

SERIAL STORY THE EDGE OF DARKNESS

BY WILLIAM WOODS

CHAPTER XVI

THE two girls, back home from the water, knelt side by side on the bed in Margit's room and impatiently watched Osterholm hunched in the courtyard, as he hitched two horses to a sleigh.

"Look how he dawdles," she whispered tensely. "He won't be gone until dark."

"It's only quarter of three."

Karen was still thinking of Karl. "Margit," she said, "do you realize it's his birthday. I have to make him so warm and quiet he'll forget everything. If I'm to be his birthday girl, I must be perfect."

"There was no time. But he nodded to me. We had an officer watching us."

It was three o'clock by Karen's watch before the farmer had climbed into the seat, wrapped the blankets around him, and waving goodbye to them, trotted the horses out the path, and down onto the Namsos road. As soon as he was out of sight the girls leaped off the bed and clattered downstairs, keeping a sharp lookout for the housekeeper and the farm hands.

Margit, shivering, hugged her and kissed her cold cheeks. The snow fell faster through the crisp and quiet air. "Get back before sunset," she said. "Get back before anybody comes." And then she watched in the lowering twilight as Karen, carrying the knapsack over her shoulders, slid off silently over the first rise.

The evening came very fast, and brought a cold wind cutting from the northwest. Up in the forest, the dark, ice-laden spruce hung heavy down, casting gray shadows over the valley below, and the brook, when Karen crossed it, was a frozen series of slender stalactites, dropping shelf on shelf downward from the hills. When she got to the bare and desolate fields she traveled faster, came down in a long glide to the sater cottage, swirled about, and stopped to catch her breath. Then she slipped off the knapsack, unbuckled her skis, and opened the door to the dark house.

MARGIT was the only one who knew everything, from the beginning. It was to her that Karen had poured out the whole story when she came back giddy and frightened from her first meeting with Karl. "Oh, Margit, Margit, he really loves me," she had cried. "What must I do?" It was as if she had once pretended to be a woman, and now could no longer be a girl.

So they had talked it over, Margit more frightened than they when she saw how serious her friend was about this most dangerous affair.

"But he's German," she had said. "He's an enemy."

Once, in the midst of a quarrel, the younger girl had shouted, "I'll kill you if you say another word. If I could trust you I tell you why, but I will not stop seeing him."

So Margit had fallen silent, and said never another word. She had seen the weeks pass, counted their stolen meetings, and prayed no trouble would come of it.

NIGHT after night, ignoring her father's scoldings, Karen had slept at the farm. She had grown quiet and thoughtful, and full of a strength and decision that not even Margit had ever suspected in her.

She looked at her watch. It was later than she thought, so she got an old broom out of the corner and began to sweep, then dusted, and got three red pillows down out of the wardrobe for the chairs, and when the cottage was all clean and in order, and the things from the knapsack were laid out on the table, last of all, she went to the shed, collected wood, and brought it back in.

The flames spread and grew as if the logs were under crackling and roaring with the wind down the chimney. The whole cottage became bright, and gradually a warmth spread into the farthest corners. Half an hour later, going out to get water for cooking, she was surprised to see how cheerful the little yellow windows looked in the middle of the dark field.

Then it was not long and she heard his loud halloo outdoors, and jumped, trembling, fussed at the white cloth, looked for matches, lighted the candles on the table, then ran and flung open the door. "Karl," she cried. "Karl. He threw up an arm in greeting and swirled about in a great circle in the darkness. She plunged out into the snow to meet him.

ing her about what they would do when peace came. An old colleague, now in Switzerland, had promised him a teaching appointment at the University in Lausanne. "Lausanne," he said, "Lausanne. It's such a pretty place." He talked about their house near the lake, and how he would go in to his classes in the morning and come back at four every afternoon. "We'll have a dog... would you like a dog, Karen?... and neighbors you could gossip with."

THE wind blew hard outdoors, piling deep drifts up against the windows. Somewhere in the dark an owl hooted. Karl leaned back, looking all the while at her proud, tilted head across the table. He realized how she had changed since their first met. The pale skin of her throat was warm. Her bare arms on the table were round and smooth. Never before had she seemed so womanly.

She rose silently, picked up the lamp, and carried it to the mantel over the hearth. And then, standing in front of the warm fire, she shivered suddenly.

"What's wrong?" she asked, turning.

"Nothing."

"You're going to be transferred from Trollness."

"No."

"Karl," she turned him about and made him face her. "Please tell me the truth. Troops are going to Russia, but I didn't think."

"Well," he said after a moment, "it's only a rumor."

"She felt cold and sick. 'You're lying,' she whispered. 'It is true.' And... even if it should turn out that way... it doesn't change anything. I'd be back... in time to go to Lausanne."

(To Be Continued)

HOLD EVERYTHING!



