



The ONLY

Stat Hunter loved baseball, and he was

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GAME IN TOWN

29

A NEW THREE-PART SERIAL

ALT CORIO was thrown out of organized baseball in 1946. His name was not Corio then. His name was Carsi. You may remember him.

Carsi and four others, teammates on a minor-league ball club in Texas, were barred from baseball for life. They did not conspire with gamblers. That is, they did not bag games for somebody else, but they had other people place money for them on the outcome of the games in which they played.

Carsi left that part of the country and changed his name to Corio right after it happened, and eventually he got a job with a company that made gears in a small town in upstate New York. There he played with the company ball team, and after a time he found out that the production supervisor at the factory knew how to put in a good word with a man named Kelly, who was general manager of the Conway Bears, an upstate franchise in the Class C Empire League.

That way Walt Corio returned to baseball. He had the heart of a gambler, and he came back carefully. He was a man with whom self-protection had become a necessity in life. It was three o'clock in the afternoon when he got off the bus and had his first look at Conway, New York. He crossed the street and went into a saloon. Inside, there were only two people, the bartender, and a girl sitting by herself at the bar drinking beer.

Corio went to the bar and ordered a beer. Taped against a mirror in back of the bar was a thin, lightweight black slate—a scoreboard. Corio said to the bartender, "You keep that up?"

"All the time. You like baseball?"

"Some."

"You look like a ballplayer," the bartender said. He turned to the girl. "Don't he, Jo Ann?"

The girl looked at Corio. "He does," she said, "at that." She seemed, to Corio's swift and not altogether amateur appraisal, to be both uncommonly pretty and uncommonly leggy; she had black hair, and despite her obvious youth, her face, while not hard, was expert.

"You play ball?" she said.

"A little."

"Supposed to be a new man trying out with this club in town," the girl said, still looking at him.

Corio noticed immediately that she had used the word *club*, and not, as ninety-nine women out of a hundred would say, *team*. He thought for a moment and then he said, "That's me."

"Well," the girl said and smiled at the bartender. "Archie, what do you know?"

"Don't ask me," Archie the bartender said. "I don't know nothing." He looked over at Corio. "You want to know anything about the Conway Bears, ask her. She's the town's number one—"

"Fan," the girl said.

"Exactly," the bartender said. "Tell him about young Joe Whittier."

"Archie," the girl said.

Archie shrugged. "He's going to—what'd you say your name was?"

"Walt," Corio said.

"Walt's going to find out anyway," Archie said. "Plays second base for Stat Hunter, Joe does."

"Who's Stat Hunter?"

"You're a ballplayer, you never heard of Stat Hunter? He's the manager, is all. Spent damn' near twenty years in the big league. Be there yet if he could throw a ball. He makes one good throw and his arm kills him for a week."

"What's he doing here?" Corio asked. "I mean, you'd think he could have a job somewhere else, higher up, maybe still in the big league. A coach or something."

Archie said, "Who knows? This Hunter's crazier than most. A nice guy. You ask anybody, they'll tell you what a nice guy Stat Hunter is. But you want to know something? All he knows how to do is play ball. It's the only game in town. You know? Guy gets taken in a crap game and a friend of his says, 'Didn't you know the game was crooked?' and the guy says, 'Sure, I knew it was crooked, but it's the only game in town.' Same way with Stat Hunter. All he knows how to do is play baseball."

Walt Corio grinned. "Will you and the lady have a beer with me?"

The girl smiled at him. "He's got a wife, too." "Hunter?"

She nodded, thoughtfully. "Divorced him two years ago. That's why he's here. He came to Conway to forget."

"Well," Corio said, "from a quick look at the town, I'd say he made a fine choice."

Archie the bartender set up another round of beer. "Anyway," he said, "there's Hunter and Joe Whittier, and that's the whole ball club."

"Never mind about Whittier, Archie," the girl, Jo Ann, said.

"What do you mean, never mind about Whittier?" Archie said and looked at Corio. "She's soft on Whittier. Soft on ballplayers generally, if you ask me, but—"

"Archie," the girl said.

