BOMBS BURST ONCE

By GRANVILLE CHURCH

W.N.U. SERVICE

THE STORY SO FAR: Jeff Curtis and his wife, Lee, are on their way to Tierra Libre when Jeff receives a note from Zora Mitchell warning them not to come. Later he learns from Jerry McInnis that Zora's husband has been murdered and that it is his job as chief engineer for a fruit company that Jeff has been called to fill. When they arrive in Tierra Libre, Jerry tells Jeff there is something strange going on. Jeff and Lee meet Montaya, Jeff's employer, and go with him to San Alejo, where Montaya tells them that Zora Mitchell has "committed suicide." Neither Jeff nor Lee believes that her death was suicide. Zora, they agree, was not the type to commit suicide. Jeff suspects Montaya of arranging, or at least of knowing about both Zora's and her husband's death. NOW CONTINUE WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER IV

Every day was a new day at San Alejo, fresh and cool and clean at dawn no matter what the blazing sun might bring later. Even the asphalt underfoot was toned up by the dew as Curt swung along for his early appointment with Montaya. Curt's mind should have been toned up, too, by the tangy air so much like a Fall morning at home, but his last words to Lee just now—he'd read the pucker between her eyes—were still in his ears.

"Don't you be worrying about Zora Mitchell," he'd told her. "I admit suicide doesn't sound like her, but we hadn't seen her for six years and that length of time will work changes in any of us."

"It was her little girl I was thinking of," Lee had answered him soberly.

"I'll find out about her."

Curt made his way to Montaya's office, a high-ceilinged room paneled and furnished in unvarnished whitewood. An impression of coolness was heightened by Venetian blinds and a grass rug.

Curt came to the point before Senor Montaya could broach business. He said, suggestively, "The news of Mrs. Mitchell's death was a considerable shock to us—to my wife and me."

Montaya looked at him in silence as though the words needed elaboration.

"I mean, we should hardly have expected suicide of Zora Mitchell, especially as she was leaving a small child."

"Nor did I expect it." The senor made this statement as a sort of admission. He fumbled among papers on his desk, bringing forth two large square envelopes.

From one he spread several photographs before Curt. They showed, from different angles, Zora Mitchell slumped over in a bamboo "peacock" chair, her head at a curious angle. There was a bullet-hole in her left temple, and blood had run from the wound, coagulated, stained her dress.

Her left hand, hanging over the arm of the chair, held a gun Curt recognized as a Luger. A Luger! he thought instantly. Funny! Where'd she get that?

He recalled how Mitchell had always favored a Colt .45 against all foreign makes of small arms.

Another question forced itself on Curt's mind. Why hadn't the physical shock relaxed Zora's fingers and made her drop the gun?

"Now, in the case of her husband, we had no chance to obtain photographs on the ground. The body was moved to Tempujo. But we did the best we could. I had sketches made."

From the second envelope Montaya spread out these sketches, and with them a map marked with an X and two photographs of the body as it lay on the flat handcar.

"An inquest was held, of course, as in the case of Mrs. Mitchell. Both—ah, incidents were quite properly handled by our local police. We have a comandancia here, another at Tempujo."

The sketches and the map were valueless, but the photographs . . . Curt picked up one of them. The picture was sickening, the body slashed and mutilated beyond recognition. Many of the cuts were clean, however, and something about these clean cuts rang a bell in Curt's mind. Yet the reason didn't at once click—that cuts which didn't bleed had to be made after death, after the blood stops coursing in the body.

"What about their little girl?" he asked. "Only five, isn't she?"

"Ah, but it is sad about her. Poor little thing. We have her at the hospital for the present, where the nurses can look after her. I am trying to get in touch with relatives in the States."

Montaya stacked the photographs and sketches, replaced them in their envelopes. He drew from his pocket an oversize cigarette case and tamped against the lid one of the special six-inch Turkish cigarettes he used. Apparently he was considering some problem.

At length he said, picking his words, "It would be natural for you to want to see the murderer of Mr. Mitchell brought to justice. I also do. But I assure you everything was done that could be done. You may believe me, Mr. Curtis, it would be a waste of time for you to try where we have failed."

