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BULL-DOG DRUMMOND

The Adventures of A Demobilized Officer Who Found Peace Dull

by CYRIL McNEILE "SAPPER"

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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She felt his heart pound madly against her; and with a sudden quick movement she put forth her arms round his neck and kissed him on the mouth.

"Is that good enough?" she asked, very low: and just for a few moments, time stood still. . . . Then, very gently, he put her back in the car.

"I suppose," he remarked resignedly, "that we had better descend to trivialities. We've had lots of fun and games since I last saw you a year or two ago."

"Idiot boy," she said happily. "It was yesterday morning."

"The interruption is considered trivial. Mere facts don't count when it's you and me." There was a further interlude of uncertain duration, followed rapidly by another because the first was so nice.

"To resume," continued Hugh, "I regret to state that they've got Potts.

The girl sat up quickly and stared at him.

"Got him? Oh, Hugh! how did they manage it?"

"I'm d—d if I know," he answered grimly. "They found out that he was in my bungalow at Goring during the afternoon by sending round a man to see about the water. Somehow or other he must have doped the drink or the food, because after dinner we all fell asleep. I don't remember anything more till I woke this morning with the most appalling head. Of course, Potts had gone."

"I heard the car drive up in the middle of the night," said the girl thoughtfully. "Do you think he's at The Elms now?"

"That is what I propose to find out tonight," answered Hugh. "We have staged a little comedy for Peterson's especial benefit, and we are hoping for the best."

"Oh, boy, do be careful!" She looked at him anxiously. "I'd never forgive myself if anything happened to you. I'd feel it was all due to me, and I just couldn't bear it."

"Dear little girl," he whispered tenderly, "you're simply adorable when you look like that. But not even for you would I back out of this show now." His mouth set in a grim line. "It's gone altogether too far, and they've shown themselves to be so completely beyond the pale that it's got to be fought out. And when it has been," he caught both her hands in his . . . "and we've won . . . why then, girl o' mine, we'll get Peter Darrell to be best man."

Which was the cue for the commencement of the last and longest interlude, terminated only by the sudden and unwelcome appearance of a motor-bus covered within and without by unromantic sightseers, and paper-bags containing bananas.

They drove slowly back to Guildford, and on the way he told her briefly of the murder of the American's secretary in Belfast, and his interview the preceding afternoon with the impostor at the Carlton.

"It's a tough proposition," he remarked quietly. "They're absolutely without scruple, and their power seems unlimited. I know they are after the duchess of Lampshire's pearls: I found the beautiful Irma consuming tea with young Laidley yesterday—you know, the duke's eldest son. But there's something more in the wind than that, Phyllis—something which, unless I'm a mug of the first water, is an infinitely larger proposition than that."

The car drew up at the station, and he strolled with her to the platform. Then the train came in, and he put her into a carriage. And two minutes later, with the touch of her lips warm on his, and her anxious little cry, "Take care, my darling!—take care!" still ringing in his ears, he got into his car and drove off to an hotel to get an early dinner.

FOUR.

At a quarter to ten he backed his car into the shadow of some trees not far from the gate of The Elms. Save for a light in the sitting-room and one in a bedroom upstairs, the front of the house was in darkness, and, treading noiselessly on the turf, he explored all round it. There was one bedroom light at the back of the house, and thrown on the blind he could see the shadow of a man. As he watched, the man got up and moved away, only to return in a moment or two and take up his old position.

"It's one of those two bedrooms," he muttered to himself, "if he's here at all."

Then he crouched in the shadow of some shrubs and waited. Through the trees to his right he could see The Larches, and once, with a sudden quickening of his heart, he thought he saw the outline of the girl show up in the light from the drawing-room. But it was only for a second, and then it was gone. . . .

He peered at his watch: it was just ten o'clock. The trees were creaking gently in the faint wind; all around him the strange night noises—noises which play pranks with a man's nerves—were whispering and muttering. Bushes seemed suddenly to come to life, and move; eerie shapes crawled over the ground toward him—figures which existed only in his imagination. And once again the thrill of the night stalker gripped him.

He remembered the German who had lain motionless for an hour in a little gully by Hebuterne, while he from behind a stunted bush had tried to locate him. And then that one creak as the Boche had moved his leg. And then . . . the end. On that night, too, the little hummocks had moved and taken to themselves strange shapes: fifty times he had imagined he saw him; fifty times he knew he was wrong—in time. He was used to it; the night held no terrors for him, only a fierce excitement. And thus it was that as he crouched in the bushes, waiting for the game to start, his pulse was as normal, and his nerves as steady as if he had been sitting down to supper. The only difference was that in his hand he held something tight-gripped.

At last faintly in the distance he heard the hum of a car. Rapidly it grew louder, and he smiled grimly to himself as the sound of five unmelodious voices singing lustily struck his ear. They passed along the road in front of the house. There was a sudden crash—then silence; but only for a moment.

Peter's voice came first:

"You priceless old ass, you've rammed the blinking gate."

It was Jerry Seymour who then took up the bawl. His voice was intensely solemn—also extremely loud.

"Preposhterous. Perfectly preposhterous. We must go and apologize to the owner. . . . I . . . I . . . absholutely . . . musht apologize. . . . Quite unpardonable. . . . You can't go about 'country . . . knocking down gates. . . . Out of queshtion. . . ."

Half-consciously Hugh listened, but, now that the moment for action had come, every faculty was concentrated on his own job. He saw half a dozen men go rushing out into the garden through a side door, and then two more ran out and came straight toward him. They crashed past him and went on into the darkness, and for an instant he wondered what they were doing. A little later he was destined to find out. . . .

