



The Story Thus Far:

WHILE managing Eddie Gordon, a young middleweight fighter, old Pop Mallory dies in Birmingham, Alabama. Whereupon, Max Ellison, a well-known New York fight manager, sends Joe Barton (who is in love with Ellison's daughter "Babs") to Birmingham, to sign Eddie up.

A few days later, Barton, back in New York, reports to Ellison. He says that, because of a curious contract Gordon had signed, *he must work for a girl*: "Pat" Mallory, Pop's daughter! He does not refer to a murder he, Joe Barton, had committed near Birmingham, one night—and his flight from a possible witness, Eddie Gordon, who had not seen his face in the darkness but who had gained possession of his revolver. . . .

Eddie Gordon goes to New York City. There, taking orders from Pat Mallory (who is secretly in love with him), he goes into training. He meets Max Ellison. He meets Ellison's young daughter, Babs. He fights his first fight, and wins. Babs, overjoyed, does not try to hide her admiration for him. And Eddie has a bitter enemy: Joe Barton. Jealous of the fighter, Joe Barton orders Morrie Oakes, a professional killer, to "eliminate" the newcomer; but not until the missing revolver (which Eddie has given to Cliff Halliday, a sports writer, for safekeeping) has been recovered. The weapon, it appears, is registered in the name of Joseph Barton—Oakes must steal it, before he kills Eddie. . . .

Labeled "Kid Tinsel" by Halliday, Eddie

wins a number of fights. Then, in poor condition because of Babs Ellison's gay, late parties, he is knocked out by Tommy Gateley. . . . The following day Pat receives a letter from a betting firm—a letter that makes it appear that she had won a large sum betting against Eddie! While she is wondering what the letter means, Ellison calls on her. He tells her, calmly, that she is to be accused of engaging in a crooked fight deal. Then, professing to be sorry for her, he offers to buy Eddie's contract for fifteen thousand dollars.

Pat asks for twenty-four hours, to think the matter over. Halliday "tells all" (omitting names) in his column; and Ellison drops his plan for tricking the girl into selling a fighter who, he feels sure, is a coming champion.

Eddie fights Gateley again, knocks him out. After which (while Oakes is trying, unsuccessfully, to find Barton's revolver), he steals away to the Adirondacks, for a much-needed rest.

VIII

TO THE left of the gravel road was an ancient stone gateway, but no gate. Propped against one of the columns was a simple sign, designed for effectiveness rather than beauty. It said simply:

TRAINING QUARTERS
EDDIE GORDON
NO ADMITTANCE

Leading in from the gateway was a narrow, curving dirt road bordered by lavish shade trees. The undergrowth was heavy and had once been well-tended and beautiful. There were the relics of flower gardens, and patches of green, velvety lawn.

Framed by birch and oak and elm and maple, a big, rambling building looked down upon what had once been a lovely lawn. It was a benign old house, mellow with age, valiantly withstanding years of abuse and neglect. Today it was spic and span, but sadly in need of paint and repair. To restore to this place any more than a semblance of its pristine loveliness was no simple job, and it had proved much too much for Patricia Mallory.

Set against a background of lush Jersey woodland, bordered by hedges, miles off the main highway and close to a mild little river, it was still a lovely spot. For years its new owners had waited patiently for a purchaser with money and an appreciation of sylvan beauty. But that purchaser had never come, and so the place was rented for brief periods

"You wouldn't by any chance be jealous, would you?" he asked. "Of course not," she said. Her cheeks flushed. "That's silly"

to those who might have use for it. It had housed—briefly—gay summer parties seeking rest and seclusion, it had served as training camp for two famous champions, and it did duty now as headquarters for Eddie Gordon.

For all its lack of fresh paint, for all its obvious need of repair, the main building—which was referred to simply as "The House"—retained a mellow dignity. It was as though it had reconciled itself to the use that was being made of it, and therefore gave tolerant approval.

Out beyond the broad, spacious veranda was a shady grove, bordered by flowers that had survived years of neglect. In the middle of that grove some former pugilistic tenant had built a ring, which had been refurbished for Eddie.