Curt stared before he managed, "Oh, quite."

"Splendid. Besides, shall I confess to a selfish motive? If—if, I say, we have been mistaken and the murderer is still about, then he is a more clever man than we think. And if you should interest yourself in the case, you might perhaps invite a similar fate, no?"

Montaya put an end to the subject with an apologetic flash of teeth. "I cannot risk that. Engineering work is behind schedule. I need you so very badly, Mr. Curtis."

The next hour was spent in meeting key workers of the general staff, persons with whom Curt would have frequent contact.

It was a whirlwind tour. The bulk of employees, numbering fifty to sixty, were Americans, with a sprinkling of Britishers and other Europeans.

Then said Montaya, "This is the best time of day for you to meet Dr. Toenjes. Later he is likely to be in the field."

Using a handy phone he called for the laboratory, and when he got his connection spoke in French.

"French?" queried Curt, as the other hung up. "I thought the name was Dutch."

Montaya smiled perfunctorily. "Oh, Dr. Toenjes also speaks Spanish and English—after a fashion. He is more successful with French. You do not, then, speak French?" As Curt shook his head, "I thought not. He will use English with you."

The Agricultural Department occupied an adjacent building, filling a corner left by the administration building and the hospital. Montaya pushed on through the outer office, vacant except for a young man typing cards, and on to a door at the rear.

In the huge working laboratory there was shelf upon shelf, and row upon row, of carefully labeled boxes and jars. Along one side of the room a number of steel filing cabi-

"Ah, but it is sad about her. Poor little thing."

nets stood in a straight line. On the work tables were odd-shaped vessels—alembics, glass funnels, retorts.

Dr. Toenjes below medium height, in a dirty linen laboratory smock, proved a colorless individual. Indeed, with his full-bearded face and careless dress he looked fair prey for a caricaturist. Near-sighted, he wore thick-lense spectacles which gave him a bug-eyed appearance.

The first words were conventional greeting. Then:

"Your shipment of—ah, chemicals at Cabeza aroused Mr. Curtis' curiosity yesterday," Montaya said. "I told him such questions were your special province."

Geniality left the bearded face. Hostile gray eyes bored through the thick lenses into Curt.

"You ver vonce vith der beebles across der riffer?" asked the Dutchman.

Curt nodded, smiled. Montaya's deprecation of the doctor's English hadn't been an exaggeration.

"Six years ago. I know Panama disease has shown up with them and that they've tried a lime treatment for it. It was a simple question I put. The quantity of lime landed on the docks—"

"Ah, ja. It iz trrooth I use der lime—but alzo der oder chemicals. Vat I use iz my zegred. Der banaana pla-ant vill be der more healthy und vigorous from my chemical treatment uff der soil, und so ve combat der fungi more better as yet. Den vill ve haff der reechest pla-anting in Tierra Libre."

If Dr. Toenjes did have a miraculous cheap compound for soil treatment, something to allay the dreaded fungus disease, something with which Associated could rejuvenate their used lands, then there was good reason for guarding the secret.

"You still haff frriends ofer der Negro vith Associated?"

The amusement in Curt's eyes was a better answer than his words.

The trend of the interview, Curt's feeling that Montaya was exhibiting him to the doctor, a certain indefinable deference in Montaya's attitude toward the Dutchman, convinced Curt that whatever the dumpy, bearded man had, he'd sold Montaya on it pretty solidly.

At last, as final courtesies were being said, the worthy doctor let down the bars. He asked with what could best be described as a cunning look, "You blay gribbage, ja?"

"Cribbage?" Curt laughed. "Sure, I know the game."

"Goot. We blay sometime, ja?"

"Certainly."

Montaya explained as they left the laboratory.

"Dr. Toenjes' one regret here is that he has no good opponent at his favorite game." He smiled politely. "He is very good at it. I hope, Mr. Curtis, you will be able to stand up to him."

Curt chuckled. "If I can't, I'll sic' my wife onto him. She can play the game backwards and forwards." He added, with another chuckle, "If he'll comb out his beard first."

