



# UNDER FIRE

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BASED ON THE DRAMA  
OF ROY COOPER NEGRO  
AUTHOR OF "UNDER COVER" AND "AFTER THE ADVENTURE"  
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## SYNOPSIS.

Georgy Wagstaff, daughter of Sir George, of the British admiralty, hints at a liaison between her governess, Ethel Willoughby, and Henry Streetman. Ethel denies it. Henry Streetman calls on Ethel and while waiting for her talks to Brewster, Sir George's butler, who is a German spy, about his failure to get at admiralty papers in Sir George's possession. He phones to German secret service headquarters. Streetman, the German spy, and Roeder (alias Brewster, the butler) are discussing the possibility of war. When Ethel appears he tries to force her to get from Sir George knowledge of the sailing orders to the British fleet. Though she believes him a French instead of a German spy, she refuses until he threatens her. She begs him to announce their secret marriage, as Georgy is suspicious but he puts her off. At tea Georgy and her lover, Guy Falconer, tease Sir George, and Streetman makes an awkward attempt to talk politics.

You can imagine, perhaps, the sort of furore that would be kicked up by the entrance of a breezy, slangy, talkative, well-informed American newspaper reporter into a typical high-class English tea party, and of his effect upon a situation exceedingly tense—when he plunges into a discussion of possible war which the party has been trying to avoid. Read about Charlie Brown of New York in this installment.

Streetman, the German spy, Sir George Wagstaff, British naval official, Ethel Willoughby, secret wife of Streetman, and others are having tea at the Wagstaff home. The party is discussing a play.

## CHAPTER IV—Continued.

"You really ought to see the play, Sir George," the irrepressible Guy remarked. He was always ready to back up Georgy in any deviltry she might embark upon.

"Yes! It deals with our next war," that young lady added.

"As if a playwright knew anything of that!" her father scoffed.

"It's horribly insulting to us Britons," Mrs. Falconer remarked.

"Drives in a lot of home truths and gives us English a fearful ragging!" Guy added cheerfully.

Sir George looked at him somewhat suspiciously.

"Who wrote it? Bernard Shaw?" he inquired. And there was much reproof in his tone. To him, Shaw was like a red rag to a bull.

"I don't know who wrote it," Georgy said carelessly. "I never can remember the beasts' names."

"It seemed to me to present a very striking picture of what may very likely happen," Henry Streetman interposed.

Mrs. Falconer turned to him in astonishment. She did not think that anyone in his senses could have taken that silly play seriously.

"You don't mean you really believe there is going to be war right over there on the continent?" she exclaimed. "I do, rather! And I fancy Sir George agrees with me—don't you, Sir George?" the wily Streetman ventured. He was determined that if he did not succeed in forcing Sir George's hand he would at least give him a run for his money.

Sir George looked bored. "Really, sir, I should prefer not to discuss that matter," he said once more.

Georgy laughed gayly. "When father puts on his mantle of dignity like that, it means serious business," she observed. And there was a deal of truth in her statement, frivolous as she seemed. But Georgy was no fool. She had not lived with her father close upon eighteen years for nothing. She knew unerringly how to interpret his every manner.

"But why should there be war, even if an Austrian duke did get killed by some Serbian or other?" Mrs. Falconer asked. "Of course I've only seen the headlines," she hastened to add, to disclaim any such plebeian pastime as the reading of newspapers.

"Behind that assassination there is much of international politics and diplomacy," Sir George explained. "In fact, it's rather a long story."

"Then, father, don't tell it!" his sarcastic daughter bantered. Her plea, however, was entirely superfluous. Sir George had not the slightest intention of committing such an indiscretion. But Guy Falconer was ready enough to air his opinions.

"Oh, it's not just Austria and Serbia!" he said confidently. "The trouble is that Germany is patting Austria on the back, and whispering, 'Don't give in, old lady!' And Russia is saying, 'Serbia, old girl, you're dead right.

We'll back you.' And there you are!" "Georgy—you're not having any tea," Ethel observed.

"Oh! I don't want any. If I did, I'd ask for it," Miss Wagstaff said.

"Tea, mother?" Guy inquired of his dotting parent. Their discussion of the subject uppermost in the minds of all had driven even the important matter of tea completely out of his mind.

