battery.

CAMP Ordnance Officer Lt. Frank E. Morhart is looking for a 35th Division soldier who has "blue to gray eyes, light brown or blond hair, wears glasses, good-looking, about five feet, eight inches tall, medium build and is training with fellows from North Platte, Neb." If he finds him the lieutenant is to notify a girl in Omaha, who met the lad on a bus between Kansas City and Omaha and neglected to ask his name.

MISSOURI



JEFFERSON BARRACKS, St. Louis. In contrast with the dispatch above is this item involving Pvt. Gerald Schori, who answers all phone calls for information

at post headquarters here. Not long ago a young woman called and admitted it was all kind of silly but perhaps Pvt. Schori could help her. "I was out at the Municipal Opera the other night with two other girls," she said, "and we talked to a soldier from Jefferson Barracks. He knew about music and said he had sung in light opera in St. Paul. He had a small mustache and his home was somewhere in the northeast part of Iowa. Do you suppose you could find him for me?" Pvt. Schori said, sure; he was the man. "No, I'm serious," the girl went on. "So am I," replied Pvt. Schori. "There are five thousand sol-

body seems to mind too much. The library is situated on a balcony overlooking the service club dance floor, and some of the readers actually keep the musical horror supplied with coins while they do their literary browsing.

VIRGINIA

CAMP PENDLETON, Virginia Beach. It looks as though Pvt. Johnny Meehan, Battery A, 244th C.A., will retain the title of the original eight-ball rookie. Following his release from initial quarantine our subject had no sooner completed sprucing up for a trip to town



"I'll have to ask you for the ring, Lois. The draft board wrote me to wind up my affairs"

ROLAND COE

diers here but I'm the guy you're talking about." He was, too.

CHANUTE FIELD, Rantoul. Pvt. Angela San Paolo threw his 17th School Squadron into a shambles when he wasn't on hand to receive a telegram that read: "Cecilia had triplets. Mother and babies doing fine. The Family." Pvt. Harley Neal of the Signal Corps read the message to Pvt. San Paolo's top kick, Willard Morgan, who did a lot of plain and fancy searching before he located his man. It made Sgt. Morgan pretty sore when San Paolo read the wire a couple of times without showing any signs of excitement, but the pay-off came when the recipient explained that Cecilia was the family cat.

MICHIGAN

FORT CUSTER, Battle Creek. That old Quiet Please sign, cherished by public libraries, has been chucked out of the window at this post's book nook, where page probers do their perusing to the accompaniment of a nickel juke box going full blast. No-

when he was assigned to K.P. duty. Meanwhile, he loaned his overcoat to the mess sergeant, who lost it. In the next few days three officers reprimanded Pvt. Meehan for being out of uniform, the lack of which gave him a heavy cold, to cure which he spent ten days in the hospital. On the rifle range Pvt. Meehan discovered he couldn't sight with his right eye, so he began firing left-handed and scored two bull's-eyes with the first three shots. Spotted by an officer, he was ordered to switch back to right-eye firing, after which his shots went so wild he was ordered off the range. On guard duty he was bawled out for having a rusty rifle. Two hours of cleaning netted him another bawling out for having the gun too oily. Unable to strike a happy medium, Pvt. Meehan changed rifles in the supply room and drew one with a defective barrel. In the interim he walks around with size-42 shorts around his size-30 waist and is having trouble with a completely strange pair of shoes that came back from the repair shop. If a day goes by in which something screwy doesn't happen to him we'll let you know.

VIRGIN ISLANDS

BENEDICT FIELD, St. Croix. Chief among the problems which face the soldiers in this land of old Danish customs is lack of entertainment and laundry facilities. The boys have so far been able to cook up a modicum of entertainment and have lately improved the laundry situation. In all St. Croix there isn't a single establishment devoted to cleaning and pressing, but word got around among native females that this service was needed and they responded individually. Now, on Friday afternoons, the roads leading to the field are filled with an army of colored women balancing bundles of laundry on their heads, or driving two-wheeled, donkey-drawn carts containing clean clothes destined for customers known only as Sergeant, Corporal and Private. Just how the men recognize their laundresses (and vice versa) is another problem, but the system has worked to date, with no socks missing.

PERHAPS the most unique disbursements "contributing to the pleasure, comfort and contentment of the enlisted men of the organization" were found by the field's commanding officer, Major John C. Wade, while he was auditing the funds of Co. A, 27th Engineers. "Oats for Company Race Horse," was one. The other: "Seamstress, Repair of Jockey Suit."

GENERAL

THE Camp Roberts (Calif.) Dispatch is running a series of weekly interviews with screen personalities written by Pvt. Nathan Waldman, former Hollywood correspondent. Corp. Eugene Gear, of The Dispatch, says any camp paper can have the column, for free, merely by asking him for it.

"WHY," asks a Columbia, S. C., newspaper in an editorial entitled Scrambling Field Armies, "do magazines go to vast expense to gather illustrative material, and then spoil the layout with inaccurate explanatory text? Collier's of July 26th, for instance, presents in full colors the shoulder insignia of our field armies, their corps and divisions. But the text scrambles amazingly the geographical distribution of the units comprising the armies; for example, placing 'way over in the Third Army the troops of the First Corps, training in the Carolinas, whereas in fact they belong to the First Army—and so on."

One sure way of getting spots before the eyes is to try to figure out why the Army places what units where, and when, but that's up to the War Department. Probably the most confusing factor is that geographical and tactical areas are entirely different. For example, the First Army geographically covers the first three corps areas (twelve states from Maine to Virginia), but tactically the First Army contains the First, Second and Sixth Army Corps—and home plate for the First Army Corps happens to be located at Columbia, S. C. On the other hand, the Third Army geographically covers thirteen states in the South and Southwest and comprises the Fourth, Fifth and Eighth Army Corps for tactical purposes. This department didn't say any First Corps troops were in the Third Army; it merely stated that the Carolinas were included in the geographical boundary of the Third Army.

WHO spoiled what layout?

G. W.

25th
ANNIVERSARY



S. A. S. K. P.

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GE

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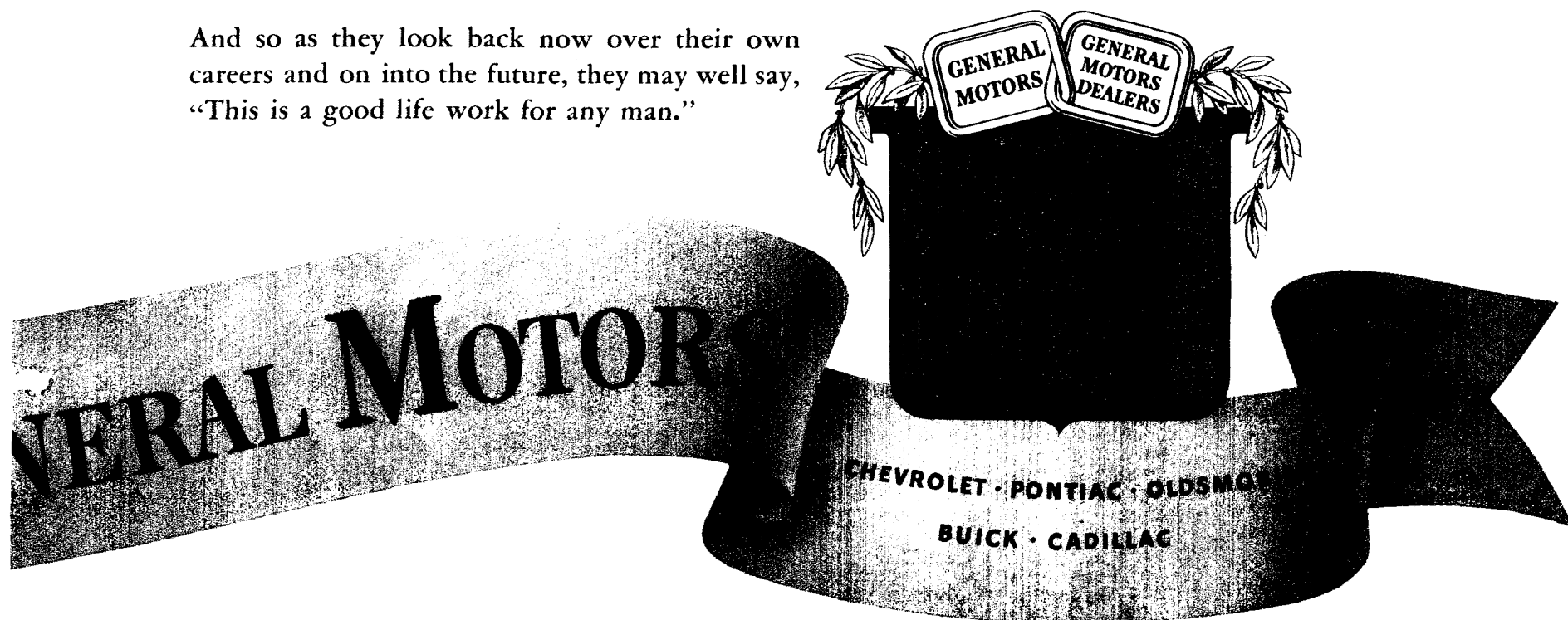
They have helped create a whole new business—the used-car business—which provides a market for the man with a car to dispose of, and a place to buy for folks who want to make a little transportation money go a long way.

