

SERIAL STORY
CARIBBEAN CRISIS

BY EATON K. GOLDTHWAITE

TOO MANY GIRLS
CHAPTER XVII

MacDowell was in the act of putting away a quick one in the cocktail-lounge when Talcott found him. "Halsey?" MacDowell grunted. "Sure I see him. He's in his cabin. Got one all to himself. I went by there just a minute ago and knocked and he yelled at me to go away. He's got himself locked in."

"What?"

"Sure. Maybe he's scared. Maybe he don't like the idea of gettin' a shiv in his back. Come to think about it, neither do I!"

Talcott ordered a brandy and seltzer and thought about Halsey's strange actions, and at the same time listened patiently to MacDowell's effusive complaints about the size of their stateroom. The combination didn't help his nerves. He was about to pull away when he saw Martha Swenson.

Coming in from the corridor entrance, she was, and she acted lost. She stood hesitant and would have turned away except that she saw him, and the confused look passed from her face. They met half-way and Talcott held a chair for her. "You'll sit down and have a drink with me, won't you?" he asked.

"I must confess," she smiled sadly, "that I have not much money in my budget for drinks."

"My dear young lady! Forget your budget. You'll very quickly learn that in America it's the man who pays."

"An' pays," MacDowell grunted as he flopped down. "Where's your pal, the blond tornado?"

"Miss Paterson is unpacking. She has so many nice things, so much clothes—" She sighed. "I had them once too. I will have them again. In New York my uncle has made arrangements for me to get a job. Not a very beeg job, but a beginning."

The drinks arrived and Martha Swenson lifted hers thoughtfully. "I would like to make a toast," she said. "Let us drink to the future."

"To the future!"

"Amen," Talcott sighed. That was something to drink to, all right. Strange how you could go along for so many years with nothing much happening to you and then bang everything happened at once.

WESTERDAY there had been loneliness. Today—Martha Swenson, a charming dark-eyed, soft-voiced woman plying him with questions about the wonderful land of America. Walrus-mustached Patrick MacDowell, grunting over his liquor and trying to look intelligent. June Paterson, as unpredictable and omnipotent as a forest fire—and Bill Talcott was supposed to be her chaperon! These were compensations if you could but forget the rest of it.

Came the jar of movement and Martha Swenson jumped up. There was so much to see; a last glimpse of the town, the French Village, the ships; she went off by herself with a promise of cocktails before dinner.

"You're certainly a fast worker," MacDowell hiccupped. Already he was becoming green about the ears.

Well, you could make the most of what you had. Not every man on the boat was chaperon to one beautiful girl and escort to another. The stock of William Talcott was on the rise; that of Patrick MacDowell on the descent.

To the depths, MacDowell clung to his bunk like an overworked dishrag. One hand embraced his head, the other his stomach, and conveniently near was a paper-lined bucket. Talcott ignored him as best he could. Dexterously he whipped a tie to his neck, noted with approval the perfect fit of his dinner jacket and at the door most unkindly said, "I'll be back to report every half hour or so. I'll have the steward send you some pig's knuckles and kraut—"

He shut in MacDowell's groans and blithely stepped along. Life was wonderful; no matter what the past or the future, the present was a ship. He had four moon-filled nights and five sun-splashed days. He had his health and a pocketful of money. And he had, or so he thought, two lovely girls. True, the blond was incredibly spoiled. She demanded the center of attention and was as erratic as a straw in the wind. Which should have made her utterly impossible, but somehow it didn't. So much for the blond.

The brunet was considerably different because—well, she was more mature. Quieter. She didn't burst in on you like a hurricane; you just made the startling discovery that she was there. She had great warm dark eyes and an altogether disturbing voice and she had a trick of making even the most trivial things seem personal and exciting. So much for Martha Swenson.

Bill Talcott sighed. After six years of no feminine company at all, two at the same time was almost too much.

HE stood in the doorway of the lounge, looking for the brunet; he didn't see her but he saw the blond and his heart slowly turned over and kicked him in the throat. "You're her chaperon," he reminded himself savagely. "You have a date with the other one—" As if that mattered.

"I saw that Norwegian night-gale making eyes at you," June Paterson announced. "So I decided it was time I asserted myself. Do you like me in this dress?"

I put it on just for you." Green. Silk. He remembered the first time. "You are perfect," he said.

"You've improved considerably yourself. I remember you now. You're the Bill Talcott I used to know. Captain of water polo, right end on the Big Red Team, and the best dancer on the campus. For awhile I thought I'd lost you."

There was banter in her voice; the flippancy of polite society fencing with buttoned folks. But her eyes belied all that; her eyes and the trembling of her mouth. The spoiled brat of memory was gone; a lovely, exquisite woman had blossomed in her place.

Outwardly he was calm. Unperturbed, a man of the world. Stink and sweat and nitrate dust? Surely not this man. Member of clubs, aristocrat; perfectly groomed, perfectly mannered, alert, suavely continental as he held her chair, signaling a steward with his eyes.