"None for me, thanks!" Mrs. Falconer replied. "I've quite outgrown it—ever since I came back from the States." The others looked aghast at her astounding confession. To thoroughgoing Britishers such a remark borders close upon lese majeste.

And then Brewster announced another caller.

"Mr. Charles Brown!" he pronounced in his best manner—a somewhat superfluous statement, perhaps, because all of Brewster's manners were of the best.

## CHAPTER V.

### Mr. Brown of New York.

In another moment a slight, wiry man, well along in the thirties, came breezily into the room. The first glance told that he was an American. His nervous alertness, his assurance, the slightly slouchy but nevertheless aggressive manner in which he held himself, differentiated him unmistakably from the other men in Ethel's sitting room.

Guy rose to greet him. He had invited the American to join the party, for Guy was almost like one of Sir George's family.

"Hello, Charlie!" he exclaimed with undoubted enthusiasm.

And straightway he introduced the newcomer to Ethel Willoughby, to whom, as hostess, Guy infallibly turned first.

"You remember my mother?" Guy asked him then.

"You bet I do!" Mr. Brown said heartily as he shook hands with that smiling lady. "Didn't we have a bully time in Chinatown?"

"Rather!" Mrs. Falconer replied; and they both laughed over their reminiscence.

To Henry Streetman the American bowed pleasantly enough. And toward Sir George he displayed the utmost affability.

"Glad to know you, Sir George!" he said as he gripped his hand. "I want to warn you, though, in case the others haven't, that I'm a newspaper man—a journalist, I think you say over here."

"You do frighten me," Sir George replied with a twinkle in his eye. "I've rather a terror of your profession, especially when they come from the States."

Charlie Brown grinned at him. "Don't worry, Sir George!" Guy interposed. "Charlie doesn't mean all he says."

"Father's only spoofing you," Georgy assured the reporter.

"Spoofing? Spoofing?" Mr. Brown repeated in a somewhat bewildered fashion. He had met many words, during his short stay in London, that he had never before encountered in the English language.

But his quick mind was not long at fault. "Oh, sure! Kidding—that's it! . . . But, Sir George, I don't blame you. We do butt in a good deal into things that don't actually concern us or the public, but I happen to belong to a newspaper where it isn't a crime for one of its staff to act like a gentleman; so don't think I'm making mental notes or that you have to put the brakes on. If you skid, it's just a private tea party, and that ends it."

"You greatly relieve me," Sir George Wagstaff said, smiling. "But I'll try not to skid—as you put it."

"Then that's all right!" the American declared.

"And, speaking of tea, won't you have some?" Ethel asked him.

"You bet I will!" he responded in his Yankee vernacular. And he stepped quickly to the table behind which she sat. "It's a great habit, tea," he dilated, as he took the cup from her.

"I'm going to introduce it at the Knickerbocker bar when I get back. It's got cocktails skinned a mile," he said fervently.

"Old man, what are you doing over here?" Guy inquired.

"Oh! Just snooping around! The paper thought they needed a change in their London news, and I knew I needed one, so I came over."

"It must be very interesting work," Ethel Willoughby observed. She was more than interested in Guy's quaint friend. His sort was new to her. And though his breeziness might not have been considered quite good form in an

Englishman, it was a quality which the British find both refreshing and entertaining in an American.

"It is interesting," Charlie Brown told her. "But you sound as if you were going to interview me; and for the love of Mike—don't!"

"Who is Mike?" Sir George inquired innocently, in his endeavor to grasp the intricacies of Mr. Brown's conversation.

"Oh, he's an Irishman we Americans swear by," the newspaper man replied. "Fancy that! How odd!" Mrs. Falconer exclaimed. She did not know that Mr. Brown was—spoofing—now. "Since you're a newspaper man you must know everything," said Georgy Wagstaff. She quite fancied the stranger; and she wanted to know him better.

"Well, at least I try to convince my editor of that," he replied.

"Then tell us about the war! We're very ignorant. We only read the headlines," she said. "Father won't talk. It'd be a breach of—something or other."

"Do tell us your opinion, Mr. Brown!" Ethel urged. "We're all so very interested."

"I suppose I can talk where Sir George can't—and I do love to talk," Brown admitted. No one knew his pet falling any better than himself.

"Silent Charlie—that's what they call him!" Guy informed the others delightedly.