They have taught many a beginner how to drive, have helped young people “budget-buy” their first automobile, have been friend, guide and counselor to countless neighbors in many different ways.

And over the years they have been good businessmen too, providing for their own, giving employment and opportunity to others, meeting pay rolls, paying taxes, owning property—businessmen doing their full share in local community affairs.

Thus to General Motors, as to their friends and acquaintances in their home towns, they are truly partners in progress.

And so as they look back now over their own careers and on into the future, they may well say, “This is a good life work for any man.”



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"Easy dough—right in our mitts. Agh!" he said. "We could permote them boots fer maybe fifty bucks. But, ner, you woon't even—"

A groundward gesture of Seaman Linn's right thumb cut him short. "You're talkin' against the highest ideals of the U. S. Navy, Tim," he said, "an' if I thought you knowed better I'd call you a fi' columnist traitor that had made a deal with Hitler. C'mon!"

At this point, a taxicab slid up to the curb.

"Oh, sailor boys! Yoo-hoo—wait a minute, sailor boys!"

Tim and Benny halted in their tracks.

A small, plump, corn-fed maiden stepped from the taxi. Her hair was pumpkin-colored, her eyes were a walnut brown and her voice had the gurgle of apple cider running down a press-mill trough.

"Callie Mae, you reckon you kin trus' these sailor boys?" she questioned herself, shyly and half afraid. Then she gave Tim and Benny a sweet smile. "Reckon I kin. Reckon I jest will!"

Seaman Linn was again unaccountably speechless, but Fireman Dunnevan said, "The polar bairse is over yonder, Miss. I . . . uh . . . guess you already seen the monkeys?"

Callie Mae shook her head. "Oh, dearie me, Callie Mae," she announced, "I reckon you been jest plumb misunderstood." Her lower lip quivered tragically.

Seaman Linn spoke. "Looks like this is Arkansas Day in Balboa Park," he said. "What can we do for you, kid?"

The maiden's eyes filled with tears. "It's Gerald an' Robert!" she blurted. "The sailor boys that jes' now run off!"

"Yeah?"

"Yerse? Whut'd they do?"

Callie Mae looked at the ground. "Robert, he jilted me, Mistah Man," she said simply. "He's jest about busted my heart right in two. But it wasn't Robert's fault. That pesky Gerald, he put Robert up to leavin' me in the lurch."

Fireman Dunnevan and Seaman Linn exchanged glances.

"Benny . . . get it? That's why they was in such a big hurry to join our ship! Agh—the dirty—"

"Right!"

THEIR words stung Callie Mae into a dramatic outburst.

"A ship? Oh, the Lawd save you naow, Callie Mae! If'n Robert goes off on a ship, you're plumb ruind!" She turned to Fireman Dunnevan. "What ship, Mistah Man? When does it sail? Jes' tell me that much . . . please, please—it's my onlyest chance!"

His sentimental Irish heart completely won, Fireman Dunnevan growled, "Agh, they wanted us to recermmend 'em fer the Trimble, Miss. But I an' Benny will fix that!"

"You—you could stop it?"

"Yerse!"

"An' fix Robert so's he won't go sailin' off on a ship?"

"I an' Benny is the best fixers in the U. S. Navy, Miss. We got ferce an' brains. I . . . uh . . . Benny could queer them boots so's they'd get put in Portsmouth—or anyways, kicked outa the Navy. Right, Benny?"

"Hold on, Tim—"

Callie Mae opened a patent-leather handbag, and pulled out quite a roll of bank notes.

"I'd thank you so kindly!" she said, "an' besides, I'd jes' give y'all nice sailor boys every las' penny of this!"

The regeneration of Fireman Dunne-

Boots, Boots, Boots!

Continued from page 12

van had begun. He hesitated not an instant, but pushed the money back to Callie Mae.

"Ner, Miss," he said stoutly, "we don't want a dime. They's a high ideal in the U. S. Navy against seein' good girls took advantage of. C'mon, Benny. Let's grab this cab an' catch them sods!"

"No brains, Tim, no brains!"

"Hunh?"

This objection by Seaman Linn brought bitter words from Callie Mae. She wrung her hands, saying, "Oh, Callie Mae, the nice, big sailor boy wants to he'p you, but the little sailor boy, he—"

"Blaaah!" said Seaman Linn, coldly. "Do we look at this from all the angles or do we go bustin' off an' glom the works by usin' methods of brute force, so on an' so forth?"

"Benny's the brain, Miss," Fireman Dunnevan interpreted, "an' with a brain you can allus get an idea. He means he's got an idea."

"Right!"

"An idea! Oh, Callie Mae, this dear, cute little sailor boy is a-goin' to he'p you after all!"

Seaman Linn jerked a thumb toward a sunlit patch of grass. "Let's discust this matter, Miss. They's a lot of angles. The main an' foremost point is: do you jest want Robert kicked outa the Navy or do you wanta marry the guy?"

"Oh, Callie Mae wants to marry Robert!"

"Then I gotta ast you a personal question."

"But, Benny—"

"You jes' ask me anything, sailor boy!"

"Well . . . uh . . . is they a . . . uh . . . physical reason, so on an' so forth, why you . . . uh . . . ?"

Callie Mae clasped her hands and

nodded. "Yes, suh, there pinely is," she said.

Fireman Dunnevan snorted angrily. "Robert betrayed you, miss?"

"Oh, Callie Mae, I do hope youah doin' the right thing, tellin' sech a dreadful truth. I reckon I am. I reckon I will! To be plain an' simple abaout it—yes!"

Seaman Linn spat delicately through his teeth. "That fixes everything okay, kid," he said. "We go right ahead an' let Robert an' Gerald join the Trimble!"

"An' go sailin' off to wahr? Oh, no—"

"Yerse, Miss! We got a rule in the U. S. Navy that if a sailor betrays a girl an' she complains about it, he's gotta marry her or else."

CALLIE MAE jumped to her feet.

"Oh, Callie Mae, ain't you sorry fo' all the mean an' hateful things you thought abaout ouah Navy?" she exclaimed. "Do I jes' go an' complain to Admiral Somebody?"

Tim and Benny traded grim glances.

"After Robert's joined our ship, kid," said Seaman Linn, "you jest complain to Chief Bosun's Mate Mulcahy. That'll be enough."

