BOMBS BURST ONCE

By GRANVILLE CHURCH

W.N.U. SERVICE

THE STORY SO FAR: Jeff Curtis and his wife, Lee, are already on their way to Tierra Libre when he receives a note from Zora Mitchell warning them not to come. When they arrive in Tierra Libre they find both Zora and her husband dead. It is Mitchell's job as chief engineer for a fruit company that Jeff has been called to fill. Later Jeff's friend Bill Henderson is also killed, and Jeff suspects his employer, Senor Montaya, of murdering him and the Mitchells because they had found a clue to the strange things going on at the plantation. Other sinister figures are the company chemist, Dr. Toenjes, and the flyers, Ryden and Lannestock. So far Jeff has no evidence, only suspicions, but he is convinced that the solution lies with Montaya.

NOW CONTINUE WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER X

Curt was tired, hot, and sticky. He had some matters to go over with Montaya and had intended a trip to the senor's office after a shower and change of clothes. But there was an hour to spare and this was as good a time as any for a visit to the field.

He plunged down a rugged footpath leading into a more traveled pathway, and in less than fifteen minutes was at the wide double gates that stretched across the railroad tracks leading into the field. These were of heavy fence wire pulled taut over pipe frames. One gate was swinging ajar, and Curt pushed on in.

A few men busy some distance away hadn't seemed to notice his approach, yet word had carried. Before Curt reached the field office, young Karl Ryden came trotting around a corner of the nearest hangar, his square face congested with anger or annoyance, Curt couldn't tell which. Perhaps it was both.

Said Curt cheerfully, "I was at the hospital and the short cut down the hill was inviting. Should have phoned, perhaps, but I wasn't near one at the moment."

"It is all right," Ryden said stiffly. "We happen to be here today."

Lannestock came running up, wiping his hands on some cotton waste. He, too, was visibly put out by the visit. Curt ignored the scowl, tried another smile, extended his hand to Lannestock.

"Hello, Lannestock. Or shall I say Gosta? We're all one family here."

Both Swedes bowed stiffly, uncertainly. Ryden was the spokesman. "Of course, Mr. Curtis. We are friends here."

"Fine—Karl." He surveyed the two. "Repair work on the planes today?"

"Yes." Ryden snapped this out. He then flung some Swedish at Lannestock, who stood wiping sweat from his forehead with the sleeve of his coverall. Lannestock nodded and made off for the living quarters. Ryden spoke again to Curt.

"My friend will get clean. Then we have something to drink. Now you let me show you the plant."

Grouped behind the two hangars were the utility buildings, and it was to these Ryden led the way.

The largest was a V-shaped affair, housing in one wing the office, in the other a six-room bachelor quarters for Ryden, Lannestock, and their principal mechanics.

But there remained the hangars. With Ryden clearly reluctant, Curt himself led the way.

In front of each hangar was the plane it housed, mechanics were still at work on them. On one plane they were repairing the landing gear, but the other machine was dismantled of cowling and propellor, and a new wing had been installed. The old one lay on the ground.

Curt puzzled. These were a make of plane quite unfamiliar to him, but after all Curt wasn't a particularly air-minded man. They seemed big, bulky, awkward things, Percherons of the air, built for hard usage. Each had powder-laying nozzles protruding from the fuselage well back under the tails.

Thought of this powder led Curt's eyes to the shed-type structure between the hangars, which evidently housed the chemical for treating the swampland. The sliding doors were closed and locked, but the hard-packed earth before the building and in paths leading to the airplanes' loading spaces was white with the stuff trod in under foot.

Curt noticed floodlighting equipment.

"I see you can do night flying."

"That is for emergency. We have never used it."

Something else was for emergency, too. An emergency against emergency, Curt told himself. At one end of the hangar in front of him he saw a broad shelf holding some dozens of oil flares.

Curt turned back to the shed that housed the chemical, eyed it speculatively. Against his better judgment he was about to put a question, when a furious chugging and clanking of rails, the sudden sound magnified by the backdrop of mountainside, told of a motorcar racing around the foot of the range toward the field.