It was a good ring, stanchly built, twenty-four feet square inside the ropes and covered today with new padded canvas. There were benches and chairs around the ring and a shiny new gong for whoever happened to be acting as time-keeper.

This afternoon a dozen men lounged about the ring in definitely informal attire. There was a burly heavyweight, two lithe middleweights and a speedy lightweight who were themselves training and also acting as sparring partners. Feets Johnson crouched in one corner, hand on the gong rope, his eyes alternately on the stop watch he held and on Eddie Gordon, who was sparring with a fast, rangy boy.

It would have been difficult for a casual acquaintance to have recognized Eddie in his training regalia. His pleasant, homely face was partially concealed by a padded leather contraption which covered forehead, nose and eyebrows as protection against the sudden, dangerous head contacts of the training routine. He wore a dingy-gray sweat shirt and black, full-length trunks. He moved warily about the ring, sparring easily and lightly—brown eyes intent behind the odd armor which protected him, knotty fists encased in twelve-ounce sparring gloves.

From the ringside you could hear the twittering of birds, the clucking of hens out somewhere behind the house, the chatter of trainers and sparring partners, and the steady crunch of fighting shoes on the resin-covered canvas and the thud of padded leather on human flesh. It was an incongruous picture against this gracious background. It didn't seem to fit—yet the unanimous verdict of the training retinue had been, "Gee! what a swell dump."

FEETS JOHNSON'S big black hand yanked the gong rope and it clanged out on the quiet afternoon air. The rangy youth with whom Eddie had been boxing waved with his right glove and climbed gratefully down out of the ring, his sparring chore completed. Eddie moved into a corner and leaned against the ropes, looking down at the canvas floor on which the sunlight—filtering through the leaves of the trees overhead—traced a delicate, lacy pattern.

Through the doorway of the house came a girl: a young and slender girl whose firm, young figure was revealed, rather than concealed, by slacks. Pat Mallory's eyes looked tired; her manner betrayed weariness and worry. There had been so infinitely many things to do—the daily tasks seemed never-ending. There were things to remember, details to be arranged, catering to be supervised, Eddie to be watched. . . .

She moved from the house toward the training ring. She conjured up a picture of this place as it must have been originally, and she sighed. She saw the loveliness which once had been, rather than the drabness to which it had fallen. By training-camp standards, it was beautiful; by artistic standards, its decay was heartbreaking.

But it was still lovely, still gentle, still relaxing. It was just the thing for Eddie. Nothing to divert his mind, nothing to worry or annoy him. A tranquil, routine, healthy existence. Daily road work along twisting, leafy paths, a bit of horseback riding, tennis on a scraggly court which had once been good, daily swims in the river, boxing in the reconditioned ring; plenty of good food at regular hours; early sleep and early rising. Yes, they all were enjoying themselves . . . all except Pat Mallory.

She banished the strained expression from her face as she approached the ring, and forced herself to smile as she looked up at Eddie. She asked, "How are things going?"

"About as usual."

"You seem to be drawn a little fine." "I'm not overtrained." "Well, don't be. It's no good. Now . . ." She beckoned to a keen-eyed young boxer who was slightly taller than Eddie. "Ready, Tim?" she asked. "Yeah—I'm ready."

He came forward and joined her. Pat gave him a smile, but turned her attention to Eddie Gordon.

"Listen, Eddie—because this is important. I've been studying the movies of Dixie Grogan's recent fights. He's got the fastest straight left in the game. I want you and Tim to step three fast rounds. All you've got to do, Tim—is to keep throwing lefts at Eddie. And Eddie, I want you to keep your hands at your sides. Don't block a punch. Slip everything."

Eddie frowned. He said, "I can get away from a left, all right."

