

# King Tommy

CHAPTER X—Continued

By George A. Birmingham  
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Janet Church was watching about the central hall looking out for some one in whose business she could interfere, helpfully of course. Janet always wants to be helpful. When she saw Tommy at the desk of the reception office she walked over and joined him. She agreed with the head clerk that an Ausweis was necessary, and showed the one which the Berlin police had granted to her. Then she offered to take a look at Tommy's passport just to see that it was in order. It was Tommy's mouth, nose, eyes and hair were described in the usual official style. His photograph, not in the least like him, was stuck in the proper place and duly stamped by the Foreign office. All the visas were there, as illegible as usual. But Janet raised her eyebrows in surprise. Taking Tommy by the arm she led him away from the desk.

"You'd better be careful with that passport," she said. "The German police know more than you'd think."

"But it's all right, isn't it?"

"Oh, it's all right, of course, for the Rev. T. A. Norreys, an Irish clergyman."

"And that's who I am."

"I don't see what good you expect to do by keeping up that pretense with me," said Janet.

"I assure you—"

"And I assure you," said Janet, "that no ordinary Irish clergyman—that's what you profess to be, isn't it?"

"Quite ordinary," said Tommy, "not even an archdeacon."

"No ordinary clergyman, English, Scotch or Irish, would have Count Casimir calling on him the moment he arrived in Berlin. Everybody knows that Casimir is up to his neck in international plots. What would he want with an ordinary clergyman? And if you're nothing but a curate, how do you account for the way you were received at the Mascotte last night? I was there when you arrived. The whole staff simply bowed down to you and you were given the best table in the room. Everybody turned round and stared at you when you came in. The head waiter, who was drunk later on, served you himself. And that's a thing head waiters don't do in the case of ordinary curates."

"I know it looks odd," said Tommy, "but, all the same, I really am—"

"I hope for your sake," said Janet, "that the police will believe you. I don't know who you really are, and it isn't my business to find out; but if the police believe that curate story I shall be surprised. Don't you be under any mistake about the Berlin police. They'll know exactly what happened last night at the Mascotte, and in all probability they know, what I don't, exactly who you are and what you're doing in Berlin."

This made Tommy a little uneasy, but he was not seriously anxious. His passport was in perfect order. He had papers in his pocket, a check book and some letters, which ought to be enough to establish his identity. He took a cab to the police office.

He found his way after some trouble, into a small, grimy, badly overheated room. It was filled with shabby looking people, men and women of various nationalities who stood in an irregular ill-formed queue. Tommy took his place behind a smelly Polish Jew and waited. After about half an hour he found himself standing opposite a desk at which a young man in plain clothes was writing. This man was smoking a bedraggled cigarette, which looked as if he had licked it all over before lighting it. He was very badly shaved and nearly as grimy as his office. His temper, like the atmosphere of his room, was overheated.

He asked Tommy a number of questions rapidly. Tommy did not understand a word that was said to him and shook his head amiably. The young man asked his questions over again more loudly. Tommy did not understand any better than before, but he tried the experiment of saying "ja" in an agreeable tone to each question. This merely irritated the young man, so Tommy, who was beginning to learn a little German, said, "Ja, bitte schoen." Even this appeared to be unsatisfactory, and the young man was getting seriously annoyed. Tommy tried "nein," and then, aiming at politeness, "nein, danke." The young man repeated his questions in a very loud and threatening tone.

Tommy, still confident that everything must go well in the end, got out his passport and handed it across the table. It contained all the information which even the most inquisitive policeman could desire, his name, his profession, the date and place of his birth were all there. His height was stated, and the color of his eyes and the shape of his mouth and a large number of other things. It certainly seemed as if every possible question was answered.

The police officer opened the passport with a jerk of his hand and allowed the ash of his cigarette to fall on the paper in order to show his disdain of everything English. There was really very little of it he could read or understand, for he knew no English; but he pretended to study it with a sort of contemptuous attention. Suddenly he became really alert. His eye had fixed on Tommy's

name, which happened to be written very legibly. He stared at it, looked at Tommy, and then began searching through a pile of documents at the side of his desk. He came on the one he wanted, opened it out beside Tommy's passport and compared the two. He took the cigarette out of his mouth and looked at Tommy with a smile of malicious triumph. He made a remark in a tone which was evidently meant to be insulting. Then he gave an order to a couple of men in uniform who stood at the door of the room. The men stepped forward, touched Tommy on the arm and motioned him to follow.