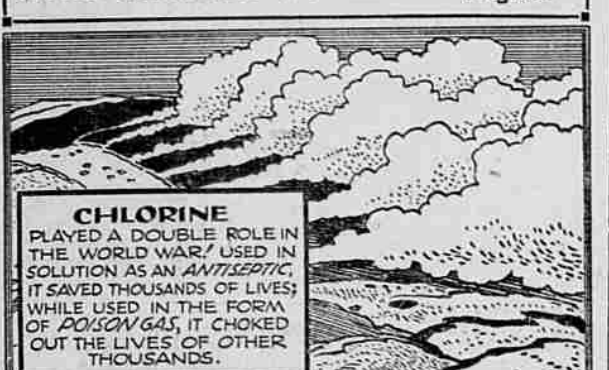
"Your job will be different this year—try to talk them out of what they want!"

The only weapon I have is hot air.—Sen. Thomas G. Bilbo.

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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



CHLORINE
PLAYED A DOUBLE ROLE IN THE WORLD WAR. USED IN SOLUTION AS AN ANTISEPTIC, IT SAVED THOUSANDS OF LIVES. WHILE USED IN THE FORM OF DISINFECTANT, IT CHOKED OUT THE LIVES OF OTHER THOUSANDS.

WHISTLING SWANS DO NOT WHISTLE AND SCREECH OWLS DO NOT SCREECH!

WHY ARE PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG, OLD-- AND THE LATEST ONES THE MOST RECENT?
ELISE O. HEINE
Madison, Wisconsin.

NEXT: What do kangaroos eat?

U. S. OFFICIAL

HORIZONTAL
1 Pictured U. S. official, Nelson

Answer to Previous Puzzle

JOE WEBER
CALL ETAPES
CANDID ANIMAL
PARTID
ABUSE
TRY LOS
TIRE
EUS
RL ATTACHERS
NEST ASTER PARS
TOTALS ANTICS
NAPLES EIRE
RESTS

15 Exist.
17 Recording secretary (abbr.).
19 Resident of ancient Media.
25 Farthest down.
27 Provide air.
29 Little mass.
30 Bind.
32 He is concerned with U. S. relations with Latin.
33 Golf term.
34 Angry.
35 Musical note.
37 Sodium (symbol).
38 Obliterate.
39 Chance.
40 Pronoun.
46 Upon.
49 Circle part.
50 One who eats.
51 Make a mistake.
52 Slight bow.
53 Winnow.
54 Arrive (abbr.).
56 Account of (abbr.).
59 Italian river.

9 Evil.
10 Rough lava.
11 Compass point.
12 Lion.
14 Tap lightly.
15 Skill.
16 Auricle.
18 Beret.
20 Coal residue.
21 Girl's name.
22 Medical doctors (abbr.).
23 Employ.
24 Winding device.
26 Three, in cards.
27 Dry.
28 Pointed shaft.
30 Rigid.
31 Member of Indo-Chinese tribe.
32 Atmosphere.
33 Ignited.
36 More ill-tempered.
40 Mineral rocks.
41 Earth goddess.

42 Sun god.
43 Palm lily.
45 Fish eggs.
47 Like.
48 Greek letter.
50 Five and five.
53 Part of fish.
54 Inquire.
56 Age.
57 International language.
58 Alternating current (abbr.).
59 Before (prefix).
60 He is — of 14 Brazilian state.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

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 57 58 59 60

JOE WEBER

WOT'S TH' GAG-- RIGGIN' YOUR LUNCH BOX UP WID WASHERS AN' NUTS TO LOOK LIKE A CAMERAT TRYNA KID SOME-BODY?

NO, I JUST THOUGHT IT WOULD BE NICE TO LOOK LIKE A SPORTSMAN INSTEAD OF A WORKMAN!

HE THINKS THEM GATE COPS HAVE IT TOO SOFT, SO HE TAPED HIS EYES PLANTIN' TO G-E-E 'EM SOMETHIN' TO DO!

THAT FUNNY BUSINESS CAN GO TOO FAR--I THINK HITLER SAW A FRENCHMAN LAYIN' IN A HAM-MOCK AN' THOUGHT HE'D HAVE SOME FUN!

THE ALERT
By J. R. Williams

YOU TIPPED NIX MARTIN OFF THAT I WAS TAKIN' A HERD OF CATTLE ACROSS THE RIVER TONIGHT!

"Karl," she asked, turning. "What's wrong?"

"Nothing."

"You're going to be transferred from Trollness."

"No."

"Karl," she turned him about and made him face her. "Please tell me the truth. Troops are going to Russia, but I didn't think."

"Well," he said after a moment, "it's only a rumor."

"She felt cold and sick. 'You're lying,' she whispered. 'It is true.' And... even if it should turn out that way... it doesn't change anything. I'd be back... in time to go to Lausanne."