The look of relief that swept Ryden's face was not lost on Curt, who thought, What now? In a few strides they were at the end of the building and saw a mozo swinging wide the gates so the motorcar would not have to stop its pace.

Ah, Curt thought, the visitor's expected. Montaya?

The car came to a grinding stop and out popped not the suave, smooth Senor Montaya, but Dr. Toenjes! Even at that distance Curt could see the Dutchman was not so genial as when Curt first met him.

Not so genial? Dr. Toenjes' hair, ragged at any time, now stood on end, for he wore no hat and the late afternoon wind was brisk. His beard was the plaything of a thousand devils. The man looked possessed.

The astonishing sensation of evil genius Curt felt of Dr. Toenjes in that one moment was dissipated as the Dutchman approached.

"Ahh? Meestoor Coortiss. A zerprise, no?" The man's voice was normal enough, his shaggy brows comically arched. "I coom for ze vorrds vith Herr Lannestock und find you. It iss a plezoor." To Ryden he said, "He iss here, no? Herr Lannestock?"

"Yes. In his room making clean." Ryden's voice had changed. Gone was the stiffness, in its place relief, as though he were handing over responsibility.

"Ah, zen I see him latoor. You like ze—ze—teengs you see here, Meestoor Coortiss?" Toenjes waved his hand vaguely at the field, the buildings.

"Very much. The men must be quite satisfied here."

Curt watched quizzically as the Dutchman's eyes shot about, taking in the planes standing out in the open, the closed doors of the chemical shed.

Dr. Toenjes turned his thick lenses on Curt. "Yess," he hissed.

A zerprize, no? Curt mimicked to himself. I teenk no. You're a confounded liar, Doctor. Lannestock phoned I was here. Why? The chemical, of course.

He indicated the shed. "Your compound, Doctor?"

Dr. Toenjes turned his thick lenses on Curt.

"Yess," he hissed.

"Efficient method of treating the ground," Curt grinned, "taking it in thousand-acre lots."

"Ah, yess. Eef Associated had so done before they pla-ant, they would have ze reechest cutting efer known. Their land ees good, wizout ze—ze—how you say? ze sour from ze centuries of water."

"They're still cutting strong, Doctor," Curt said dryly. Then, as the Dutchman's eyes continued to bore through him he gave a short laugh. "Look here, Dr. Toenjes. Let's get something straightened out. You, too, Karl. And Gosta," he added, as Lannestock joined the group in fresh whites.

"You'll have to get rid of your suspicions of me. I'm no spy for Associated. I work for Senor Montaya, just as you do. His success is mine, and I' mcertainly going to do nothing to undermine my own future. I didn't seek this job. The senor sought me. Up to then I hadn't even heard of this planting. So you needn't be worried about my giving away your secret, Doctor."

The Dutchman studied Curt. "Ah, no, I am not vorry," he said at last. "For you do not ze zegred have. It has nobody but me, me alone, Meestoor Coortiss."

"Okay, that's fine. Then let's drop the bars. We'll be here together for a long time to come. Anyway," he went on curiously, "you've less reason to be worried about me than about any one of your some thousands of farm laborers who could easily steal samples of your stuff to sell to Associated for analysis."

At this Dr. Toenjes shook his head with satisfaction.

"Ah, no. Zamples from ze grround zey could get, but zamples from ze ground vould not vork out in laboratory analysis, Meestoor Coortiss. All zey find iss lime. My zegred ingredient, he iss too quick absorbed."

Curt stared, then gave another laugh.

"Well, you need have no worries at all, then. You seem to guard the fresh stuff well at its source."

He couldn't keep the sarcasm from his words, but he smiled agreeably enough. He took off his Stetson to wipe the sweatband and mop his forehead, and by way of changing the subject he motioned to the far end of the field and the big abandoned hangars there.

"Too bad you couldn't have used the original hangars and had the benefit of that shade," he said.

As the three stared at him he laughed again. Evidently he hadn't yet struck the combination of syllables that would ease the conversation along an agreeable path. But as he'd mentioned the hangar, he might as well continue.

"Senor Montaya told me the story. Well, things grow fast here. It won't be many years before the trees planted at this end will give good shade."