Tommy, puzzled and rather suspicious, followed the constable into an inner office. There he found himself in the presence of another police officer, evidently a man of superior rank, for he was smoking a cigar. The constable made a short report and handed over Tommy's passport. The superior officer stared curiously, then he, too, began to ask questions, a large number of questions. Tommy could neither understand nor answer. All he could do was to point to his passport. But it was evidently in some way unsatisfactory. The officer the police officer looked at it the more insistently he repeated his questions. At last, thoroughly dissatisfied both with Tommy and the passport, he rang the office bell sharply.

Two minutes later Tommy found himself under arrest. He was not actually handcuffed, but it was made quite clear to him that he was under the charge of two policemen who stood one on each side of him.

The police officer laid his cigar down carefully and took up a telephone receiver which stood on his desk. Then followed a long conversation, or rather a series of conversations. Tommy, listening and watch-



The Superior Officer Stared Curiously. Then He, Too, Began to Ask Questions, a Large Number of Questions.

ing carefully, realized that the officer was repeating his story several times over, with long pauses between each telling, during which it seemed to Tommy that he was being switched off from one listener to another. Tommy did not understand a word he said, but he caught his name occasionally, very badly pronounced. After a while he began to recognize the words "junger Engländer." Tommy, who was still in quite a friendly mood, turned to one of the policemen beside him.

"It's a pity," he said, "that he doesn't try broadcasting. That must be the fifth time he's told his story."

After the police officer had talked into his telephone for half an hour, he gave an order to his two men and Tommy was led off. They shut him up in a small inner room and left him there. Tommy began to feel slightly annoyed, but was not in the least frightened. It was evident that the hotel clerk had been wrong in saying that the police proceedings are merely formal, and Janet Church right when she warned him that he was likely to have a great deal of trouble before he got permission to stay in Berlin.

When Tommy had been incarcerated for about an hour he was taken out and put in a taxi. His two guards went with him. They were perfectly civil, but they never took their eyes off him for an instant.

The cab stopped opposite an immense, floridly decorated doorway. Tommy was led through it, into what seemed to be a public office. He was conducted along a corridor, taken up an elevator, led along two other corridors and finally with immense ceremony, ushered into a very handsomely furnished office.

A tall, fierce-looking man, elderly, grizzled and most imperfectly shaved, sat at a large table covered with papers. He was evidently a person of great importance and Tommy took a good look at him. His short gray hair stood upright on his head like the bristles of a brush. There were large rolls of fat on his neck. Tom-

my did not know it till afterward, but he was in the presence of the Prince von Steinveldt, head of the German ministry for the control of aliens.

"You speak not German good," said Von Steinveldt stiffly.

"I don't speak it at all," said Tommy, "except 'ja,' 'nein,' 'heiss wasser' and 'bitte schoen.' I don't believe I know a single word. It's a great relief to me to hear you talk English. You can't imagine how I've been worried all the morning by people asking me questions which I couldn't understand. If there's anything you really want to know, I'll be delighted to tell you provided you ask in English."

"Your name?"

"Norreys," said Tommy. "Rev. Thomas A. Norreys, M. A. T. C. D."

"Ach, so?"

"Yes," said Tommy pleasantly, "just so. I see you've got my passport there. If you look at it you'll see my photograph. My nose is of normal size, my face oval, my eyes of a bluish color—"

"So?"

"Exactly so," said Tommy, and then waited.

The German referred to some papers which lay before him and then took another look at Tommy's passport.

"Your name," he said, "is Norreys, but it is here in the passport not altogether rightly spelled."

"N-o-r-r-e-y-s," said Tommy.

"Here," said the German, tapping one of his own papers, "I your name N-o-r-r-e-y-s spelled find. Not true?"