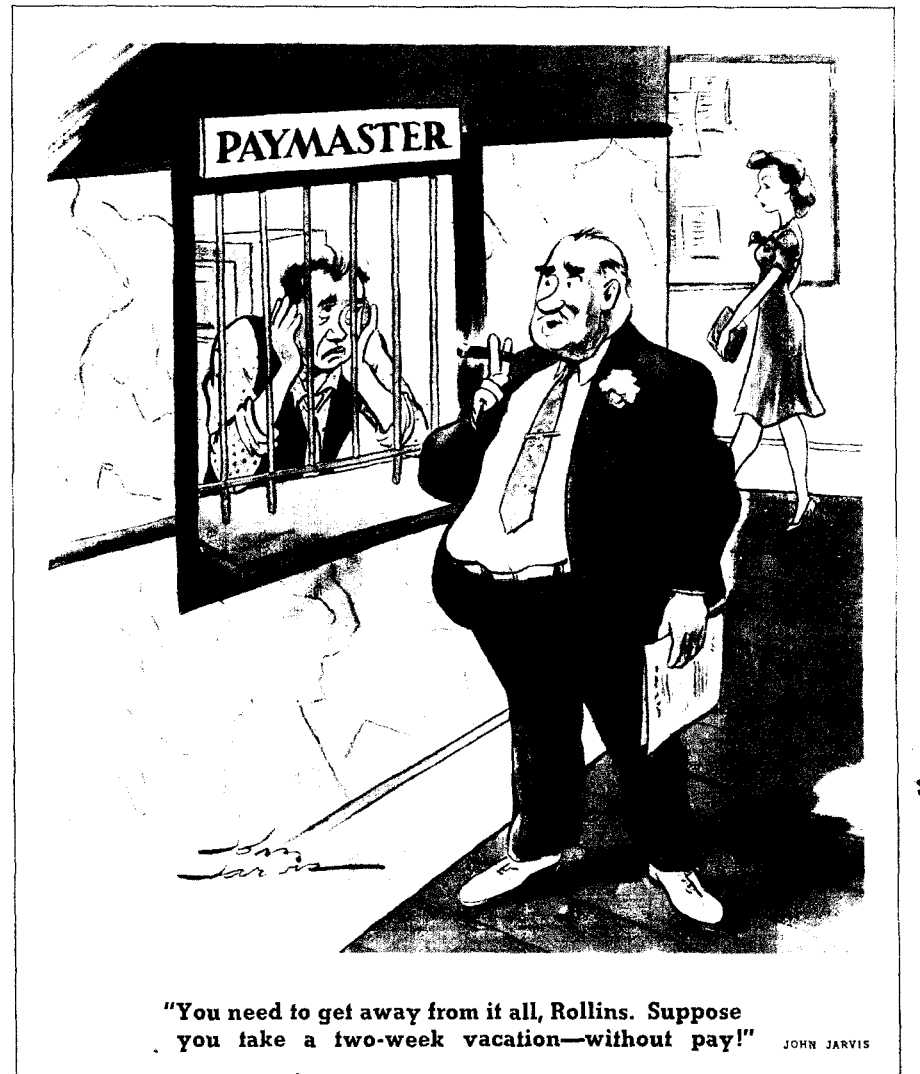
"Yerse!"

"You darlings. Callie Mae is jest a-goin' to give you both a great big hug an' a kiss—"

But before Callie Mae could thus express her thanks, another taxicab lurched to a stop with a climactic shrieking of brakes. A thin, hungry-looking man, shorter than Seaman Linn and without a hat to cover his balding head, popped spryly out.

Callie Mae took one look at him, gasped, and said in low, anxious tones, "Where kin I meet y'all boys later?"

"Two o'clock—in front of the Y on Broadway. Is this guy a friend of yours? He looks like he knows you."



"You need to get away from it all, Rollins. Suppose you take a two-week vacation—without pay!"

JOHN JARVIS

"The pesky feller is my worst enemy. Oh, please don't let him foller me!"

"Right!"

Guarded by Tim and Benny, the maiden hurried toward her own taxicab. The little man, who had started to approach Callie Mae, changed his course in an effort to intercept her.

"Now, Sugar, you've got to talk to me—just ten seconds, Sugar—"

"Scat, you pesky rascal!"

Callie Mae swept past her worst enemy and into her taxicab. When the little man tried to follow, the hefty left paw of Fireman Dunnevan reached out and jerked him back.

"Rough stuff, eh?" he said.

"Yersee! Want it rougher?"

"Ju-das, Tim—don't hit him. You'll knock his head off'n his shoulders!"

The taxi carrying Callie Mae roared down the park drive.

"Now, now, my friends—this is all a misunderstanding. No reason for us to have an ugly quarrel. Let me explain, I beg of you—"

"Turn him loose, Tim."

The little man shook himself together and smiled ingratiatingly at Seaman Linn and Fireman Dunnevan. "I like sailors. I admire our splendid Navy—indeed I do!" he said. "You men, I take it, are Sugar's friends?"

"Yersee!"

"We only jest now met the gal," Seaman Linn corrected, "but she ast us to help her in a certain private and confidential matter with reference to her love life. She said you was her worst enemy."

Callie Mae's worst enemy sadly shook his head.

"Before God and man, that is an untrue statement, my friends," he said. "I know all about the matter to which you refer—"

"Agh!—he's a city slicker, Benny!"

"What part of Arkansas are you from, Shorty? I bet on Little Rock or Pine Bluff."

"You never heard of Ben John Ribblesdale?"

"Ner!"

MR. RIBBLESDALE recovered from this shock, after wincing dramatically. "I say only this, my friends—if you encourage that little girl to marry Robert, you know not what you do."

"Yersee?"

"Definitely. It will wreck her whole life."

"Why?"

"It so happens that I cannot speak freely—"

"Blaaah!"

"—but I say, before God and man, that I shall go to any length to dissuade Sugar from taking this fatal step. Any length!" Mr. Ribblesdale pulled a checkbook from an inner pocket and waved it under Benny's nose. "I am prepared to pay as much as five hundred dollars for effective assistance in blocking this marriage."

"Five hunnert?"

"Yes."

"Benny! Didja hear that? He says five hunnert bucks jest to bust up Robert an' Callie Mae—"

Seaman Linn jerked his thumb contemptuously groundward. He turned on Mr. Ribblesdale.

"Not for fi' thousand, Shorty!" he said. "I an' Tim an' the U. S. Navy has got somethin' better to do jest now. We're busy tryin' to save little punks like you from Hitler. Crawl back in 'at cab before I bust you one!"

"Before God and man, I—"

"G'wan, now! Shove off!"

Mr. Ribblesdale pocketed his checkbook. "You know not what you do, my friends," he said.

Turning on his heel, he retreated with dignity to his taxicab, boarded it and rolled away.

But he was wrong. Fireman Dunne-

van knew very well what he and Seaman Linn had done.

"Judas, Benny!" he mourned. "In olden times you'd 've took the dough from Gerald an' Robert to get 'em on our ship. Then, you'd 've took the dough from Shorty to keep Gerald an' Robert off'n our ship, so's Callie Mae couldn't make Robert marry her. Yersee—an' you'd prob'ly 've took dough from Callie Mae an' made Robert marry her anyways! Yersee!"

Seaman Linn gulped, but the light of high purpose "robed him about as with garments ineffable."

"I an' you is through with all that fer the duration, Tim," he said gently. "C'mon, Fireman. I'm gonna turn you loose on them monkeys. Maybe you can sucker 'em outa a few bananas!"

Fireman Dunnevan thought this over, three deep furrows in his brow. "Is—that sarcastical, Benny?"

"A brain!"

"An' we go through with ut, strickly on the level?"

"Right!"

CHIEF Bosun's Mate Daniel Patrick Mulcahy of the U. S. Destroyer Trimble stood near the ship's port gangway at 1:30 o'clock that afternoon and beamed upon four happy sailors. Only a stroke of great good fortune could have moved Chief Mulcahy to beam upon any sailors at any time. He was known from Shanghai to Brooklyn navy yard as "Nails" Mulcahy.

But the chief, on this occasion, was not content merely to smile. He chuckled. He took another look at Boots Robert Treadway and Gerald McCudden, and chuckled again. Then, he turned to Seaman Linn and Fireman Dunnevan.

"Sure, now," he said, "these are the likeliest lookin' boots I've seen for some toime. Good worrk, Linn!"

"Thanks, Chief!"

"Yersee . . . thanks."

Chief Mulcahy addressed the widely grinning Gerald and Robert. "You bhoys go forr'd an' report to Chief Larsen. Oi'll sind to the station for yer papers. Oi'm takin' no chances on havin' another ship steal ye!" He pointed a stubby forefinger toward Gerald's mouth. "Keep that brightwork nice an' shiney, son!"

Gerald and Robert joined in the laughter. Robert said, ducking his head toward Seaman Linn, "We thank you so kindly, Mistah Linn, suh. We suttinly are mighty glad to git abo'd sech a nice ship!"

"Yayyy tell!" said Gerald, "an' we sho will work ouah tails off fo' you, Chief Mulcahy, suh!"

The chief nodded dotingly after them, as they hurried toward the fo'c'sle. "A pair av good, clean, wholesome lads," he said. "An' scarce enough they are, these toimes, with so many city-ruined helions pourin' inter this Navy."

"Right, Chief!"

"Yersee—right!"

Then came the accolade for Seaman Linn and Fireman Dunnevan.

"The cap'n an' I am takin' due notice av yer change in heart, Linn. You an' Dunnevan have gone a matter av six weeks without shenanigans. See to ut that the good worrk continues. Ye may have liberty until nine p. m., as a reward fer findin' the farmers!"