And where was the brunet? June Paterson could best answer that. They shared the same cabin. If there be plot behind this, it was more pleasant than the intrigue of Abas Island. It really didn't matter—

Talcott lifted his glass. "To your perfection," he said. "I thank heaven for Lowell Eyrd and Cornell and memory."

She did not smile. Her eyes were wide, glistening, and radiance touched her cheeks. "I too thank heaven," she responded softly.

And then it was broken. A steward was coming toward them, circumventing tables. "Mr. Talcott?" he asked. "I have a wireless message for you, sir."

Talcott accepted the envelope, begged leave of June Paterson and ripped it open. There were three words only in the message but they brought him rudely back. "No answer," he said to the waiting steward, and then sighing, stared moodily at his unfinished drink.

(To Be Continued)

SANTA BARBARA ISLANDS
The eight Santa Barbara Islands, off the coast of California, consist of Ana Capa, Santa Barbara, Santa Catalina, San Clemente, Santa Cruz, San Miguel, San Nicolas, and Santa Rosa.

LARGEST STATE
Texas has an area equal to the combined areas of Connecticut, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

There are more than 12,000 water supply reservoirs and dams in the United States.

FRIENDLY CREDIT
ON ALL PURCHASES OF MEN'S WEAR.

- No Interest
- No Carrying Charge
- No Red Tape

OREGON WOOLEN STORE
8TH AND MAIN

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

THE SUN AND THE MOON APPEAR TO BE ABOUT THE SAME SIZE; ACTUALLY, THE MOON COULD MAKE ITS MONTHLY TRIPS AROUND THE EARTH INSIDE A HOLLOW GLOBE MUCH SMALLER THAN THE SUN.

BOLL WEEVIL HAS NO GREAT LIKING FOR COTTON; IT CLIMBS THE COTTON STALK MOSTLY BECAUSE IT IS THIRSTY!

WHAT AMERICAN CITY IS KNOWN AS "MOTHER-IN-LAW OF THE NAVY"?

ANSWER: Pensacola, Florida, because it has trained so many Navy flyers.

NEXT: How you look to your dog.

LATE AUTHOR

HORIZONTAL

- 1 Pictured late author, Percival
- 2 More uncommon
- 3 Playing card
- 4 Water wheel
- 5 His favorite
- 6 French Foreign Legion
- 7 Upon
- 8 Parent
- 9 Any
- 10 Greek letter
- 11 Edge
- 12 Symbol for aluminum
- 13 Cleat
- 14 Also
- 15 Land measure
- 16 Entangle
- 17 Kind
- 18 Symbol for thallium
- 19 Exclamation
- 20 Heart (myth.)
- 21 Accomplish
- 22 April (abbr.)
- 23 Compass point
- 24 Lose blood
- 25 Helmet-shaped part
- 26 Authors of poems
- 27 Pasteboards
- 28 Displeasing
- 29 Hour (abbr.)
- 30 Hastened
- 31 Metal
- 32 Weight of India
- 33 Baseball term
- 34 7 type of jacket
- 35 Knock
- 36 Scripture
- 37 Fabulous bird
- 38 Symbol for ethyl
- 39 Norse
- 40 Rough lava
- 41 Symbol for tantalum
- 42 His first book was in 1912
- 43 Beverages
- 44 Alleged force
- 45 Symbol for silver
- 46 Rodent
- 47 Saucy
- 48 Genus of quadrupeds
- 49 Greek letter
- 50 Varnish ingredient
- 51 Bustle
- 52 Jumbled type
- 53 Symbol for strontium

Answer to Previous Puzzle

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|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | | | | | 13 | | | | |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | | | | | 18 | |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | | | | | 23 | |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | | | 27 | 28 | | | |
| | 29 | | | | 30 | | | | |
| 31 | 32 | | | | 33 | 34 | | | |
| 35 | 36 | 37 | | | 38 | 39 | | | |
| 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | | |
| | 48 | 49 | | | 50 | 51 | 52 | | |
| 53 | | | | | 54 | | 55 | | |
| 56 | | | | | | | | | 9 |

OWOO! HE'S GETTIN' WORSE! FENCE POSTS FER MARKERS IN HIS VICTORY GARDEN--OH, OOOOH!

OH, THESE AIN'T JIS FER THAT! THEY'RE FER KEEPIN' TH' WEEDS DOWN, TOO--WEEDS CAN'T COME UP WHERE ONE OF THESE IS!

Out Our Way
By J. R. Williams THE MAN WITHOUT THE HOE

NO, RYDER--I CAN'T GO BACK TO VALLEY CENTER! FOLKS THERE THINK I'M A CRIMINAL!

LICKIN' A BAD PAST IS LIKE WHIPPIN' A BULLY! DON'T RUN AWAY--DOUBLE UP YOUR FISTS AND FLOW IN, PODNER!

Red Ryder

THOSE BLASTS WERE DOWN IN THAT SWAMPY COVE AT THE MOUTH OF THE CREEK--

BUT WHAT ON EARTH CAUSED THEM! NEARLY BLEW ME OUT OF BED--

THE POLICE FOUND OIL ALL OVER THE COVE AND WRECKAGE OF AN AXIS SUBMARINE--

A SUB, RIGHT IN THE COVE? BUT WHY DID IT COME INTO THAT COVE?