Then came a peal at the front-door bell, and he determined to wait no longer. He darted through the garden door, to find a flight of stairs in front of him, and in another moment he was on the first floor. He walked rapidly along the landing, trying to find his bearings, and, turning a corner, he found himself at the top of the main staircase—the spot where he had fought Peterson two nights previously.

He walked quickly on to the room which he calculated was the one where he had seen the shadow on the blind. Without a second's hesitation he flung the door open and walked in. There lying in the bed, was the American, while crouched beside him, with a revolver in his hand, was a man. . . .

For a few seconds they watched one another in silence, and then the man straightened up.

"The soldier!" he snarled. "You young pup!"

Deliberately, almost casually, he raised his revolver, and then the unexpected happened. A jet of liquid ammonia struck him full in the face, and with a short laugh Hugh dropped his water-pistol in his pocket, and turned his attention to the bed. Wrapping the millionaire in a blanket, he picked him up, and, paying no more attention to the man gasping and choking in a corner, he raced for the back stairs.

Below he could hear Jerry hiccoughing gently, and explaining to the pro . . . pro . . . pritor that he personally would repair . . . inshisted on repairing . . . any and every gate posht he posshessed. . . . And then he reached the garden. . . .

Everything had fallen out exactly as he had hoped, but had hardly dared to expect. He heard Peterson's voice, calm and suave as usual, answering Jerry. From the garden in front came the dreadful sound of a duet by Algy and Peter. Not a soul was in sight; the back of the house was clear. All that he had to do was to walk quietly through the wicket-gate to The Larches with his semi-conscious burden, get to his car, and drive off. It all seemed so easy that he laughed. . . .

But there were one or two factors that he had forgotten, and the first and most important one was the man upstairs. The window was thrown up suddenly, and the man leaned out waving his arms. He was still gasping with the strength of the ammonia, but Hugh saw him clearly in the light from the room behind. And as he cursed himself for a fool in not having tied him up, from the trees close by there came the sharp clang of metal.

With a quick catch in his breath he began to run. The two men who had rushed past him before he had entered the house, and whom, save for a passing thought, he had disregarded, had become the principal danger. For he had heard that clang before; he remembered Jem Smith's white horror-struck face, and then his sigh of relief as the thing—whatever it was—was shut in its cage. And now it was out, dodging through the trees, let loose by the two men. He heard something crash into a bush on his right, and give a snarl of anger. Like a flash he swerved into the undergrowth on the left.

Then began a dreadful . . .

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The Clay Products Company, Brazil, Ind.	1½ per cent.

SEMI-ANNUALLY—DUE JULY 1, 1921

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The Insley Mfg. Co., Indianapolis, Ind.	3½ per cent.
The Rude Mfg. Co., Liberty, Ind.	3½ per cent.
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The Milholland Mch. Co., Indianapolis, Ind.	3½ per cent.
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C. VICTOR MATTHEWS, District Manager



"The Soldier!" He Snarled. "You Young Pup!"

was still some way from the fence, and he was hampered at every step by the man slung over his back. He could hear the thing blundering about searching for him, and suddenly, with a cold feeling of fear, he realized that the animal was in front of him—that his way to the gate was barred. The next moment he saw it. . . .

Shadowy, indistinct, in the darkness, he saw something glide between two bushes. Then it came out into the open, and he knew it had seen him, though as yet he could not make out what it was.

Cautiously he lowered the millionaire to the ground, and took a step forward. It was enough; with a snarl of fury the crouching form shambled toward him. Two hairy arms shot out toward his throat, he smelt the brute's foetid breath, hot and loathsome, and he realized what he was up against. It was a partially grown gorilla.

For a full minute they fought in silence, save for the hoarse grunts of the animal as it tried to tear away the man's hand from its throat, and then encircle him with its powerful arms. And with his brain cold as ice Hugh saw his danger and kept his head. It couldn't go on; no human being could last the pace, whatever his strength. And there was only one chance of finishing it quickly, the possibility that the grip taught him by Olaki would serve with a monkey as it did with a man.

He shifted his left thumb an inch or two on the brute's throat, and the baboon, thinking he was weakening, redoubled its efforts. And then, little by little, the fingers moved, and the grip which had been tight before grew tighter still. Back went its head; something was snapping in its neck. With a scream of fear and rage it wrapped its legs round Drummond, squeezing and writhing. And then suddenly there was a tearing snap, and the great limbs relaxed and grew limp.

For a moment the man stood watching the still quivering brute lying at his feet; then, with a gasp of utter exhaustion, he dropped on the ground himself. He was done—utterly cooked; even Peterson's voice close behind scarcely roused him.

"Quite one of the most amusing entertainments I've seen for a long time." The calm, expressionless voice made him look up wearily, and he saw that he was surrounded by men. The inevitable cigar glowed red in the darkness, and after a moment or two he scrambled unsteadily to his feet.

"I'd forgotten your d—d menagerie. I must frankly confess," he remarked. "What's the party for?" He glanced at the men who had closed in round him.

"A guard of honor, my young friend," said Peterson suavely, 'to lead you to the house. I wouldn't hesitate . . . it's very foolish. Your friends have gone, and, strong as you are, I don't think you can manage ten."

Hugh commenced to stroll toward the house.

"Well, don't leave the wretched Potts lying about. I dropped him over there."

(To Be Continued.)

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Perhaps an office some time might seek the man if the man were not so busy seeking the office that he's not at home when the office calls.

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