Nobody said anything to this, either, so Curt went on in a moment, rather irritably, "You should clear the grass from that end of the field. From the color and ripple in the wind I can tell from here that it's high and dry. Don't your engines ever spit fire? Couldn't your planes in landing or taking off fire that dry stuff?"

"We cut it regular. It is time again," Ryden conceded.

The group was ambling. Curt became aware that Dr. Toenjes was steering them away from the white-floored space before the chemical shed. He grinned.

At this point Dr. Toenjes suggested a drink, so they headed for the clubroom. Lannestock held open the screen door. They took chairs about a table and a native servant set before them tall glasses and bottles of Schnapps. Only then did Toenjes become quite fully at ease. He could be affable when he chose. It was not a prolonged visit, and the last lift of the big tumblers found it ending on a reasonably social note. Yet even now, after drinking together with him, Curt noted the Swedes were still unsmiling and formal!

Dr. Toenjes offered Curt a lift up the mountainside.

"You haven't taken care of your business with Gosta," Curt reminded him, adding provocatively, "the business that brought you to the field."

The Dutchman stared through his thick lenses. "Oh, yess." He spoke to Lannestock. "It iss about tomorrow, ze vork for you. Coom to ze office, on ze map I show you."

The two were gone but a few minutes. Then Curt and the doctor, in the latter's car, were on their way up to San Alejo.

This was the first time Curt had gone over the branch line to the airfield. It followed the field's boundary at first, then halfway down curved away to cling to the foot of the mountain. This necessitated a rather long spur to serve the bodega at the far end of the field.

They had just passed this spur when there came a buzzing from the air which quickly grew in volume to a steady, powerful drone. Curt put his head out of the window to look up, but could see nothing.

Toenjes stopped the car. Both men climbed out, squinting against the sun. They knew the C. A. T. planes were grounded and in any case this sound told of heavier ships. Powerful ships. More than one.

Then they were seen. Two huge planes dropped from a bank of clouds and circled low over the San Alejo field.

"Army planes!" Curt exclaimed at sight of the insignia on the wings. "Must be from the Canal. Well, why do they circle? Why don't they land or fly on?"

The reason became apparent as a third plane came limping into view. One of its engines was misfiring. Something had happened and these two were hanging on to make sure of the third's safety.

The damaged plane settled onto the San Alejo runway, taxied to the upper end. Above, the two circling planes climbed, straightened out, and made off directly North.

"Headed for Soledad," said Curt. "Let's go back and find out what's wrong."

The words weren't necessary. The Dutchman's brows bristled, his eyes bulged. "Ja!" he wheezed, and excitedly plunged into the car.

They could have backed the car onto the bodega track, then out the other arm of the spur's "Y," and thus be headed for the field again. But Toenjes couldn't wait so long. Curt had only time to hop on the running board as the Dutchman crashed into reverse gear and backed the car to the field.

When they arrived at the grounded army plane they found four men landed and the plane already surrounded by airfield workers. The newcomers were in United States Army uniform. One, the leader, was expostulating angrily with the glowering Ryden.

"What the deuce? There are no private fields, man, when a plane is in distress. Here! Keep those monkeys away from this plane. Blanding! Newman! Push these people back! You, whatever your name is." He stabbed a finger at Ryden for attention. "You seem to have authority here. We'll have to make repairs before we can go on. Give us a hand and we can take off before dark, but waste any more time telling me I can't land here and you'll have to put us up overnight. We ARE landed!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Farm Topics

Best to Train Bull When It's Still Young

Age of Two Weeks Not Too Early to Begin

Are you afraid of bulls? Prof. Raymond Albrectson of the New York State college of agriculture has the handling of a herd sire down to a science.

These Midland, Texas, cowboys, Don Houston (left) and Bell Houston, on the Schonbauer ranch No. 1, are as fully acquainted with the scouring effect of Bang's disease as are farmers throughout the United States.

A bull can't talk intelligibly, but he still has sense and feelings, according to Professor Albrectson who gives the following advice about handling these masters of the cow family.

