

# DEVIL-MAY-CARE

by ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE  
ILLUSTRATED BY DONALD RILEY

### What's Gone on Before

At a party in Palm Beach given by Mr. Cooper Clary, Leeson, an attorney, meets Lucy Harkness, known as Devil-May-Care because of her adventurous life. In a game in which partners are chosen for the evening, Lucy is won by Tim Stevens, who has a reputation as a heart breaker. Leeson is a bit jealous. Tim Stevens tells Lucy they are going aboard his boat, the Minerva, and she accedes in order not to be a quitter. Asked if she is sorry that she won her company, Lucy says she is not and that evidently fate arranged it. Tim thereupon tells her to stop looking regretfully after Leeson.

Aboard Stevens boat, Stevens tells Lucy he loves her, to which she replies with contempt. He becomes angry, and she becomes afraid of him. Stevens tells Lucy that he will not let her go until she has promised to marry him. To escape him she leaps into the water from her cabin window, swimming a short distance under the water.

Now go on with the story.

The Minerva was making, she guessed, about seven knots; unless some one on deck had seen her or heard the slight splash of her dive she would not be observed, for though the Gulf Stream gleamed, it was the pale radiance of the stars that was reflected; the moon, being new, cast no beam upon the sea. It would be several minutes before Stevens would give the alarm, before the course of the Minerva could be altered and its searchlight made to play upon the waters. Only accident could aid them in finding her; that accident could hardly be avoided by a thirty foot swim beneath the water. Time enough to worry when the discovery was imminent.

Her feet sagged until they hung straight down; the tired arms relaxed; her black hair, shiny in the first rays of the sun, dipped below the water. And then her toes found hard sand. She kicked violently, and her head came above the surface. There, straight before her, green and lovely in the morning, was land. She had been tired; too hopeless to see it; swimming on her side, she had not looked ahead for, oh, hours, it seemed. And here it was, white sand, fragrant jungle. She mustered all her waning strength. It was only a few yards to the shelving beach where she could get out and walk.

A path! That meant people. If she could only reach a house, get inside. If she only had a blanket, to keep off the sun, the flies, the ants. There was a house. A shack, but it looked like the Couden House to Lucy Harkness. A veritable palace of unpainted boards. She staggered toward it. Even a makeshift veranda, with a roof above it, chairs, a table, and there must be a bed inside. A bed!

She leaned for a moment against a coconut palm. A nut fell, crashing upon the veranda a land crab, scared by the sound, looked up, saw a white figure that stretched toward the sky. He scuttled across the cracked boards, as the white figure advanced, stumbled across the veranda, and into the hut.

How could the crab know that it was the most harmless human in the world just now; merely a half-drowned, semiconscious girl, naked as no one had ever seen her since she was a baby, as nothing had ever seen her save the sun, the sea, the jungle, and the crab?

Lucy Harkness stirred, and an instant ache rushed through her body, but it was the delicious ache that follows complete exhaustion and subsequent rest.

"Oo," said Lucy Harkness.

"I could eat," she said slowly, at least six eggs, four lamb chops, a dozen slices of hot, buttered toast—"And six pepsin tablets," said a husky voice.

Instinctively she drew tight the baggy pajamas. The voice might have come from the room in which she stood, yet there was no one there. She stepped to the door, noticing for the first time that it stood ajar, and peeped through.

Smiling gaily at her, the while he stirred a yellowish mess in a frying-pan that sizzled above an open fire, stood a tall, slim man. He wore khaki knickers and his white shirt had short sleeves and no collar. His hair was quite gray; green sunglasses hid the color of his eyes; his nose was twisted slightly, and though once broken, and his wide thin lips curved in a grin that showed white teeth. For the rest, he was clean shaven, and his hands seemed extraordinarily muscular.

"God gave me more than I deserve," she responded, "including a good digestion. Why didn't you build your fire on the windward side, and then I'd have smelled the coffee and

gladdened your eyes with my presence sooner?"

"Always a purchase price," he sighed. "Some women are bought with jewels, some with rank, and you, it seems, with coffee."

Unaware that she did so, she nodded. This was a man who could instantly catch your mood, drop into file, and march along with you.

"I'm not sure that a suit of pajamas is sufficient clothing to justify my presence at your breakfast table," she said.