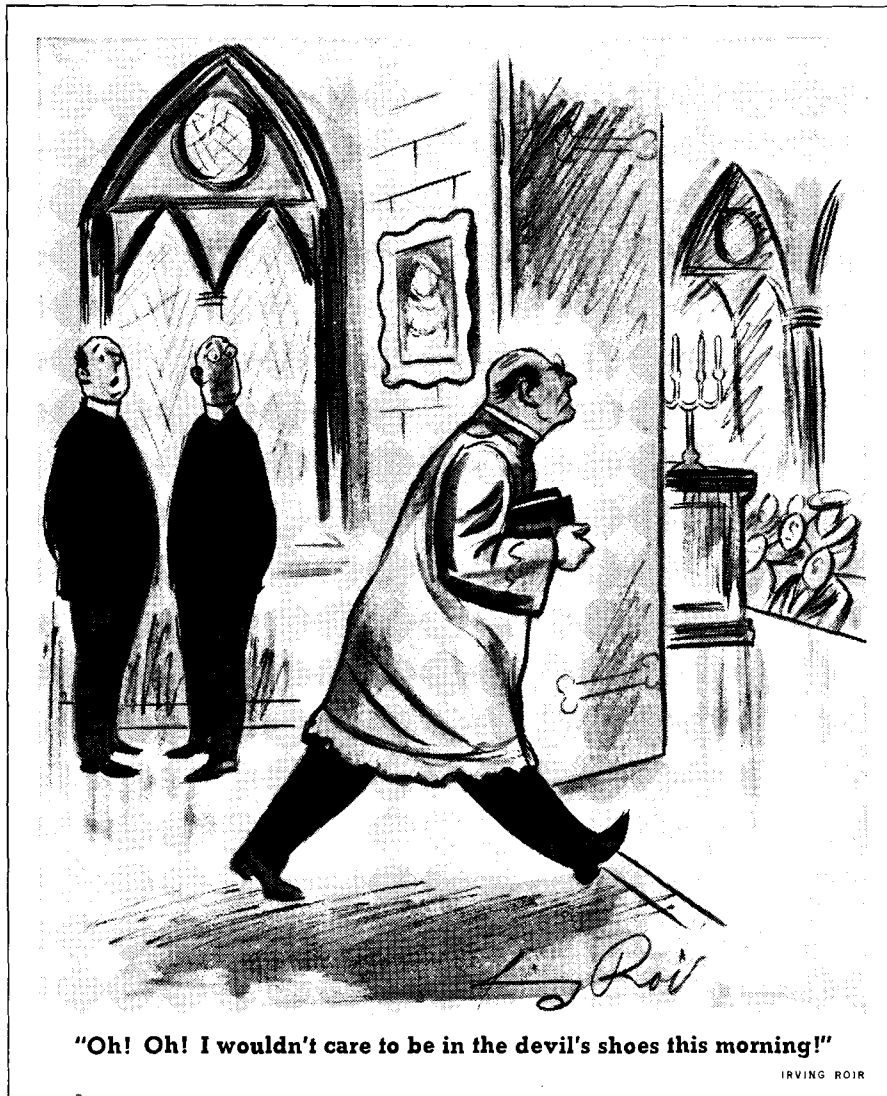
"Maybe. But you've never been up

ingly well, although there were many that he did not succeed in evading. And then the third round ended, and Pat said, "That's enough for today, boys."

Eddie clambered down out of the ring and Feets slipped a robe around his shoulders. He was breathing evenly and his lean, lithe body was relaxed. Pat said, "That was pretty good, Eddie. Ten more days of that and you won't even have to think about a left."

Eddie looked doubtful and so Feets hastened to interject his opinion: "Miss Patricia sho is right, Mistuh Eddie. Faces wasn't created to stop no punches with."

Eddie turned away and Pat said, "Take a good rubdown and shower and rest for a while before dinner. . . ." He walked toward the house without answering and Feets looked down solicitously at the young girl. "It sho ain't fitten," he stated positively.



against one like Dixie Grogan's. I engaged Tim because he's got the next thing to it. If you can learn to avoid Tim's left with your hands down, you shouldn't have any trouble with Dixie." She turned toward the taller youth. "Go ahead, Tim."

Tim climbed into the ring and took the corner opposite Eddie. At a signal from Pat, Feets sounded the gong and they moved out to face each other.

THE boxers followed Pat's instructions. Tim's left was fast and accurate. During the first round Eddie experienced difficulty in avoiding it. Occasionally he shook his head and grunted with annoyance, but Pat held him to routine. "Take it easy, Eddie . . . watch his shoulder. . . ." She turned to Feets and asked, "What do you think?"