"Not in the least true," said Tommy.

"Herr Marquis," said the German, "we are of your coming to this country and of your plan for the restoration of the monarchy of Lystra and of the so-deep-gripping plots of your minister of Balkan affairs good informed. The police Ausweis permitting you longer to remain in Berlin will not be granted be."

"I suppose you know," said Tommy, "that all that rignarole about plots and monarchies and marquises has nothing whatever to do with me, and my name is spelled exactly as it is in my passport."

"The in English so-called bluff do I most perfectly understand," said the German. "Within the borders of the German state may you no longer remain."

"That," said Tommy, "is a bit rough on me. I came over here simply to get rid of a lot of your money which I happened to have. I don't want to say anything insulting to Germany or to hurt your feelings in any way, but you must know that your money isn't very highly thought of anywhere else in the world. I don't suppose the most unsophisticated South Sea Islander would give you a coconut for a whole sackful of marks. If you turn me out of Germany I don't see how I am to get rid of that money at all."

"In Germany," said Von Steinveldt, "for you to remain is strongly forbidden."

Tommy had begun to feel irritated with the ridiculously pompous old man who sat before him. He had tried to annoy him by speaking of the worthlessness of German marks. But the attempt had not been a success. He tried again. This time a different tactic.

"Very well," he said, "if you expel me from Germany, I shall go to Strasburg and make a tour of Alsace and Lorraine. They're not in Germany any longer, you know."

"To cross the frontier," said Von Steinveldt, "is without the police Ausweis entirely impossible."

Tommy thought this over carefully for a minute and then realized the absurdity of the position.

"You say I can't stay in Berlin?" he said.

"Anywhere in Germany," said Von Steinveldt, "is for you strongly forbidden."

"And at the same time you say I can't go."

"To cross the frontier without the police Ausweis impossible is."

"So far as I can see," said Tommy, "the only thing left for me to do is to fade away gradually like the Cheshire cat in 'Alice in Wonderland,' and I can't do that. The only kind of man I ever heard of who could do that is a Mahatma, with an astral body, and I'm not one. But I dare say you're simply making what you believe to be a joke. I always heard that German jokes are a bit difficult to see."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Made Lonely Journey

A woman farmer in a lonely part of South Africa, Mrs. Ida Francis, has just shown that in luck and endurance British women settlers are not behind the men.

About two months ago a cyclone devastated her farm, which lies beyond the western fringe of the desolate Kalahari desert; and then came floods which destroyed the food and shelter for her cattle. The only way to save her animals was to drive them 400 miles across the desert to her son's farm, and this she did, unaided.

She found that many of the water holes in the desert had dried up, and sometimes she had to ward off attacks by lions with her rifle; and she kept steadily on, and in the end brought nearly all her charges through safely. —Family Herald.

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### Street Made Beautiful

The 3,000 delegates and visitors to the triennial convention of the Episcopal church at New Orleans, La., next October will pass through a street of blossoms when they walk up St. Charles avenue. A committee, provided with plants, shrubs, vines, trowels and watering cans made a careful house-to-house canvass giving out plants, and if nobody was at home, set out the flowers, watered them, and left a note of explanation to account for the vines and shrubbery mysteriously springing up in their gardens.

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### World's Oldest Forest

A hundred million years ago many millions of years before man himself appeared on the earth, there grew a forest near what is now Gilboa, N. Y. Dr. John M. Clarke, New York state geologist and paleontologist, pronounced this grove the oldest known forest. He has resurrected it from the remains in the rocks, and he finds these ancient trees to have been much like modern tree ferns, probably attaining heights of 50 feet or more.

### New Zealand Emblem

The fern leaf as emblem has been suggested for New Zealand. The idea was advanced at a commercial travelers' banquet recently held at Wellington in honor of the All Blacks Rugby team. It was suggested that the footballers had carried the fern leaf triumphantly around the world the New Zealand government should adopt the fern leaf as an emblem to be stamped on all exports from that country.—Family Herald.

No matter what happens, you will always find plenty of people who predicted it.

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Rather than endure condescension, most people will stay outside the circle where it is practiced.

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