"You had less on when I found you," he said drily.

"Prudery," she retorted, slightly angered at her blush, "should begin and end at home. Behold, friend land-lord, somewhere in these silken swatches, Lucy Harkness, at your service, knight of the jungle and sea, feeder of the folorn, rescuer of beleaguered maidens. No, you are looking at the wrong sleeve. This is I, in the left sleeve."

He waved a gay hand at her.

"Nymph of the rosy dawn, Fergus Faunce, M. D., greets you. If you will put both feet in a slipper you'll find under the bed, and jump out here, you will concede that I'm as good at a recipe as I hope you'll grant I am at a prescription."

This was nice. A gentleman, and one of easy, fluent speech, of lazy gaiety and friendly camaraderie. She stepped back, found the slippers, laughed as she put her small feet into them, and then, seeing a flannel dressing gown, reached for it. Her hand dropped back. Something in the dry quality of his voice, as he reminded her of this morning's nudity, lingered in her memory. The pajamas were sufficient clothing. She shuffled out upon the veranda.

"Where do you live?" he asked, breaking a long silence.

"North. On the Lake Trail. We go along the County Road; I'll show you."

### CHAPTER II.

"Perhaps, Tim," she said, "you do not understand women as well as you thought."

He reached out a shaking hand, but she easily avoided his grasp.

"For God's sake, Lucy, tell me—" "What?" She smiled.

He, too, sat down, carefully, cautiously, as though he were uncertain of each movement that his big body made.

"I went to Mrs. Clary. She said she talked to you, and . . . Lucy, what did you do? God! can't you understand how I felt? Nearly insane—" "Fear does that," she said.

"Fear? You don't know me. It was what I'd done to you. Lucy before God, I was insane, crazy. Modane and the Japs had to hold me from jumping overboard. The thing I wanted most on earth was gone. Oh, Lucy, Lucy! can you ever, ever—" "Listen, Tim: I think I like you better brutal than appealing. After all, I owe you something. We live for experience, don't we? Without experience we're dead, eh? Well then, last night I lived. Of course the price one pays for experience isn't always pleasant. I landed, naked, on a beach. I found a hut, entered, and fainted. A man found me there; he clothed me in his own pajamas, put me to bed. He happened to be a gentleman, but even so—" "Lucky for him that you can say he was a gentleman," said Stevens. She laughed.

"My chivalrous friend! You who would have dishonored me, who drove me into the sea, can glower at the mention of another man, can knot your fists. The only thing that makes the human race tolerable is its ridiculous quality."

"Who was he," demanded Stevens.

"The very question he asked!" she laughed. "I didn't tell him, but I will tell you. Dr. Fergus Faunce, Tim. And I think, if I asked him to, he'd operate on you without a diagnosis."

"You told him what had happened," he asked.

"My dear man! Lucy Harkness does not advertise the fact that she's a fool. And to tell what had happened would be to admit that I knew so little of character that I trusted myself with a wild beast. Which would make me out a fool."

"Go on," he muttered. "I deserve it all."

"Humility is so engaging a trait," she said. "I suppose you do really believe that perhaps you deserve a scolding. I wonder if you realize that it's only by the grace of fate you are not facing a murder charge."

"It's by the grace of fate that you are not dead," he rejoined. "It was that, Lucy, that drove me mad. Not fear for me but horror for you."

"It doesn't occur to you, Lucy, that

I never dreamed you'd mind. I really thought you loved me. The rest, Lucy, how could you have thought that I intended . . . I wanted to talk to you, as I said. And you—I heard you open the port hole, knew what you feared, and . . . I know I had no right, no possible excuse for running away with you, but I meant to stop at Miami—"

"And produce the ring and minister eh?" she jeered. "Of course you did not intend to break down my door—" "Before God, Lucy, I had no thought! I was mad. You don't understand what it is to be obsessed with some one that . . . Wait till you love But to hurt you . . . But to hurt you . . . I was bluffing, making you think I'd go to the extreme length of keeping you on the Minerva for weeks, but . . . And then I thought you were drowned."

He put his hands over his face, as though to shut out the dreadful picture.

"If I had wanted some one as crazily as all that, and believed that some one drowned, swishing around in the tide, I'd have joined that one I loved so much," she said coolly.