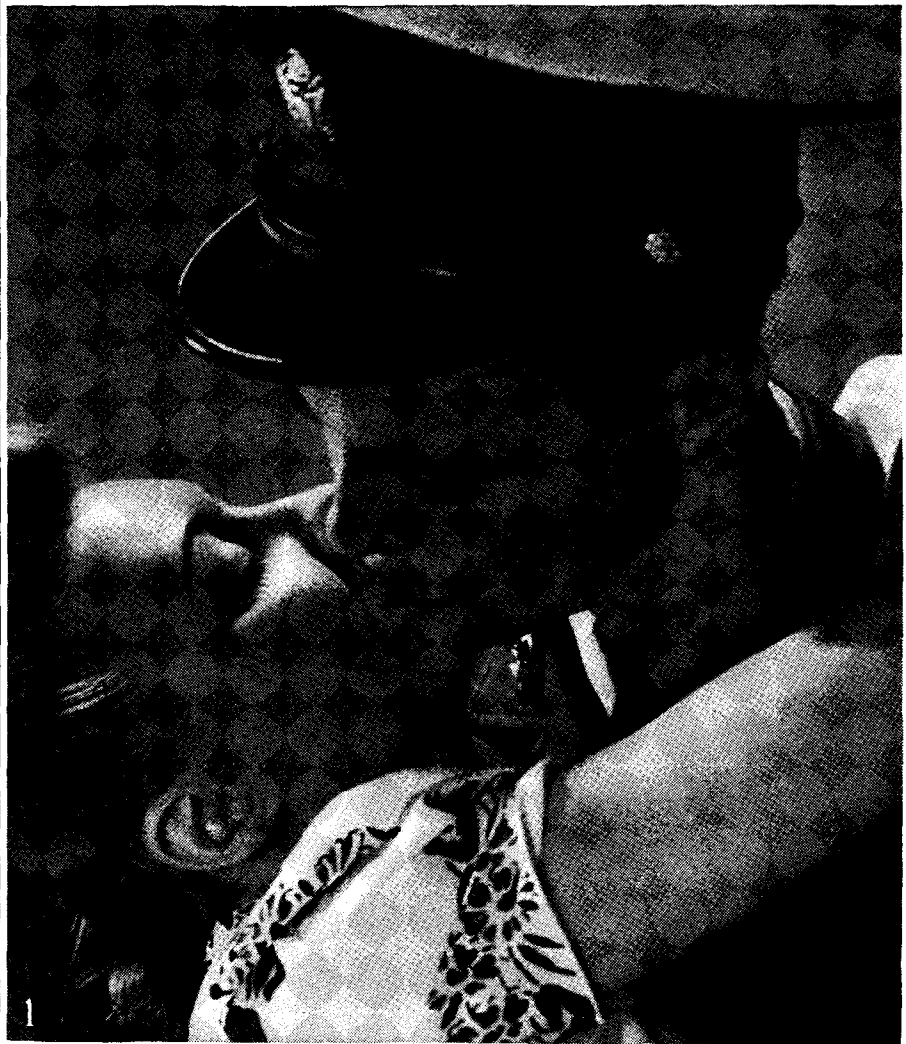
"If you knowed whut it corst I an' Benny—"

"Pipe down, Tim! Thanks, Chief. We're only doin' our part in the national defendst, so on an' so forth. Uh . . . by the way . . . will you be home later this aft?"

Chief Mulcahy, a pious family man, nodded.

"An' where else would I be? Why?"

"Oh . . . uh . . . I just wanted to know in case . . . uh . . . anything was to come



Salute to a soldier just off the train from camp. In transporting soldiers, big guns and other equipment American railroads play...



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VALLEY
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FILMED AT IDAHO'S WORLD-FAMOUS RESORT
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WITH
**GLENN MILLER
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"A ride on the Union Pacific Streamliner, CITY OF LOS ANGELES," says Sonja Henie, "is a melody of comfort and convenience. It's as smooth as a ride down a mountain on skis in 'Sun Valley Serenade.'"

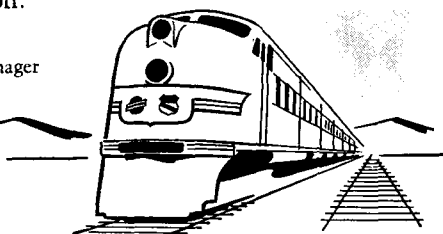
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The Progressive

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up about Robert an' Gerald. Jest want to be sure they's a hunderd per cent, Chief."

"Nivver worry about *that*, Linn! Oi've been judgin' human character too long. Off with ye!"

AT 2:30 o'clock that afternoon, Chief Mulcahy sat on the front porch of his cottage in Coronado, reading Our Navy magazine. His good wife, Norah, was singing as she went about her household tasks within. Except for the drone of airplanes buzzing about the North Island base, it was a scene of cheerful tranquillity.

At 2:32 o'clock, a taxicab stopped in front of Chief Mulcahy's cottage. The chief did not glance up from his reading until he heard a girlish voice exclaim:

"Callie Mae, you're plumb scairt an' breathless! You can't face Mistah Chief Mulcahy—no, you kin. You will!"

"He'll take your side, Miss!"

"Yerse!"

The chief heaved to his feet, frowning. Seaman Linn and Fireman Dunnevan, accompanied by a tearful country maiden, approached the porch steps. Mrs. Mulcahy came to the front door.

"Whist, now . . . whut's all this, Linn?"

Callie Mae did her own talking.

"Mistah Chief Mulcahy," she said, tragic but brave, "I jes' hate to bothah the U. S. Navy about a po' little gal like me. But Mistah Robert Treadway, that's jes' naow joined y'all's destroyah has turnd out mighty unremindful. He—he lef' me in the lurch, instead of marryin' me. These boys say the Navy don't allow a sailuh to leave a gal in the lurch. Am I correctly info'med?"

Mrs. Mulcahy stepped out on the porch. "You poor little thing," she said. "I'll talk to her, Daniel. We'll go inside."

Bursting into sobs, Callie Mae allowed Mrs. Mulcahy to lead her into the house.

Seaman Linn and Fireman Dunnevan faced Chief Mulcahy's grim scowl with self-righteous calm.

"We're sure sorry this little matter come up, Chief," Seaman Linn said. "We was deceived by Robert's falst face, so forth an' so on, as much as you."

"Yerse!"

"Indeed, indeed?"

Over his shoulder, Seaman Linn saw another taxicab rapidly approach and slide to a stop in front of Chief Mulcahy's house. "I guess you can get this all straightened out, Chief," he said, "so I an' Tim will shove off—"

"Ye'll stay right here!"

Mrs. Mulcahy returned to the porch. She looked at her husband sadly, as Callie Mae's snuffles grew into a wail from the living room.

"Whist, Norah. Is ut—"

"Yes. Something will have to be done!"

Chief Mulcahy nodded. "Tell the child to prepare fer a weddin'," he said. "I'll be havin' a talk with that scamp—"

There was an interruption.

Mr. Ben John Ribblesdale, brief case in hand, had reached the porch. "Wedding!" he exclaimed. "You know not what you do!"

Chief Mulcahy grunted. "Who're you, Shorty?" he said.

"Pay no attention to him, Chief," put in Seaman Linn, briskly. "He's a screwball shyster that—"

But this time Mr. Ribblesdale spoke out clear and bold.

"Before God and man, friend," he said to Chief Mulcahy, "I am not a screwball and I am not a shyster. I happen to be—"

Callie Mae rushed out the front door. "You git away f'm heah, you nasty little rascal!" she said. "I got enough grief an' sorer withaout you buttin' an' embarrassin' me. You hesh up an' leave right this very minute—"

Mr. Ribblesdale cackled like a nasty little rascal. "Talk plain English, Sugar," he said. "Save your accent for pictures!"

Callie Mae blinked. "Naow whut on earth kin he be talkin' about?"

Chief Mulcahy glowered. "On your way, Shorty," he said. "We're takin' care av this young lady!"

Ben John Ribblesdale stood his ground. "Can it be possible," he said, "that you Navy people have never heard Sim, Sime and Minnie, the Home-spun Harmony Trio, on the radio?"

Mrs. Mulcahy gasped. "I have!" she said.

"Well, this is Minnie—"

Callie Mae turned on him, her eyes blazing. "Now, we are through, you rat!" she yelled. "You're fired. I tear up the contract. We're washed up. You filthy little—"

Seaman Linn grabbed Ben John and swung him around.

"She ain't a country kid? Jest an actress?"