Their final stop was the engineering office, a one-story structure, square like the laboratory. It occupied the corner between the general offices and the clubhouse, thus completing the layout of principal company buildings about the square and balancing the community center.

Here Curt was introduced to his own staff. It was now midmorning. Three draftsmen were at work, two at detail drawings, the third on maps. One room was reserved for the field men when they came to San Alejo to submit their progress reports. There was a dark-room, and a big vault containing records and master charts. From photostatic machine down to electric erasers the equipment throughout was ultra-modern.

Curt's own office was airy, light, cool, with both desk and big table on which to spread out his papers, a swivel chair between, a handy upright rack for rolls of blueprints. But the one thing which instantly took his attention was the huge aerial photographic map of the C. A. T. tract permanently framed against the wall. Here was something!

Montaya led the way across the room, to tap proudly with his finger tips. "I'd never have gotten my planting under way without this."

This map showed a rough triangle of about 20,000 hectares, or 50,000 acres. The Quebrado Mountains formed the western boundary. Along the south and east flowed the Masica River, joining the turbulent, unruly Rio Negro, the northern boundary, just below the rise of land where stood Tempujo.

No buildings and no engineering work showed on the map. It had been made before any preliminary work had been done. But it gave Curt an instant picture of the entire project; of the drainage necessary to clear the huge swamp, dotted with stands of jungle; of the levees necessary to hold back the rivers; of the best terrain for spur tracks to feed the farms.

"The Negro is a wild stream that requires taming," said Montaya. "We work on that now. Along here," he indicated with a pointer taken from a rack beside the map, "we make a twenty-three-foot levee. Your most important job, Mr. Curtis, is to see that it is completed within the next five months. On that I gamble 8,000 acres of planting!"

"The Masica will hardly worry us this year. In fact, since the—ah, unfortunate happening to Mr. Mitchell, I have halted work on the Masica levee and put those machines on the Negro levee. Flooding of the Masica will not endanger present planting.

"Along this line," he indicated with the pointer, "is our main canal. Already it has drained several thousand acres. Here will be secondary ditches. But we have so much to do, yes, so many laterals to dig. The canals in the upper half of the tract must also be completed before the rains come.

"Now, we have four draglines and a three-yard shovel and 6,000 laborers at work on the engineering projects . . ."

This wasn't even the beginning. More and more Curt realized he'd stepped into a man-size job. And with people who knew where they were going—what they wanted and how to go about getting it.

"Who made this map?"

"Mr. Ryden and Mr. Lannestock," was the answer. "In a plane I chartered especial for the purpose, a year before I was ready to start work. It takes long to secure a concession, to plan. It is good work, no? They are competent young men. That is why I am so happy now to have them under contract.

"Bueno. Here are progress reports on the Negro levee, the main drainage system, and the railroad. You will wish to look them over, but you will be brief about it, no? Directly after lunch we shall start on an inspection tour of the valley. For this we shall take the rest of today and tomorrow, so you will bring what personal articles you need for overnight. In the meantime, I have much to do myself . . ."

Curt hardly noticed Montaya's departure. He even forgot the worries in the back of his mind. What a job! The best equipment to work with, a challenge to meet, with the next season's rainfall the deadline. He swelled to the task, his eyes shone. He could have stood for hours before that map. Noon rolled around all too soon.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Household News

by Lynn Chambers

Serve a Salad . . . Win Your Vitamins
(See Recipes Below.)

Vitamin Ways

Comes winter and fall when vegetables and fruits are more scarce than during summer and fall, and many a homemaker is apt to fall shy on serving her family these vital body regulating and protective foods. Yet, this is the time when the body needs them most. These foods build up the body's resistance to disease—and keep you, to pick a common example, from having a cold as soon as warm weather and sun flee.

Minerals are busy building and repairing, replenishing body tissues that get torn down and used up, daily with every movement you make. Vitamins help you use the foods you eat.