Red Ryder

JENKINS KID, EH? HIT BY THE BUS-- CHEST CRUSHED-- BRAIN CONCUSSION, TOO-- NO TIME TO LOSE-- IF ONLY--

BUT IT'S NOTHING TO ME ANY MORE-- DOCTOR CLOVER IS OPERATING IN THE BACK ROOM OF THE DRUG STORE-- NOTHING I CAN DO-- AND YET--

Little Orphan Annie

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, I'M ONLY GONNA GET FIVE DOLLARS?

JASPER GRUBBLE LEFT AN ESTATE OF \$10-- THAT'S YOUR HALF!

BUT I THOUGHT THAT OLD COOT GAVE AWAY MILLIONS BEFORE HE DIED?

HE DID-- THAT'S WHY HE HAD NOTHING LEFT AFTER HE DIED!

Freckles and His Friends

BLAZES! NOW I KNOW WHAT'S MEANT BY A COMPLEXION LIKE PEACHES AND CREAM

I ASKED IF YOU WERE HURT

YES, INDEED! I HOPE SO, I THINK YOU'VE BROKEN MY LEG

Wash Tubbs

OH, FERD! LOOK HOW THE BIG BULLIES HAVE TIED UP POOR LITTLE PUG

WHY THE DIRTY !!

FOR TWO CENTS I'D...

SHH-- THERE ARE TOO MANY OF THEM

Boots and Her Buddies

QUEEN UNPATEABLE! YEH, BUT SHE MISSED TH' SHIP'S DIDN'T MISS OL' GUZ! BOY, WHAT A CLOUT!

WHOOOY! THAT'S BAD LUCK-- TH' SHIP'S JINKED!

HAS JUST HIT TH' WATER-- WE'LL KNOW MOMENT! EITHER QUICK NOW! SHE IS...

THIS IS TH' BIG MOMENT! EITHER QUICK NOW! SHE IS...

ALLEY OOP

BAH!-- IMAGINE THAT STUFFY SCHOOL BOARD INSISTING I PRESENT A CERTIFICATE!-- AND WHEN I RELATED I HAD TUTORED PRINCES, RAJAHS AND LAMAS, SOME JACKANAPES CLERK REPLIED, "YOU DONT MEAN MARY'S LITTLE LAMA, DO YOU, MISTER?"-- EGAD, MAJOR FATTLETON SHALL HEAR OF THIS!

WHY GO THROUGH SO MUCH TRAINING TO SHADOW-BOX WITH WINDMILLS, MAJOR? FOR A GUY WHO EXPECTS TO TEACH OTHERS, YOU SHOW TERRIFIC RESISTANCE TO ATTACKS OF EDUCATION YOURSELF!

BUY WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

WE'LL SEE THE MAJOR ANYWAY--

Our Boarding House With Major Hoople

BUT NOT WITH ANY MAN THAT ACCUSES ME OF DOUBLE CROSSING! YOU'LL APOLOGIZE, DONNELLY-- AND QUICK!

YOU'LL EXPLAIN, RIDER-- AND QUICK!

I GOT IN THIS RANGE WAR ON ACCOUNT OF YOU AND I'M STICKIN'--

11-27

DO LIKE TO SEE THIS DOCTOR CLOVER-- SEE WHAT HE KNOWS ABOUT SURGERY-- ER-- I WONDER IF I MIGHT BE ALLOWED TO GO IN--

NO! NO ONE CAN GO IN THERE, EH? YOU?

DOC ZEE! BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN THE ARMY-- OH-- THAT IS-- OF COURSE YOU CAN COME IN, DOCTOR--

ALL BE VERY QUIET-- NOT A THING I CAN DO ANY MORE-- JUST CURIOUS--

Harold Gray

WAS TEN BUCKS HIS ENTIRE ESTATE?

THERE WAS ONE MORE ITEM-- AND YOU'RE ENTITLED TO HALF!

WHICH HALF DO YOU WANT? !!

By Blosser

BY THE WAY, WHAT UNIFORM IS THAT?

SIR, THIS IS AN OFFICER'S UNIFORM OF THE WAFF-WOMEN'S AUXILIARY AIR FORCE, AND NOW, IF YOUR BROKEN LEG IS BETTER, CAPTAIN AND YOU HAVE NO FURTHER QUESTIONS, I'LL RESUME MY DUTIES

GOOD DAY, SIR!

BRR! I WONDER IF ALL ENGLISH GIRLS ARE LIKE THAT?

By Crane

DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, ERIC?

WE SHOULD INVESTIGATE, YES?

By Martin

"OR SHE AINT!"

BROTHER, SHE AINT SUNK LIKE A STONE!

HAW HAW HAW

By V. T. Hamlin