"Born in Jersey City, friend!"

"Gerald an' Robert—they ain't—"

"Born in Pittsburgh and Webster Groves, Missouri, respectively, friend!"

Fireman Dunnevan spoke: "Robert, he didn't betray her? *Ner?*"

Mr. Ribblesdale turned on Callie Mae reproachfully. "So it wasn't enough to wreck your own career, Sugar? You want to smear Robert all up and get him barred from the networks?"

Callie Mae burst into genuine tears. "You did all the smearing. You talked me into signing for pictures and breaking up the act. That's w-what made Robert join the Navy—to-f-forget me—"

Chief Mulcahy, very red in the face, grabbed Mr. Ribblesdale by the arm. "Agh . . . I've a good mind to slap you off this porch—"

"Before God and man, friend, you know not what you do! Sim, Sime and Minnie was a great act. Not a finger would I have laid on it. But Robert and Gerald would have been drafted into the Army. They merely decided to volunteer for the Navy, instead—"

"That's a lie! You made me break Robert's heart!"

"I tried to save you a career from the wreckage, Sugar. A great future in pictures. But no—you want to marry a sailor—"

"Pipe down!" roared Chief Mulcahy.

"Linn . . . Dunnevan!"

"Y-yessir, Chief?"

"Yerse?"

"The brig fer ye both! Shove off!"

SEAMAN LINN and Fireman Dunnevan sat on upturned scrub buckets in the storeroom brig of the Destroyer Trimble. It was the witching hour of 8 P. M., when all shore-liberty parties are just starting to have fun.

"Benny?"

"Yeah?"

"Yeoman Webster says Callie Mae is gonna give up her contract in pictures an' Robert is gonna marry her."

"So what?"

"I feel orful, Benny."

"Ha!"

"Ain't you sorry we didn't take all the dough they offered us, Benny?"

"Naw. Pipe down."

A key rattled in the lock of the steel door. It opened and Chief Mulcahy stood there, beaming.

"Okay, you guys," he said. "I thought ye'd collected plenty fer suckerin' me, but that theayter agent says ye refused a tidy forrtune. Git ye out on a 48 liberty. An', Linn!"

"Yessir!"

"If ye run afoul av any av this new crop av boots—take 'em! 'Tis the only way to save this man's Navy from bein' too smart-alecky. Consider that an order!"

You're a Good Kid

Continued from page 14

lack of sleep or the heat. But came a day when she knew what it was, and she faced it. She couldn't quite see the pretty home nor the four children, but she could see the man, and it was Clay Cosgrove.

It was bad enough the nights he was racing at other tracks and didn't meet her, but the night that Freeport was racing, and he didn't come in for coffee with the other fellows, Liz got a real taste of terror. She looked up and down the counter frantically, and her serious gray eyes were pinched with pain for them all to see. She counted noses again and again until Hick Donovan leaned over the counter teasing her with his smile.

"Lookin' for Cosgrove? He took a roll tonight, but he's okay. He's downtown, gettin' patched up. He'll be along later."

IT WAS the sight of the two plaster patches, one on his forehead and one on his jaw, that set off the fuse of Liz's fury. She shook so that she could hardly pass his coffee across the counter without landing it in the saucer.

"You look kind of pale," he told her. "Had bad news?"

She looked up then, with one of those thin-lipped, bad-report-card looks, and that was how Clay knew. It set everything going inside of him with a great loud singing, and his face was a most wonderful thing to see.

She wouldn't talk to him when he fell into step with her that night. She kept her head turned away, murmuring impolite little murmurs when he spoke to her, racing along the sidewalk as though she couldn't wait to get the walk finished with. Finally, Clay said:

"Take it a little easy, will you, Liz? I'm gippy tonight."

She stopped short then, and looked up at him from one plaster patch to the other.

"Does it hurt you, Clay?"

"No. I just twisted my foot and it's gippy."

"I'm sorry," she said, not wanting to say it. It was his own fault and he shouldn't expect sympathy.

When they reached her boarding-house, Clay put his hand on the gate

and held it closed. "Look," he said quietly, "there's something I got to say to you, Liz. It won't take long."

Liz stood still in the shadowy moonlight, her face in the darkness, no way of telling that her heart had dropped into her shoes and there were tears of misery in her eyes.

"Fellow does a lot of fast thinking when he sees the fence coming for him," Clay said. "Gets to thinking about the folks he loves, and how lousy they're going to feel if he's pulled out cold."

Liz didn't say anything.

"I was thinking about you tonight, Liz. You're a good kid. Would you feel bad?"

"Of course," Liz said tightly.

Clay put his hands on her shoulders and brought her nearer to him until he could see the moonlight on the pale, scared face of her, and the teardrops in her eyes. His voice was a deep, gentle thing.

"Liz," he said, "all the good goes out of it for a man when he lets it push him around. All the rest of his life, he's saying behind his wife's back, 'I'd have been a better man without her.' Would you have that happen?"

Liz couldn't answer him. She was crying silently, deep in her throat, and she couldn't answer him. But her heart was set stubborn against his words.

"I love you, Liz, and I want to marry you. But I'm afraid to ask you for fear you'd ask me to give up the track. I wouldn't want to be forced to choose. There's one kind of love I don't want to have with a woman, Liz—the kind that'll make a schoolboy out of me for the rest of my life! I'll choose for myself what work I'll do, and my wife will have a stout enough heart to bear with both of us. That's the only way it can ever be with me! Now, I'm going to ask you just one favor, and it won't hurt you to say yes. I want you to come to the races Friday night, and see for yourself what they are."

"It won't make any difference, Clay," she told him, crying. "But just so you can never say I wasn't fair . . ."

She sat by herself in the stands, Friday night, high over the west curve, shaking with nervous fear. She didn't like any of it—as though she could! The



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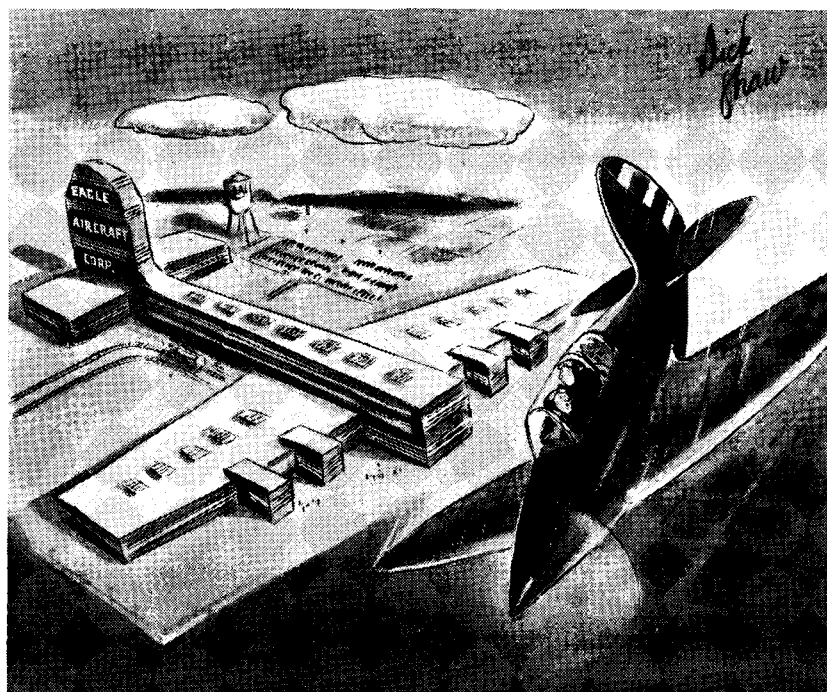


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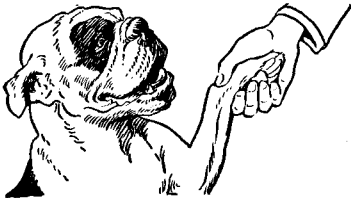
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shattering noise that drove its vibration through her jaws like the dentist's drill—the pale blue billows of smoke coming up across the track in a never-ending stench—the shriek of tires on the curves. Noise and smell and the dizzy grinding, grinding of those midget racers going nowhere.

"It's only that I promised Clay," she thought.

It couldn't be over too soon for her. Clay rode the second elimination heat and placed. Liz watched him come out on the track with a peculiar feeling of indifference, of unreality. She could not recognize him in monkey suit, cap and goggles. He was Number 36, blue and white, and if the announcer had not called his name, she would not have known that it was him.