"You don't mind, Sir George?" The American turned inquiringly to Sir George Wagstaff.

"Naturally not!" the older man assented good-naturedly. "As you said, this is only a private tea party."

"Then please do!" Georgy insisted. "If you don't, Guy will!" She dearly loved to rag her devoted admirer.

"Away!" Brown declaimed in mock satisfaction at being able to scatter his opinions broadcast. "Well, I'll tell you. While most of you Londoners have been wondering whether the Irish are going to start a civil war, or whether Gunboat Smith did foul Carpenter, I've been digging up some inside dope, and, believe me, there's going to be a merry old bust-up. Russia, I know, is mobilizing; and so is Germany."

"But can Russia, with her internal conditions, afford to fight?" Streetman asked him.

"I don't know whether she can afford to or not," Charlie Brown said. "But I believe she is going to."

"I take it you are not particularly informed on Russia," Streetman retorted, somewhat acridly.

"Oh, yes I am!" the undaunted Yankee replied. "I know it's awfully cold there, and that they drink vodka, and have revolutions, and send their prisoners to Siberia, and apart from that I'm pretty darned sure Russia's going to fight." Words habitually fowed from Charlie Brown's mouth without the slightest effort. It is so with bores. But Mr. Brown was far from being a bore. What saved him was the fact that he always said something well worth listening to.

Guy Falconer did not allow the conversation to interrupt his ministry to the inner man. He stepped up to Ethel's table and took a sandwich off a plate. But before he regaled himself with it he paused long enough to say: "You know, I think Charlie's right."

"Go on, Mr. Brown!" Georgy said, impatient at the interruption.

"Don't you think Germany can defeat both France and Russia?" Streetman demanded.

"Maybe—maybe!" Charlie Brown said. "But with England on their side—"

Streetman did not wait for him to finish. "England, with a civil war in Ulster on her hands, wouldn't dare—" he began heatedly.

And then Mr. Brown interrupted him. He had not the slightest intention of being browbeaten by anybody. And there was a vague antagonism in Streetman's manner toward him that roused him mightily.

"Civil war!" he exclaimed. "Why, if England has a scrap with Germany, that Ulster trouble will stop in ten minutes; and every Irishman that goes to the front will lick three Germans—maybe four. . . . I've seen the Irish mix things up in New York."

Streetman subsided, for the moment, beneath that avalanche of words.

"And you think Germany is quite prepared to face those odds?" Ethel Willoughby asked the American.

"Not intentionally," he replied. "The Germans have got everything down so pat in theory that nothing can stop them; but God help 'em if their theories don't work." There was no mistaking where Brown's sympathies lay. For, though he had not by words expressed his real feelings in the matter at issue, there was a fervent ring in his voice that sufficiently betrayed his sentiments.

Meanwhile Henry Streetman regarded him with extreme disfavor. Perhaps for the moment, among all those enemies, he momentarily forgot that his interests required that he should by no means appear to hold any opinions that one might not expect in the most insular of the English.

"It seems a pity," he said, "but Germany is the only nation in the world that is ready—absolutely ready. She

is the only nation that can risk a war with any chance of victory."

His companions looked at him in astonishment. And Sir George Wagstaff even was stirred out of the attitude of apathy that he was wont to assume.

"You talk strangely, sir, for an Englishman," he told Streetman. But his manifest reproof seemed lost upon that gentleman.

"My nationality does not blind me to the facts," the spy said hastily.

"I admire the Germans in lots of ways," Charlie Brown continued, in what was really only a futile effort to appear neutral. "At all the arts and sciences they're wonders. And it's a cinch they've got a great military machine."

"The most marvelous in the world!" Streetman agreed with him heartily.

Charlie Brown set his empty teacup on the table.

"You're dead right there!" he assented. "Why, back in New York I know a waiter at Luechow's—bully German place!—who was telling me one day how Germany had everything doped out. If war came he'd chase back to his home town—go to his armory, and in his locker, number 250, he'd find his uniform, his shoes, his gun properly oiled, some of that dried pea soup, fresh water in his canteen! They've been putting fresh water in those canteens every day for two years past. In fact, everything a soldier needs would be there waiting for him. Then he'd march down to the station and in a couple of hours he and hundreds of thousands like him would be off to the front. . . . Now, you've got to hand it to a country that's got it all planned out like that."

