

DOWN FOR THE COUNT—

A Different "Short Story with A Kick" To It!

By VINCENT SCOTT

If cosmic creation began by the disturbance of an equilibrium, so does creation in man begin by the disturb-

severely. Among other things, she called him names, names that stung him and made him flinch as if he



Sam was a man of action when it pertained to quieting Clarabelle. He had learned that it was useless to argue with her, and he found that planting his big fist between her eyes proved effective in winning a point. So on this occasion he started in to take her the shortest way home via the fistie route.



Sam had bullied Clarabelle ever since he married her, and he never dreamed that she would ever resist, but she did and—Oh Boy! Read this story. Complete on this page.

the whole world vibrated beneath its gigantic thundering—the World War—and Sam counted himself in.

Because he had been an elevator attendant in a Harlem apartment house, he gave his occupation as indoor chauffeur. The fifteenth New York Infantry claimed him. Then things began to happen and happen fast, before he knew what it was all about, he was marching up the gang plank to the tune of "Over There." He felt his littleness as he boarded one of his Uncle Samuel's giant battleships. His liking for water had been limited to quenching thirst only; but now he was seeing more water than he had ever seen before, and somehow he wasn't thirsty.

Two days out, and Sam had joined the long line of rail-birds, adding his most recent meal to the list with those who were feeding the ocean, but they were not to indulge in this relieving pastime for long. A submarine was sighted in the distance, and the order was given to clear the deck. All hands ducked inside; the hatches were closed and locked behind them. There would be no more deck liberty until they entered the safety zone.

The irony of it all; thousands of Black Men from every state in the union, not having power of choice, were forced to accept the World War as their war, and not being invulnerable would most certainly shed their life's blood in defense of their country. This was the Negroes' chance to free their country. They held no malice; they did not renege. The black race is an invincible race. Had you been in the hold of the ship with them on the journey over there, you too, would have thrilled to the singing, as their voices joined in harmonious accord, moaning in rhythmic precision, "Somebody's in Trouble Lawd, Come by Heah; Somebody's in Trouble Lawd, Come by Heah."

Even in the face of death, the unconquerable "Blacks" sang. The vessel with its human cargo, reeled and tossed like a rubber ball on the waves, sometimes careening so far to one side, it seemed as though it would never right itself, but it sailed on, and the singing continued, "Somebody's in Trouble, Lawd, Come by Heah."

Black men are natural-born fighters. They were rushed to the front line trenches because of this fact; the war had to be won, not lost. Sam Mosby went to battle as though to a picnic, next to reaming a German with his bayonet, he was overly fond of sleeping; and shell-fire didn't prevent him in the least. Sam was used to explosions, he had lived with Clarabelle five years, and so far as he was concerned, this man's war was just another little fracas for him to quiet. He brought three Heinies in, single-handed one day, and was decorated for it. When asked how he did it, he said, "One ob de German gemmens, hit me on de haid when ah ain't lookin'!" He was questioned as to what he was doing that kept him from seeing the Germans: "Ah was climbin' ovah babbd wyah, and got hung up, so while ah was busy gittin' loose, dey hits me ovah de haid from de rear, an dat made me fightin' mad!" The condition of the three "Huns" was proof enough that Sam's fighting blood had boiled.

Sam Mosby knew enough to play lackey for his superior officers, and by so doing, received a good many favors deprived his comrades. While shining the captain's shoes one day, a man-urver bomb dropped nearby, the captain asked Sam would he stay by him if another were to drop close to them. Sam pulled his huge flat feet together, dropped his shoulders, extended his long neck, and folded his ham-like hands across his barrel chest; his jaw quivered, and his voice was shaking high and querulous as he

answered, "Kurnal, I ain't goin' to tell you no lie sub. Ef one ob dem things bust close by me, I'll just natchelly be obliged to go-way from heah. But please, sub, don't you set me down as no deserter, just put me in de books as absent widout leave, 'cause I'll be due back jest ez soon ez I kin git mah brakes to workin'."

Sam did not know that a bombing plane from the Fatherland was flying two thousand feet above him, nor did he know its messenger of destruction had already been released, but it is as well he didn't know.

He had barely finished speaking, when the explosion came; death's agent had arrived. Sam was blown off into ethereal space, up, up, he went to the gates of Heaven. Clarabelle was standing there, weeping, he wonder'd why; she was saying something, but he couldn't hear a sound, then he began to fall, down, down, down, but Clarabelle stayed right beside him. He was coming down faster than he went up; it made him nervous.

"Whar is ah'm at?"—he blinked his eyes in bewilderment and looked around; he wasn't on a cloud at all. Clarabelle answered him between sobs, "You is goin' to be awright honey, jest take it kin'a easy, I see so sorry I hurt you honey, how does you feel?" It all came back to him now. He had regained consciousness; his mind was clearing up. He was on a nice clean hospital cot, and in misery; his shoulder pained him, but Clarabelle was sorry and besides, he loved her.

But there was a third party in the room, a police officer. He started questioning Sam and Sam "lied" Clarabelle free of all blame. "Ah never wants to see another gun, sho nuff ah don't," so spoke Clarabelle. "You is been out ob your haid for two days." "I is dat, an' ah been places, doin' things de hol' time, I see tired, Clarabelle lemme sleep."

Clarabelle closed the door behind

her quietly; she was smiling now, and Sam Mosby was sleeping.

THE END

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ance of an equilibrium. Sam Mosby's inner creation had begun, his equilibrium was badly shaken. He had just lost his perfectly good job because of a misunderstanding with his employer, and to top it off, his wife, Clarabelle's tongue lashed him

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