"And you think, Lucy, that I intended to live?" he demanded.

"You're not a ghost, Tim," she jeered. "You're here in the flesh, safe and sound, pleading for me to overlook a slight error caused by boyish enthusiasm."

"Because I can't find words—no one could—to palliate what I did. How can I say I'm sorry I did something that made you almost kill yourself? But you ask me why I'm alive? In another hour, had I not heard that you were alive, I'd have been dead. I was going to tell Mrs. Clary what had happened. Then, at my house, I was going to settle some affairs. An hour at most. Then I'd have been as dead as I thought you were. As for Modane and the crew, I gave them nothing. I told them to keep their mouths shut for an hour. I explained you'd a blinding headache, gone mad from pain—" "And Lucy Harkness was to be remembered as a suicide?" she sneered.

"Better that than to have known what really occurred. Oh, not to save my name! To save your memory."

"Most noble man!" she sneered mockingly. "In another moment you will be asking me to marry you."

"Why not?" he blazed. "At least, you know how much I want you, and—" "And that, of course, must overcome my resistance. Tim, it must be strange to meet a woman who isn't madly in love with you."

"All right, sneer!" he cried. "A moment ago you were . . . kind, Lucy. But now . . . Is it all ended? Because if it is, I'm going straight from this patio to my house, and do what I intended to do."

She stared at him. The film had

left his blue eyes and there was a gleam of almost mad determination in them. Somehow, the weakness that his too-good looks sometimes gave his features, was entirely gone. "Quitters drop out before the race is ended," she said softly.

"Don't talk in puzzles. I want straight talk," he cried.

"How do I know?" she said. "You commit the unforgivable. I prefer death to what I thought you had in store for me. And yet . . . I receive you; I listen to your excuses. Let's start from there, Tim Stevens."

His too-full lower lip seemed to lose its sensual appearance, to flatten with purpose.

**TO BE CONTINUED**

### Outwitting the Corn Borer

Monroe, Michigan, Jan. 9.—A. R. Marston, Superintendent of the Michigan Corn Borer Experimental station, announces that the cross-breeding of Maize Amargo, a South American strain of red corn, with Duncan, Golden Glow and Red Cob Ensilage strains will produce, after inbreeding, a corn which is immune to the corn borer. This strain, after three years experimenting, has proved 100 per cent resistant when it is planted next to infested corn. It will be available for planting in five years.

### Bald Eagles Fewer

Juneau, Alaska, Jan. 9.—In 1917 a bounty was placed on the bald eagle. Prior to 1927, 70,000 eagles have been killed. The bounty remains. The bald eagle has only one or two young ones a year. So had the passenger pigeon, the last of which died in the Cincinnati Zoological Garden. It seems as though the bald eagle too is well on its way to extermination.

### The Heart of the Nation In a Bower of Ice



This remarkable night photograph of the Capitol shows the majestic dome framed in the sleek-covered branches of the trees in the Capitol Park after a recent heavy storm in Washington.

### Spring's Not Far Behind

Andover, N. J., Jan. 9.—"If winter comes, spring's not far behind," said Browning, and his contention seems to be borne out this year by the beaver. The beaver each year collects enough food and wood to carry him through the winter. This year the beaver has just begun the task they generally start in October, thus indicating a very short cold season. The beaver has generally been a good forecaster.

### Eat Meat or Be Eaten

New York, Jan. 9.—Lorenz Hagenback, who has come to America to act as an adviser to leading zoos, says that persons who eat a great deal of meat can walk right up to lions and tigers without the trouble of being picked for a meal. Meat, says this authority, will make a man smell like a lion or tiger and these wild cats will give him slight attention. Antelopes and zebras, however, feel no friendship for the meat eater. Vegetarians stand little chance in the jungle if they come within the range of lions and tigers, Hagenback declares.

"Do you mind if I eat while you smoke?" asked the elderly woman in a restaurant.

"Not if you do it quietly enough so I can hear the orchestra," responded her flapper companion.

Melissa: I'll never go fishing with Fred again.

Belinda: Did he try to make love to you?

Melissa: No; he did nothing but fish.

Tom: What's so different about that?

Tim: Russia's a terrible place. A few men boss the government and control all industry.



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