GRADUALLY, the terrible pounding of her heart began to tell her it was Clay when Number 36, blue and white, took the west curve with a scream of tires, flashing past that spot on the fence, bald with bright new lumber, where the kid they called "Spin-dizzy" had plowed through last Tuesday. Past the west curve, now, around for another lap, the blue smoke turning orange as the going got hot; down the stretch again to take that curve past the bald new lumber. Then, the checkered flag axed down on the finish, and Clay had placed. He'd race the semifinals.

"Popcorn! peanuts! candy!"

She couldn't have swallowed a thing, the way her throat felt. The smoke was fierce, drifting idly upward beneath the floodlights. She watched two men down on the track, one throwing resin on the west curve, the other spreading it with a broom. This was a somber, violent business and Clay should have known that seeing it would make her hate it more than just thinking about it. *I'll choose for myself what work I'll do, and my wife will have a stout enough heart to bear with both of us!* Not this Liz! A woman wanted a man; not a foolhardy, reckless kid with a big grin.

She'd tell him that. The sooner, the better. She could tell him easy tonight, cold-mad and frightened as she was. She sat through the next race, hardly seeing it for the aching fury that burned in her. What use was a man who wouldn't grow up? What could two people ever have together, gadding around the country in a trailer, like a couple of school kids playing at marriage!

The announcer called the intermission, and the stands began to empty, everyone going down to stretch legs and buy sodas and hot dogs, and mill around the pits staring at the cars and the racers with quiet awe. Liz sat still, feeling lonely and a fool. Clay would be looking for her in the pits. Even now he must be looking for her. Well, this was as good a time as any, while her mind was so cold and clear.

She got up and walked down the ramp, her legs trembling with stiffness.

She saw the backs of a dozen slender young legs lined up along the fence of Clay's pit, their owners leaning over, watching Shorty and Clay cleaning spark plugs. She was glad she had worn a hat and gloves. They lent her dignity. Clay stood up and wiped his hands, grinning over the heads along the fence, and Shorty smiled and tipped his hat.

"Hello, Liz."

"Hello, Clay. Hello, Shorty."

The girls moved away from the fence, eying her critically over their shoulders. Liz stood up straight and looked down at the midget blue-and-white racer.

"It's cute, isn't it?" she observed.

Clay laughed, and Shorty looked up with disgust, changing suddenly as he caught sight of her eyes. They looked at each other with a wary antagonism.

Then Shorty wrinkled up his homely face and shook his head.

"Cute, is it? That ain't sayin' much for a buggy that's got the race ahead of it this one's got. The semifinals will be a lousy grind."

Liz knew he was warning her not to upset Clay. It hadn't occurred to her before that he had this other race ahead of him—perhaps two races, if he came in with the first three in the semifinals. Maybe she ought to wait.

"Hot dog, Liz?" Clay invited.

"No, I don't think so, thanks. I'd better be getting back."

He walked with her as far as the soda stand. His eyes were shining with the excitement of having her there. He bought a candy bar for her, thrusting it shyly into her hand.

"Well, what do you think of racing now?" he asked her.

Liz thought for a long moment, evading his eyes.

"I'll be able to tell you better when it's all over," she said.

"I'll race the second semifinals. And—I hope!—the finals. Meet me at the pit afterward and we'll paint the town sky-blue pink."

"All right. I'll meet you."

They were rolling them out for the first semifinals when she got back to her seat. An hour, two hours didn't matter, she thought coldly. Shorty was right about not upsetting him before he raced. She wouldn't want it on her conscience if anything should happen. He was a nice kid, Clay. Just a good kid.

The noise began again, drilling through her teeth, the blue smoke idling upward, and on the green in the center of the track, the news photographer put a new flash bulb in the camera, and mechanics sprawled on the grass, waiting for engine trouble to send them leaping into action.

Around, around, around, the green lights along the track flashed to yellow as Number 44 careened crazily with a flat and was rolled onto the grass for repairs. Green again, and the little cars shot ahead, their smoke turning orange, the floodlights sending back flickering reflections from the cars and the helmets. Around, slow for the curve, tear up the stretch, slow for that west curve with the bald lumber patch.

Liz looked down at her program. Fifteen laps. Not long now. Not long before she could tell him not to ask her, before she could go home and take a bath and go to bed to sleep forever.

When she looked up again, she saw the two cars climb, swerve, lock wheels.

They began to turn slowly, around and around. Liz watched them, hypnotized. When they hit the grass the top car turned over and rolled. And there was a man in that car, and the stands were screaming. She stood up and screamed herself until the car stopped rolling and the driver climbed out and held out his hands to the mechanics. They carried him, half walking, off the track. The lights were still flashing red when they rolled the two cars out of the way. The lights flashed green, and the announcer called, "Heads up! Heads up!"

Liz sat down, cold and shaking. The race went on. The ambulance pulled out of the grounds with its freight.

There was a long delay before the second semifinals. The cars were rolled out, they took their trial warm-ups around the track, the announcer called their numbers, colors and names, and then, lined along the track for the start, they waited. What was the delay? The stands were getting restless. The announcer came on:

"Sorry, folks, but we're waiting for the ambulance to come back. You know it's the rules that a race can't be run without an ambulance on the grounds. Suppose we review the line-up—"

Liz was suddenly shivering with cold. She watched the men fidgeting in their cars—watched Clay readjust his goggles. Waiting for the ambulance—how must it feel to be sitting down there waiting for the ambulance, knowing you might need it in fifteen minutes?

THE ambulance pulled into the grounds and the stands cheered and the cars began to roll. Around, around, gathering their speed, jockeying for position until the green starting flag snapped them into roaring life. Liz watched Number 36, blue and white, watched him so intently that it was as though her eyes were the force behind his speed. Fifteen laps. She counted them studiously. Seven, eight—Clay was in fifth place. Ten—eleven—he moved up to fourth, to third. The track was covered with hot orange smoke, and the stands were quiet.

Twelve— He was coming down the stretch for the west curve, and suddenly Liz stood up. She had seen the slight swerve, and on the west curve, Number 36 went into a wild spin. In a second he was over, rolling, rolling for the fence. There was a splintering crash, and Liz saw the fence bulge as he plowed into it. She could not see the car down behind the fence, but she could see the four wheels spinning in the air, and she knew



that Clay Cosgrove was pinned under that overturned car.

She began to run. There wasn't a sound from her, but as she ran she kept saying to herself, "I'm glad I didn't tell him! He's dead, and I'm glad I didn't tell him!" At the entrance to the track they were bringing him out on a stretcher. His eyes were closed, his face perfectly relaxed. She saw Shorty and he shook his head at her.

"Wait here, Liz," he said. "Wait here for me."

They were gone in a second, and then she heard the ambulance pull out. She could hear it out in the street, its siren growing faint in the distance.

Shorty came up and took her by the arm.

"Come on, Liz. I've got the roadster over here."

He put her into the car and got in himself. His homely face was pale green. He didn't speak to her, and she didn't ask him any questions. She didn't want to talk about it.

AT THE hospital they got out of the car and went into the hall. There was a waiting room and they sat down. At one o'clock the doctor came in.

"He'll be all right," he told them. "Broken collarbone and a slight concussion and a few minor bruises. He must have taken quite a spill."

Shorty was smiling all over his face, digging down in his pocket for his cigarettes.

"Colossal!" He nodded. "Can we see him?"

"Mmm. Maybe you'd better go in before you go home. He wants to see you. Is this Liz?"

Liz blushed at the humor in the doctor's smile. She stood up.

"Oh, thank you, Doctor. Yes, I'm Liz."

The doctor smiled at her a moment in silence. Then, he said, "It will be a long time before he races again, you know. Perhaps, while he's mending, you could persuade him to quit this suicidal racket."

Liz looked at Shorty quickly. He had stopped his cigarette halfway to his lips. She looked down at the candy bar in her hand, smiling.

"He won't quit." She shook her head. "He's too stubborn to quit. When he's done with racing, it won't be because you or I want him to. It'll be something—something inside of himself. He's too much of a man to do it any other way."

Shorty held her arm solicitously all the way down the long hall to Clay's room. Clay was lying flat in the high bed, half buried under the cast and the ice bag and bandages. When he saw them, he grinned.

"Hi, fellows. Gee, Liz, you must think—"

"You're not supposed to talk," she interrupted him softly. "You're not to worry either. Shorty will have Number 36 ready and waiting by the time you get out of here."

He reached out his good hand for hers, and smiled at Shorty over her head.