The big Negro beamed approval. "It's just what Pop would've done," he said. "You sho learnt plenty fum him."

In the second round Eddie had less difficulty in eluding Tim's rapierlike jabs. In the third round he did exceed-

"What isn't, Feets?"

"You havin' all this grief an' mis'ry an' wastin' yo'se'f aroun' a bunch of prize fighters."

She smiled wanly. "I don't enjoy it much, you know."

"Yassum, I know. Ten millium things goin' wrong all the time, an' nobody depreciatin' what you is doin'. Time Mistuh Eddie wins that title, we'll be takin' you off to a hawspital."

"It won't be long now. . . ." She looked up, seeking encouragement. "Eddie seems to be doing all right, doesn't he?"

"Yassum . . . on'y . . ."

"Only what?"

"On'y he's gittin' edgy. Like a thoroughbred hawss befo' a big race. Seems like you can't tell just when he'll bust out."

"Not much chance here. . . ." She smiled at Feets, and compelled herself to speak gaily: "Guess what we're havin' for dinner tonight."

Feets said, "It don't matter what it is, Miss Patricia—so long as it's eatments."

"What would you say to some real Southern fried chicken and a batch of the lightest, flakiest biscuits you ever tasted?"

A reverent look came into his eyes. "I reckon I'd say Hot Dam!"

"Well, say it then. I got rid of the cook we had and hired a new one. Fresh up from the South. You'll find her in the kitchen. If you want some advance samples, you'd better hurry."

"Hurry?" Mr. Johnson turned away eagerly. "Gimme just one feather in each hand, Miss Patricia—an' I'll fly."

His countenance was a study in concentrated ecstasy as he circled the house and approached the kitchen door. Real, ginuwine fried chicken! Good ol' biscuits! With lots of butter and fresh honey. Mm-m-mmmmm! He flung open the door . . . and the smile vanished. In its place came an expression of abysmal woe. He gulped, choked and wavered uncertainly. The voice of the new cook was sweet as saccharine. She said, "Good evenin', Mistuh Johnson."

"Magenta!" It was more a groan than a greeting.

"Uh-huh. It's me—sho nuff. Ain't you glad?"

His head shook slowly and automatically. "Ise aghast," he declared miserably. "Absotively an' posolutely aghast!" He leaned against the icebox and passed a shaking hand across a suddenly perspiring forehead. "Miz Johnson," he inquired in bewilderment, "how come it that with all the woods in the United States you could git lost in—you had to find this heah place?"

"It wa'n't no accident," explained Magenta. "I searched it out."

"Nineteen forty is sho an unlucky yeah fo' me."

"Miss Patricia figgered you'd be s'prised . . ."

"Uh-huh. Ise s'prised, all right."

"Ain't you gwine exten' me no welcome?"

"No ma'am." Feets was very positive on that point. "I ain't gwine extend you nothin'," he stated firmly. "Commencin' right now."

HE TURNED his broad back to her and pushed through the screen door. He was wallowing in the nethermost depths of despair. "Fried chicken!" he muttered miserably. "Hot Southern biscuits! Magenta! Tha's what I call hash!"

It was difficult for Mr. Johnson to reconcile himself to this latest and most ultimate disaster. He helped Magenta set the table, and conducted himself with frigid aloofness. He went out on the veranda, rang the dinner bell and watched the helpers and sparring partners troop in and seat themselves about the huge training table. He made ready to serve them, meanwhile maintaining an attitude of injured dignity.

Pat Mallory appeared in the dining-room doorway. Somebody looked up and whistled in admiration. Somebody else said, "Well, I'll be . . ."

Pat Mallory had given in to an overpowering urge to be feminine for one evening; to insulate herself against this grim masculine business of fighting.

The dress she had selected was the daintiest in the limited wardrobe she had brought with her. It was white and it was frilly and it was cut just a wee bit low at the throat. It made her feel better to wear that dress; made her feel less incongruous—less sexless. Feets said, as he held her chair, "You sho look beautiful, Miss Patricia. . . ."