Good-to-eat foods help the family take in all these vital minerals and vitamins. Drab, uninteresting dishes will send them off to eating other foods to take the edge off their hunger—wherever they can put their hands on something. I need not point out that in this way they may really be losing out on foods necessary to the body.

Cooking vegetables well, and doing pretty things to their appearance will help their consumption rating. A bit of sauce or extra seasoning will put an ordinary vegetable over and at the same time insure your family of what it needs most:

***Scalloped Peas and Onions.**
(Serves 5 to 6)
1 pound small white onions
1 No. 2 can peas
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
3 tablespoons finely crushed bread crumbs

Parboil onions 25 minutes. Drain. Drain peas and reserve ½ cup pea liquor. Melt 2 tablespoons butter, blend in flour, salt and pepper. Add pea liquor and milk and cook until mixture thickens, stirring constantly. Pour into casserole. Melt remaining butter, stir in bread crumbs, sprinkle over casserole. Bake in a moderately hot (375-degree) oven for about 25 minutes.

Lynn Says:

Vital Statistics: There are about seven inches in the Nutrition Yardstick which bear checking every day in every way so as to keep you and your family in the running:

The first inch includes milk: 1 pint per day for every adult and 1 quart for every child. Of course you don't have to drink all this milk. Use part of it in cooking.

Second honors go to meat, fish or poultry, and this is not hard to use up. For lunch or dinner, whichever fits best for your family, one serving per person should be counted.

At least one egg a day or at least four to five per week marks the third inch. Have it for breakfast or toss it in the hot bread for dinner, or custard for lunch.

Cereal's important, too. Serve it in the breakfast, or a pudding or even cookies. Bread and rolls come under this category, also.

Fifth inch includes the vegetables: two besides potatoes, one should be a leafy vegetable—spinach, lettuce, broccoli, romaine, etc.—and the other raw. Cabbage is perfect.

Now, the fruits. Two a day isn't hard to manage. Of course you start off with breakfast, and then include one for lunch or dinner dessert.

The last and seventh inch includes butter or some fat rich in vitamin A. This is for fuel and energy.

This Week's Menu
Browned Oysters
*Scalloped Peas and Onions
*Cranberry-Pineapple Salad
Hot Biscuits
*Apple Juice Mince Pie
*Recipes Given

Vegetable Bouillon.
(Serves 2)
½ cup water
¾ to 1 cup juice strained from canned string or wax beans
1 bouillon cube
2 small sprigs parsley

Add water to bean juice and heat to boiling. Dissolve bouillon cube in boiling liquid. Serve hot garnished with parsley.

A one-dish meal that's good for fall is this one with many vegetable favorites:

Ham Hock With Vegetables.
(Serves 5)
2½ pounds ham hock
5 medium-sized potatoes
1 bunch carrots
5 medium-sized onions
1 medium-sized head of cabbage

Wipe ham hock. Cover with boiling water, cover and simmer two hours or until tender. Clean vegetables, add to meat, cook, uncovered 20 to 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Fried Squash Cakes.

Slice squash very thin, being certain to slice it across. Place the slices in salt water, wipe them dry, sprinkle with salt and pepper, dip in flour, beaten egg and then in cracker crumbs. Repeat the process twice and then drop into hot fat for frying. When they have cooked through and are brown, drain on brown paper and serve.

Festive Squash.
(Serves 6)
3 small squashes
1 cup drained canned tomatoes
1 cup shredded, processed cheddar cheese
1 tablespoon chopped onion
2 cups soft bread crumbs
Salt, pepper
3 tablespoons melted butter
Parsley
Broiled bacon

Wash the squashes and cut them in half, lengthwise and cook in boiling salted water until almost tender. Scoop out the centers, leaving a ¼-inch shell. Cut the pulp into small pieces and drain thoroughly. Combine with tomatoes, cheese, onion, 1 cup bread crumbs and seasonings to taste. Pile this into the squash shells and sprinkle with remaining crumbs mixed with the melted butter. Bake in a moderate (350-degree) oven until the crumbs are brown. Arrange in a round platter and serve with parsley and crisp, broiled bacon.