"You're a good kid, Liz," he said. "You're an awful good kid."

G-2 Men

Continued from page 13

wide experience as a military attaché himself. He was military attaché in Russia in 1916, served as an observer with the Bulgarian, Serbian and Montenegrin forces during the Balkan wars. He was in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne offensives of September-November, 1918. Then he served successively in Austria, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. From 1922-25 he was military attaché at Constantinople and in July, 1939, he was named military attaché to Great Britain and Ireland.

Before an officer is eligible for appointment as a military attaché he must be a graduate of the Command and General Staff School, he must know the language of the country to which he is to be accredited. Only our attaché in Turkey is unable to speak the local language. He gets by with French.

He must also possess good looks and the capacity to mix well in any society. He must be personable, energetic, tactful and have an inquiring mind.

And there is another important qualification—the missus. The military attaché's wife can make or break him. She must get along with the other embassy or legation wives and upon her, largely, depends the success or failure of the heavy social schedules the military attaché must keep.

The G-2 chief also considers the individual temperament of the officer as to its suitability for the capital for which he is candidate. For the bigger capitals it is desirable that the military attaché have private means, as his expenses are likely to exceed his pay allowances. For all the tremendous returns we get from the work of the m.a., we don't lavish money on him.

It is essential that the m.a. and the ambassador get on well together. The attaché has two chiefs, the chief of G-2 and the ambassador. The attaché reports in code direct to the War Depart-

ment in Washington, but he also serves as adviser to the ambassador.

All gathering of information must be done on the up and up. The Army employs no spies in peacetime and our military attachés are not allowed to engage spies. They are not given so much as a thin dime for the purchase of information. We are the only major power on earth that has no secret fund for these purposes. The British for years employed the largest secret fund, a staggering amount, according to popular belief, but, since the advent of Hitler, Germany is said to have passed her in this type of spending.

Brains Instead of Money

So our attachés must depend solely on their brains and personalities to get information for which other powers lay out the bank roll—a neat trick, but they have managed very well.

How do they do it? In a thousand ways. First, of course, through direct communication with the war department of the country in which stationed. The military attaché's initial act upon arrival is an official call in full uniform upon the minister of war. From then on he keeps the closest possible contact with the war department and intelligence service of the country and seizes every opportunity to attend maneuvers, visit troops, inspect munitions and armament factories.

Real ingenuity is demanded in picking up information unofficially and sometimes unconsciously divulged. At social functions, cocktail parties, teas, state affairs, the alert attaché finds many a lead. Chance remarks and hints can be valuable. That is why he is encouraged to entertain widely and attend many functions. This important part of his work is responsible for the erroneous idea that his is a "coffee-cooling" job.

Actually, the social end of the job is

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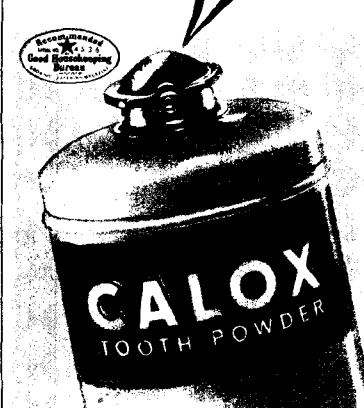


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A NEW WARNER
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frequently a hardship. I have known Brigadier General Horace Fuller, who made an outstanding record in France before and during the war, to attend as many as five important social affairs in a day—a big official luncheon at noon, a couple of teas and a cocktail party in the afternoon and evening, an official dinner—and then go back to the embassy late at night and work over his reports to Washington until early in the morning.

Washington Wasn't Guessing

On August 26, 1939, while many of the big minds around the world were bumbling about a "second Munich" and saying "Aw, they won't fight," General (at that time Colonel) Fuller had the situation so well taped that he was able to cable his chief in Washington the exact disposition of German forces on the eastern frontier, almost to a division. In plain, terse English, he said the preparations for the Polish invasion, which he had been reporting in detail for weeks, were complete. The attack could be expected in five days at the most. It came, as you recall, on September 1st.

That is not a secondhand, after-the-event story. I happened to have had lunch with General Fuller in Paris that day and I remember every dreadfully prophetic word the general spoke. He said if the weather stayed dry the Poles could not hope to last more than four weeks at the very outside. You remember, they were finished in eighteen days. As to the French, he said:

"If the French take the initiative, if they gamble, they will have a chance. I fear they won't. And if they don't, if they stay on the defensive, I'm afraid they'll be licked in less than a year."

Six months before the Germans struck at Norway, General Fuller warned that a Scandinavian expedition was apparently in the making. He said from September on that the Germans would strike at France through the Lowlands and provided the War Department with accurate reports of the swelling Nazi concentrations at Aachen and other key jump-off points on the Western Front.

General Fuller wasn't blind to the unpleasant fact that the French were criminally wasting their opportunities during the winter. He reported the disgraceful failure to get aircraft production going, sabotage in factories, obstruction by Fascist-minded capitalists, lack of preparation in the north, suffering morale. So, when the shocking end of France came, G-2 in Washington was prepared for it.

Where did Fuller get his amazing information on German troop movements and dispositions? From the French Intelligence, of course. And they had paid plenty for it. He could get that information only because France and the United States were on very friendly terms. But don't think for a minute that was the only reason. Don't think that they were handing out that precious information to just any American official. General Fuller got it because of four years of the ablest preparation, four years during which the French had come to know him closely as an intelligent and honorable officer.

America's relationships with the country to which he is assigned make a great deal of difference to the attaché. The better these relationships, the more effective his work can be.

Thus, Brigadier General Raymond E. Lee, our brilliant military attaché to England and Ireland, and big Brigadier General Martin F. ("Mike") Scanlon, our air attaché to England and Ireland and one of the most popular officers in the Army, get the fullest sort of co-operation from the British today.

These officers are doing a tremendous work in the battle of Britain. Working

steadily under conditions of danger, they are keeping Washington accurately informed of the progress of the war and reporting in detail the hundreds of vitally important facts about air warfare and material. They are assisted by large staffs of officers from our Air Force and by other technicians, as well as by a steady stream of special missions, including observers from the Air Force, field artillery, signal, engineering, medical and quartermasters corps. They prepare the way for such important visitors as Major General George V. Strong, chief of our War Plans Division, and Major General James E. Chaney, ranking expert of our Air Force.

Colonel Bernard A. Peyton is holding down the difficult Berlin post, aided by five assistants. He succeeded Colonel Truman Smith, who before the war kept G-2 informed on the enormous air force and armored army the Nazis were building in preparation for war.

Lieutenant Colonel Barnwell R. Legge commands our listening post at Berne, that tricky crossroads of rumor, propaganda, fact and fable. Now *there's* a pink-tea lad for you. Cherubic, smiling Barney Legge can drink pink tea with anybody. But he can play rough games with anybody, too. He was a second lieutenant when he entered the terrible Soissons show of 1918. He finished in a slightly punctured condition, but he was commanding the entire 26th Infantry. Every superior commanding officer had been killed or disabled in that holocaust. How he came out alive nobody knows, least of all Barney.

Steady, even-tempered Major Robert Schow is our attaché at Vichy. Schow was one of General Fuller's valued assistants at Paris until France fell. Not long ago the Paris press printed a violent story to the effect that Major Schow had knocked down a French captain who objected to the playing of America. It is not clear what, if anything, actually happened. But, without knowing the facts, I'd be willing to bet on two things: (a) that if quick-spoken Bob Schow hung one on a French captain, the Frenchman had it coming to him; (b) that if the Frenchman was socked by Bob Schow, he knew he was socked—but expertly.

The Coffee-Coolers Pay Off

Other attachés in key posts are Lieutenant Colonel Norman E. Fiske, Rome; Lieutenant Colonel Harry I. T. Cresswell, Tokyo; Lieutenant Colonel William Mayer, Peiping; Major Joseph K. Baker, Athens; Major Ivan D. Yeaton, Moscow.

Space is too short to mention all of those whose work has shone during the war. Men like Lieutenant Colonel Sumner Waite, the assistant m.a. at Paris, a tank expert whom we can thank for a lot of our knowledge of modern armored equipment. Then there was Major Rene Studler, the ordnance expert who had a roving assignment in Europe for four years. Major Studler hails from Columbus, Ohio. He has a red guard's mustache, a mathematical mind and epicurean tastes. He is credited with having a photographic eye which has been very useful. Studler has been known to see war machines and sketch them from memory.