They all looked at her with approval. For the briefest fraction of an instant, she thought Eddie might join in the chorus of compliments . . . but after a brief scrutiny, he returned his attention to his plate.

All through dinner Pat was unnaturally gay. Her eyes were bright, her

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The Secret Four

By William Hillman

BY CABLE FROM LONDON

Anyone can listen to Hitler's words, but here is a band of radio sleuths who can tell the British what he thinks. They predicted the time of Italy's war declaration and the recent peace feelers. We give you the first low-down on a brand-new weapon of military intelligence

AS YOU read this the Nazi Propaganda Ministry, from radio stations in Berlin and in German-conquered lands, is pouring out torrents of words—purposeful words.

The British government considers the word offensive of the Nazis as important as the war on land, at sea, in the skies. In some ways it believes it more important. A true analysis of the verbal TNT in the propaganda shells gives a good idea of what's being planned in actual combat.

Operating on this theory, the British have introduced a method of trapping the strategists behind this Nazi word offensive. They have put four brilliant psychologists on the job as propaganda analysts. Their official function is to analyze the enemy's word shells as scientifically as British munitions experts examine fragments of bombs

dropped on London by enemy planes.

Great Britain's propaganda lab in which psychoanalysts determine the true chemistry of Hitler's verbal artillery fire has been kept a secret. It still is a secret to millions of Britons. I stumbled onto the fact of its existence. The matter had to be taken up with high government officials before I was allowed to write anything about them.

When dictators bellow their threats into their radios, Miss Anne Outwaithe lends a knowing feminine ear and up pops the hidden motive. In short, diplomacy's herdish



Above is Sociologist Mark Abrams, one of the four official mind readers whose job is warning the British government—in advance—of any imminent enemy skulduggery



about the truth or falsity of what is said; that is the job of the ministry of information. Words betray what is in the minds of those who speak. Words reveal intentions and plans. The text and not the facts is the important thing.

Why, for instance, does the German sender, after broadcasting comments in English, omit certain details when the same talks are made in Gaelic or Hindustani? Why are special items, presumably of general interest, stressed in news to the German public but omitted in talks to Russia or South America or to England? Why are Italian stations telling North America in Esperanto what is contradictory to broadcasts they make in Arabic or Magyar? What is the meaning of German and Italian and Russian broadcasters simultaneously touching on certain subjects in what seems to be the same language yet which on examination gives conflicting impressions?

The answers to these questions come close to letting the Axis cats out of the bag. Even when the *Deutsche Stimme* or the *Vox Romano* dissimulate they can't hide the truth from these astounding sleuths of the mike.

The secret four were the first to realize the Nazis were to launch their blitzkrieg against the Low Countries in May. They foresaw something like the magnetic mine. They predicted preparatory activity on the French coast for the invasion of Britain and certain activities in the Mediterranean. They had no doubt Italy was coming into the war. They warned of Hitler's intention regarding the French navy. They guessed the Germans would stage a peace offensive in July.

I can now reveal that the four psychologists did not believe the Nazis would invade Britain this past summer or fall. Their diagnosis—and they

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Only modern science, total war, and the use of radio as a weapon could have produced them. They believe that Hitler said a mouthful when he declared in *Mein Kampf* that "in war, words are acts." They consider this the key to the feuhrer's mental processes. Perhaps the only thing Hitler has ever said that they believe, it is the "theme song" of the psychiatric four.

They meet daily around a coffee table, they frame a weekly report which goes to the cabinet, the foreign office and the war, navy and air ministries. They scan the millions of words that pour from the microphones of Europe. Close to three hundred alert listeners and translators under supervision of the British Broadcasting Corporation take down the broadcasts of every radio station on the Continent day and night. The four study especially what is said on the ether waves from Berlin and Rome. Words are cigarette ashes, fingerprints, footsteps in the snow to these sleuths.

The broadcast words are their only clues. They refuse to listen to inside information. They won't look at secret reports. They study only the news stories and propaganda from German and Italian radio stations. For the first time in the history of military intelligence the methods of Professor Sigmund Freud are applied.

The secret four are not concerned