A few green leaves of lettuce, romaine, watercress or other salad greens guarantee much of the important, but hard-to-get vitamin D. Perhaps, you like the greens plain, or perhaps with a bit of color such as:

***Cranberry-Pineapple Salad.**

Cut slices of canned cranberry sauce and top with slices of pineapple. Arrange in lettuce nests. Soften cream cheese with milk and add a few chopped nuts. Shape into balls and place among lettuce leaves. Serve with mayonnaise.

***Apple Juice Mince Pie.**
(Makes 1 9-inch pie)
1 package orange flavored gelatin
2 cups apple juice
½ teaspoon lemon juice
1 cup mincemeat
Cream cheese

Dissolve the gelatin in apple juice that has been heated to the boiling point. Add lemon juice and mincemeat. Cook until thick and creamy, then pour into a baked pie shell. Chill until firm, then decorate top with cream cheese put through a pastry tube.

Lynn Chambers can give you expert advice on your household and food problems. Write her at Western Newspaper Union, 210 South Desplaines street, Chicago, Illinois. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your reply.

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THINGS for You TO MAKE

MOTIFS for baby dominate this transfer—in fact, the entire transfer is devoted to baby. There are sprays of dainty embroidery just right for wee dresses, slips or gertrudes and the scallop patterns might come in handy here also. Ronald, the duck, rides a ric rac wave as bib decoration, or perhaps he'd make a playsuit pocket along with Whiskers, the cat. A cute bunny rabbit and Paddlefoot, the duck, complete it.

• • •

These cunning designs are all on one transfer, Z9486, 15 cents, together with directions and suggestions for their use. Send your order to:

AUNT MARTHA
Box 166-W Kansas City, Mo.
Enclose 15 cents for each pattern desired. Pattern No.....
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Valuable Paper

Waste paper is so valuable in England that prizes totaling $50,000 are being offered to collectors of this vital commodity. On the other hand, those who burn their waste paper are liable, on conviction, to a fine of $2,500 or three months in jail, or both.

Beware Coughs
from common colds
That Hang On

Creomulsion relieves promptly because it goes right to the seat of the trouble to help loosen and expel germ laden phlegm, and aid nature to soothe and heal raw, tender, inflamed bronchial mucous membranes. Tell your druggist to sell you a bottle of Creomulsion with the understanding you must like the way it quickly allays the cough or you are to have your money back.

CREOMULSION
for Coughs, Chest Colds, Bronchitis

Self-Poisoning

Bad temper is its own scourge. Few things are more bitter than to feel bitter. A man's venom poisons himself more than his victim. —Charles Buxton.

DON'T *go on* **SUFFERING!**
from the fiery itch of dry eczema. Quick lingering relief usually follows the use of *soothing* **RESINOL**

Deforming Nature

Nature is perfect, wherever we look, but man always deforms it. —Schiller.

Sentinels of Health

Don't Neglect Them!

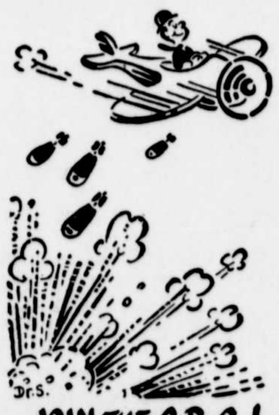
Nature designed the kidneys to do a marvelous job. Their task is to keep the flowing blood stream free of an excess of toxic impurities. The act of living—*life itself*—is constantly producing waste matter the kidneys must remove from the blood if good heath is to endure.

When the kidneys fail to function as Nature intended, there is retention of waste that may cause body-wide distress. One may suffer nagging backache, persistent headache, attacks of dizziness, getting up nights, swelling, puffiness under the eyes—feel tired, nervous, all worn out.

Frequent, scanty or burning passages are sometimes further evidence of kidney or bladder disturbance.

The recognized and proper treatment is a diuretic medicine to help the kidneys get rid of excess poisonous body waste. Use *Doan's Pills*. They have had more than forty years of public approval. Are endorsed the country over. Insist on *Doan's*. Sold at all drug stores.

DOAN'S PILLS



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