Thirty years ago we had only three military attachés abroad. Today we have fifty-two with the rank of military attaché in forty countries, several with large staffs.

These extraordinarily gifted men of the Army and their counterparts, the U. S. Naval attachés and their men on the oceans and seas and in foreign capitals, are doing work of inestimable value for the nation.

The coffee coolers are paying off at extraordinarily long prices.

Black Planes at Night

Continued from page 15

heard the rattle of machine-gun fire. It is a quick, sharp bark, quite unlike the sound of other guns. A great drama was being played up there above us. German planes loaded with thousands of tons of high explosive were trying to get through to London. London slept all unaware.

Then, ten thousand feet above and two miles to the east, a tremendous golden and purple ball of fire appeared. It lit the whole countryside. It seemed to hang in the air for seconds.

"That's a new kind of flare they're dropping," I said.

The two pilots looked at me with pitying eyes. "That's not a flare," one of them said quietly. "That's an aircraft on fire—I hope one of theirs."

The light changed to sullen yellow and then suddenly dropped. It was hard to believe that it was a burning plane. It dropped and then suddenly died and then two seconds later there was a tremendous explosion. Its bombs had found the ground. The world seemed very quiet now; the planes were very high and their motors sang a soft litany.

The men were quiet. The C. O. smiled.

"I hope we're putting on a good show for you."

"It's a good show," I told him. "Was that plane one of ours?"

"No, it was a Jerry all right."

It was good to know that one of these men I'd been with all evening hadn't got it. The hours went on. Dawn was breaking now and the pigeons were coming home to roost. One by one they approached, circled, showing their identification lights, and then settled down. It was five A. M. And the night's work was about over. A Spitfire landed. The pilot who climbed down was Cecil, the one who had asked me about his glass of beer.

Nothing "Probable" About It

"I nailed one," he said. "Made quite a blaze. Could you see it from here?"

"You could see that one from London," I told him.

"They can't call that one a probable," he growled. He told me about getting it. He was as casual as though he were telling of a movie he'd seen.

"I came up from below," he said. "And just had time to get in one cannon shot. It was the luckiest shot I ever made. Mind you, if you hit a Jerry kite at all that's good shooting. If you hit his petrol tank that's a miracle. Anyhow I hit his tank and the whole thing went up in flames. I was climbing as I shot and I zoomed over him. My hit got the full force of that blast, and damned if it didn't turn us right over on our back! It was pretty hot for about five seconds."

"What did you do?"

"I got the hell out of there quick," he laughed. "I didn't know when those bombs were going off."

"How about some lunch now?" he suggested. It seemed a good idea, though it was the first time I'd ever had lunch at 5 A. M. We went into the mess. Things were very informal here. It was warm and we took off our coats and sat in our shirt sleeves. We had thick, juicy chops. We had fried potatoes and peas and beans and there was plenty of butter on the table. Then the mess attendant brought in a plate of something that made me exclaim, "What is that?"

"Cheese, just cheese," Cecil said.

Just cheese. I hadn't seen so much cheese since I'd left New York.

We had cheese and I ate as much as I

could with decency and we had buns and cups of coffee and the boys talked of the squadrons. The Defiant squadron at this airport is one of the most famous in England. This bunch made its name around the time of Dunkirk. Over Holland they got 37 Germans in one day. Between May 14th and May 30th last year the squadron got 65 Jerries—the best record made by any squadron. During that time they lost five airplanes and five crews. The Defiant, of course, is a two-place airplane. The pilot flies and the gunner shoots. When the Defiant first came out the Germans were baffled by its turret. That gun turret with its armor and guns weighs a ton and a half. That slows the aircraft down a bit but gives it great firing power.

Eight Crosses and Eight Medals

The squadron was changed to night fighting at the beginning of the winter. It spent five horrible, unproductive months flying constantly in bad weather. It flew 450 night-operation hours without ever sighting a German plane. But it's easier now. They got 17 during the first three weeks of June. The squadron had eight Distinguished Flying Crosses and eight Distinguished Flying Medals, and two of the latter have bars.

One pilot and his gunner hold the D. F. M. with bar, which merely means that they have been decorated twice. Legends are growing up about this great team. Last fall their Defiant got a bullet through its radiator. The same thing happened that happens to your car when your radiator leaks. Their glycol (the same stuff you use in winter to keep your radiator from freezing) all leaked out, the motor heated up and then stopped. They were at 20,000 feet directly over the Channel. They did the only thing possible to do: they glided toward the English coast. They made it, all right. That is a routine operation but what made the experience remarkable was the fact that while gliding toward England they managed to dive on a Junkers and the gunner calmly blew the Junkers to bits. He was a butcher's boy before the war.

I learned the squadron secret: A scion of a great English family was anxious to enter the air force. He was thirty-eight, however, and so was turned down. He changed his name, secured a fake birth certificate saying that he was twenty-five and was accepted. He is doing great work too. His colleagues in the House of Lords sometimes wonder why he never appears any more at sessions. They don't know that he and his cat's eyes are knocking down Germans.

"Lunch" over, we got a full report of the night's operations. In all, the boys had got seven German planes. More important was the fact that they had prevented the German planes from reaching London. I drove back to London and went to my hotel. It was just 7 A. M. A sleepy-eyed charwoman scrubbing the lobby floor had just turned on the radio to hear the morning news.

"This is the BBC Home and Forces program," the voice droned out of the loud-speaker. "Giving you the news. There was some enemy air activity over the country last night. Seven enemy aircraft were destroyed by our night fighters. London had a warning which lasted four hours but not one enemy aircraft was heard over the city—"

"I wonder," the charwoman said sleepily, "if you can always believe those reports?"

"You can believe that one, sweetheart," I told her.



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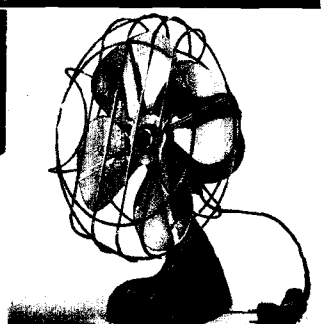
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Yankee Arrows

By Hugh MacNair Kahler and Lucian Cary

PHOTOGRAPHED FOR COLLIER'S
BY IFOR THOMAS

There are 200,000 archers in America today who could give Robin Hood some pretty stiff competition. With the new bows and arrows, even amateurs can break ancient records

IF ROBIN HOOD had happened into Storrs, Connecticut, during the last week end in June, the scene on the two football fields of the University of Connecticut would have looked familiar to him.

He would have heard a language that he understood, with words like brace and stave and nock and loose used just as he used them. He would have seen Connecticut Yankees spinning arrows on their thumbnails precisely as he used to prove the straightness of his cloth-yard shafts.

If he had fetched along a quiverful of those shafts and his yew-wood long-bow, he would have been welcome to join the Eastern Archery Association and shoot for four days in its Sixty-third Anniversary tournament.

But he would have stood small chance of winning any prizes unless one of the Yankee archers had lent him a modern American bow and some modern American arrows.

A thousand years and more ago the wild Welshmen began hacking stout branches off elm trees and roughly shaping them into six-foot bows. They taught their unhappy English neighbors so much respect for their invention that during the five centuries in which the English made it the deadliest projectile weapon in the world they never thought of changing it except to use yew wood instead of elm. It was the old Welsh longbow in English hands that won Crecy and Poitiers and Agincourt against top-heavy odds. It was the same bow that made the English Bowman a nightmare and a terror to the armor-plated knights of every land in Europe. It established a tradition so strong that it came through another 500 years unchanged and unquestioned, although science was questioning and changing almost everything else.

But science has caught up with it at last. Few of the hundred men and eighty women shooting at the long row of targets on the side line of the two fields up at Storrs were using bows of the old English type. Most of them, like most of the two hundred thousand other archers in America, were using weapons designed by American and Canadian engineers who have found out many things about bows, in the last few years, that nobody ever knew before.

For those four days at Storrs, every year, such things as age, sex, race, profession and possessions cease to matter. There is not even a distinction between professional and amateur. And this is true of the hundreds of other archery

(Continued on page 54)

Good shooting by Ex-Champion Ann Weber, left; Ree Dillinger, new champion, and Mrs. E. F. Aicher. Of their sixteen arrows they have put into this target, nine are in or on the edge of the bull's-eye

Junior archers—boys and girls under 16—shoot American Rounds. Here are Jean Rowe and Muriel Ulrich

Carl Weese holds the American Round record. Bow on ground is new recurved model