"By George, you have!" said Guy Falconer. He had listened, like the others, with increasing wonder as the American told his story. "If England were only prepared, too, along similar lines—" Ethel Willoughby said. She did not finish her remark. There was no need of that; for the vein which lay behind her words was only too evident to them all.

"But she isn't prepared—not the least bit—is she, Sir George?" Charlie Brown turned to the member of the British admiralty as a man who could easily back up his statement in an authoritative fashion.

Sir George Wagstaff vouchsafed an enigmatic smile. He was, to be sure, vitally interested in everything the newspaper man had said. But he had no intention of allowing himself to be startled into making any ingenuous admission.

"I get you," Brown replied, with a quick nod of understanding. "Force of habit makes me ask questions. I guess I thought I was interviewing you." And, taking out his cigarette case, he asked Ethel's permission to smoke. Always an enthusiast, he had thrown every ounce of his nervous energy into the discussion. War was a subject that, in those days, was ever present in his mind.

"Preparation such as Germany's is often the surest guaranty of peace," Streetman remarked, reluctant to quit the topic that most interested him. He hoped, too, in the course of the tea party, to gather information of some sort that might prove of value to him. He had been quick to perceive that the American was uncommonly well informed upon conditions throughout Europe.

"Ordinarily such preparation makes for peace," Brown admitted. "But not with Germany! She's been itching for a chance to demonstrate her theories; but the trouble is, she guesses wrong. Diplomatically, ever since old George W. Bismarck died, she's never been right. And just now she's guessing she can lick France, Russia and England with the rest of the world thrown in."

"And perhaps she's right," Henry Streetman could not refrain from adding.

## CHAPTER VI.

### One of England's Sons.

Charlie Brown lighted his cigarette in silence, while he digested Streetman's amazing statement.

Brown, as you see, is unusually shrewd and quick of apprehension. Does it occur to you that he suspects Streetman and takes this method of drawing him out?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Not Very Rich.

"Germany's fatless days," said Dr. August Breitenbach, German socialist writer, in an address in New York, "give rise to some strange happenings."

"A waiter in a Berlin restaurant spilled a plate of soup over the pink silk bodice of a lady's evening gown."

"You'll have to pay the damage for that," said the lady, angrily.

"Oh, it's all right, ma'am. There won't be any damage," said the waiter. "Today is one of our fatless days, you know, and on fatless days our soup doesn't stain."

## A Well Known Woman Speaks

### In Every Town in Oregon Neighbors Say the Same.

Portland, Oregon.—"I have used Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription for my nerves and a general break-down and after using only three bottles I was completely cured. I also used Doctor Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery for the blood and it proved very beneficial."

"I can heartily recommend Doctor Pierce's medicines."—Mrs. J. B. HAUGH, 643 Deacum Ave.

The mighty restorative power of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription speedily causes all womanly troubles to disappear—compels the organs to properly perform their natural functions, corrects displacements, overcomes irregularities, removes pain and misery at certain times and brings back health and strength to nervous, irritable and exhausted women.

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Why should any woman continue to worry, to lead a miserable existence, when certain help is at hand?

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### How She Was Relieved from Pain by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Taunton, Mass.—"I had pains in both sides and when my periods came I had to stay at home from work and suffer a long time. One day a woman came to our house and asked my mother why I was suffering. Mother told her that I suffered every month and she said, 'Why don't you buy a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound?' My mother bought it and the next month I was so well that I worked all the month without staying at home a day. I am in good health now and have told lots of girls about it."—Miss CLARICE MORIN, 22 Russell Street, Taunton, Mass.

Thousands of girls suffer in silence every month rather than consult a physician. If girls who are troubled with painful or irregular periods, backache, headache, dragging-down sensations, fainting spells or indigestion would take Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, a safe and pure remedy made from roots and herbs much suffering might be avoided.

Write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass. (confidential) for free advice which will prove helpful.

### Versatile.

A lady stopping at a hotel on the Pacific coast rang the bell the first morning of her arrival and was very much surprised when a Japanese boy opened the door and came in.

"I pushed the button three times for a maid," she said sternly, as she dived under the bed covers.

"Yes," the little fellow replied, "me she."

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