"Well, all right," the bartender said. "Whittier plays second base. A heller, that boy, a real heller. Headed for the big leagues if I ever saw it. Does everything. And on the side—ooo! Drinks, gambles—" Archie paused and looked significantly at Jo Ann. Then he went on. "Owes half the town. That boy's in debt, Walt. Can't be no more than twenty, twenty-one years old and he's in debt right up to his jawbone. All that's going to save him is if he gets a call to the majors, gets some more of that baseball money. Save him and save Stat Hunter too. That's the only way a manager can produce with a bush-league club like this one. The hell with winning the pennant. You got to come up with a player, is all." Archie drank some beer. "Don't smoke, though. Never seen young Joe Whittier with a cigarette in his hand."

Corio said, "How come Stat Hunter puts up with all that?"

"Who said Hunter knew about it? This is only Hunter's first year, and it's still only June yet. Besides, it ain't known all over."

Corio looked at Jo Ann. "No?"

She looked back at him. "No."

"Me," Corio said offhandedly, "I can take a little playing too. You wouldn't happen to know of something?"

The bartender and Jo Ann looked at each other. Then Archie said, "The house takes it. It's fair, but you play the house. Isn't that right, Jo Ann?"

"Yup," she said.

"It's the Black Widow," Archie said. "Out on Route Forty-seven, west of town, maybe two miles. Don't get there much ahead of ten o'clock, and tell the waiter you wanted to see somebody downstairs."

"Meanwhile," the girl said to Corio, "we've got to find you a place to stay."

"We?"

The girl got off the bar stool. "It's like Archie says. I like ballplayers. Come on."

FAIRCHILD PARK, home of the Conway Bears, was situated along the main-line tracks of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad a mile or so south of the Conway depot.

Nobody knows how many ambitious young boys, yearning to become professional ballplayers, have gazed out the windows of passing trains, viewed Fairchild Park, and decided then and there upon medicine, plumbing or the law. In common with many other sooty, ramshackle and splinter-fenced ball yards in towns across the country, Fairchild Park had that not wholly describable quality of appearing vacant and discarded even when in use.

Still, it was a way of life for the fifteen men—four infielders, one utility man, five pitchers, two catchers and three outfielders—who made up the roster of the Conway Bears of the Class C Empire League. Some of them, the young ones, still were uncertain of their craft; others, the old-timers, who had been up for a trial with the majors or the fast minors, now went through the motions with mechanical imperfection.

One of them—his name was Andrew Hunter—had spent sixteen years in the major leagues. Now he managed the Bears and (Continued on page 84)

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK MCCARTHY



There are suits to show a girl's form

in water, suits to show it in the sun

... *And Now*

THIS summer you'll see three kinds of girls on every beach: the sunners; the swimmers; and the underwater brigade, a fast-increasing female minority of snorkel-and-goggle enthusiasts who have joined the current national craze for skin-diving. Sunners and swimmers wear distinctly different kinds of bathing suits. The swimmer prefers a minimum of tricky trappings and a maximum of sturdy strappings. The sunner's minimum and maximum requirements are reversed. Each can find plenty of good-looking suits to serve her purpose; but fashion designers have neglected the underwater girl, who has problems uniquely her own. Her suit must be warm, to combat the chill of deep waters; it must be strong, to bear the stresses and strains of underwater pressure; and it must give her complete freedom to move.

To find a suit which would answer these needs, Collier's asked designer Grace Arcuri, of Catalina, Inc., to blueprint a practical, fashionwise outfit for the girl who wants to look ornamental though submerged. Miss Arcuri came up with an answer which will keep any swimmer comfortable in any kind of water. The suit contains Orlon for strength and quick drying, wool for warmth, and rubber for snug fit. It is designed in four parts: brief bra and trunks are worn for warm-water swimming; in more rugged temperatures, skintight, lightweight jacket and pants can be zippered on to keep body heat intact.

The underwater suit, and some of the best of this year's crop for shore and surface girls, illustrates the primary functional point: the feminine form will catch the masculine eye whether it suns, swims or sinks. —MARTHA WEINMAN



High-priced but high-powered garb for sunners is Rose Marie Reid suit with bodice heavily encrusted with seed pearls and rhinestones. One of the season's fanciest, the outfit sells for \$75



Knit tube suit by Jantzen (right) is effective sun *décor*, takes water too. Below, new cover-up trend is shown in Cabana Beachwear knitted two-piece. Accessories from Saks Fifth Avenue



Sub-suit submerges in full array. Model in center is wearing warm-water version of the suit, which may be covered by tigh

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