Little Orphan Annie

OH, MR. HIGH--IT'S SO NICE THAT YOU COULD COME AND SEE US!

YES! WE'RE DOING SWELL, BUT YOU MEAN MORE TO PUG THAN ANY-ONE ELSE!

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GRATEFUL TO YOU I AM FOR LOOKING AFTER HER!

WHY YOU DON'T MIND, I'LL DRAW THE DRAPERIES TIGHT!

Boots and Her Buddies

LIBERTY! DEATH TO THE INVADERS!

YELLS, SCREAMS! PISTOL SHOTS!

Wash Tubbs

JINKY CLAIMS DOTTIE WAS HIS GIRL, AND HE'S OFFERED THESE LETTERS AS PROOF!

ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE FROM DOTTIE?

UH-HUH! ONE OF 'EM CONTAINS A LOCK OF HER HAIR, WHICH I COMPARED--AND IT'S AUTHENTIC!

AND HERE'S A LIP-PRINT!

Freckles and His Friends

I'M RUNNING THIS AFFAIR! YOU HAD NO BUSINESS KILLING OFF THOSE JAPS!

YOU MEAN YOU'RE MAD 'CAUSE WE KNOCKED OFF A BUNCH OF AMERICA'S ENEMIES?

YOU'RE DOGGONE RIGHT I AM! I'M AN AMERICAN, A BREED THAT'S NOT IN THE HABIT OF SITTING AROUND HIGH AND DRY WHILE OTHER FOLKS DO THEIR FIGHTING FOR THEM!

ALLEY OOP

MISTAH MAJOR, YOU IS LUCKIER THAN BOFE GLEEVEG FULL OB JOKERS--DEM ONLS WAS WASHBOARD CLEAN WHEN TH' GAME BUST UP! I BET TH' CLUB MEMBERS SUFFER FROM PAPER SHORT-AGE FO' TH' DURATION!

EGAD, JASON! MY SKILL DID REAP A NEAT STAKE! THAT LAST STRAIGHT FLUSH OVER-WHELMED THE BOYS LIKE A TIDAL WAVE!

MY WORD! LOOK AT THAT MILK WAGON--ISN'T THERE SOMETHING FAMILIAR ABOUT THE CREATURE BETWEEN THE SHAFTS?

Looks Like A Horse From Here

Our Boarding House With Major Hoople

IT ISN'T FAIR TO SAY! IF PEOPLE KNEW SHE HAD A JALDIRD FATHER--

SOME FINE MEN HAVE BEEN IN JAIL FRIENDLY THEY LIVED IT DOWN, AND YOU CAN, TOO!

I'LL TAKE YOUR ADVICE, RYDER! I'LL GO!

WHEEEE!

Some Fine Men Have Been in Jail

APPARENTLY THEY HAD A SECRET SUPPLY BASE THERE--AN OLD SCOW WAS BLOWN UP, TOO--SEEMS IT WAS FULL OF OIL DRUMS--AMMUNITION, ETC.

BUT WHAT HAVE MADE THEM BLOW UP?

NO ONE SEEMS TO KNOW--HM-M-HELLO, ANNIE--PANDA--WHAT MAKES YOU LOOK SO SMUG AND WELL-PLEASED?

OH, NOTHING--NOTHING AT ALL.

By Harold Gray

GRACIOUS! HE SEEMS TERRIBLY UPSET ABOUT SOMETHING?

TELL ME--HAS ANYTHING OF A SUSPICIOUS NATURE HAPPENED HERE RECENTLY?

NO, GO, NOT EXACTLY! EXCEPT THE MAN I CHASED AWAY! HE WAS RUMMAGING THROUGH THE PROFESSOR'S THINGS!

BUT THE POLICE PHONED JUST THIS MORNING THAT HE HAD BEEN CAUGHT AND IS NOW IN JAIL!

THANK GOODNESS IT WAS NOTHING MORE SERIOUS!

AWW-WH! ME! NO SPOOKY-WOONK-STUFF!

By Martin

AH, HA! HERE IS THE COMMANDER WHO WAS MY "FRIEND", YET HE SENTENCED MY SON TO BE SHOT AND HAD ME KICKED IN THE STOMACH!

YEE HAAEEEEE!

By Crane

IS THIS HERO TOO?

I WASN'T SURE--SO I CONDUCTED A ONE-MAN SURVEY AMONG A LOT OF GIRLS!

IT DIDN'T PROVE A THING-- BUT IT WAS AN AWFUL LOT OF FUN!

By Blosser

NOW YOU SLACK-JAWED ANTHROPOLOGICAL WONDERS, KEEP THAT IN MIND THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE TEMPTED TO HOG ALL THE SCRAP!

SHOULD WE TAKE THAT STUFF OFF HIM?

YEH, GUZ...THIS TIME I FIGGER HE'S GOT A LEGITIMATE SQUAWK!

By V. T. Hamlin