The bull is a creature of habit and early training can establish desirable traits. Teach a bull calf how to behave in public at an early age.

A two-week old bull calf is not too young to be taught good behavior.

At six or eight months bull training is almost impossible. First teach the bull to lead at your side. Do not let him trail behind four or five feet. A bull with a running start has made many trainers the undignified part of an uplift movement. Do not let him get his head down or get in front of you.

Be firm, but not harsh. Make the lessons alike so that the bull won't need to remember too many things. Make leading a habit.

At eight months old insert a light ring in the bull's nose. Let the nose heal before educating the bull to lead with the ring. Keep the halter on him in the early stages of ring training, then teach him to lead on a staff.

"Well, is this any of your business?" seems to be what Mom Cow is saying to the photographer as he took this picture of Mom and her two day old calf on the Carl Wooster farm, Union Hill, N. Y.

Teach the bull to offer his ring by rewarding him with an apple, carrot or any tidbit he likes. When handling his ring do it firmly but avoid harsh handling unless the bull is very headstrong.

Professor Albrectson's final advice is that the best way to handle a mature bull is—very little.

Special Roosts Train Chickens

It doesn't take long to get chicks started on the roost, if roosts are built on frames with cross pieces made of lath. These frames at first are placed on the floor. They are only two inches high and the chicks go on them at once. After a few nights they are suspended from the ceiling by wires and lifted a few inches off the floor. To steady the frame one edge can be placed against the side of the building. The roosts are lifted gradually until the desired height is reached.

Rural Briefs

Dried foods, called dehydrated by the highbrows—are coming to the fore. Their advantages for both storage and transportation are greatly reduced bulk and weight.

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Where wheat is being held in emergency storage, floor joints should be examined to make sure they can carry the load. Wheat is 10 times heavier than an equal volume of loose hay.

PATTERNS

SEWING CIRCLE

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CONSIDER . . . first the pretty blouse with its round neck then the jumper which buttons down the back and ties at the waist . . . isn't this a charming fashion for young girls of 3 to 8 years? For long wear, make the jumper of corduroy . . . the blouse of batiste or broadcloth.

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Barbara Bell Pattern No. 1681-B is designed for sizes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 years. Size 4 jumper requires 1¾ yards 35 or 39-inch material, blouse ⅞ yard.

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PREPAREDNESS by the AMERICAN RED CROSS

THE making of large numbers of surgical dressings for the armed forces in wartime is one of the principal duties of the American Red Cross.

Immediately after the outbreak of the world war in Europe in September, 1939, more than 500 Red Cross chapters throughout the nation began making large quantities of surgical dressings for our army and navy. In addition, a large number of dressings were made to be used by Red Cross relief organizations caring for the suffering civilian population in the war-torn countries of Europe.

As the war progressed and spread to more and more nations of the world, this program of surgical dressings was gradually enlarged and extended to Red Cross chapters in practically every county in the United States. Today more than 3,000 Red Cross chapters are busily engaged in making surgical dressings for our army and navy according to standard specifications and methods furnished by them.

More than two million women throughout the nation are now making surgical dressings for our armed forces under this program. By the end of October, 1942, they had made more than a hundred million dressings of all kinds and were embarking on a very large program for the coming year. The making of surgical dressings is a very important work in which nearly every woman can participate, no matter where she is located or how little time she can spare.

During the past month, ten million surgical dressings made by volunteers in American Red Cross workrooms were sent to Russia for Russian soldiers wounded at Stalingrad.

Prepared Exclusively for WNU.

FAMOUS ALL-BRAN MUFFINS. EASY TO MAKE. DELICIOUS!

They really are the most delicious muffins that ever melted a pat of butter! Made with crisp, toasted shreds of KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN, they have a texture and flavor that have made them famous all over America.

KELLOGG'S ALL-BRAN MUFFINS

2 tablespoons shortening
¼ cup sugar
1 egg
1 cup All-Bran
¾ cup milk
1 cup flour
½ teaspoon salt
2½ teaspoons baking powder

Cream shortening and sugar; add egg and beat well. Stir in All-Bran and milk; let soak until most of moisture is taken up. Sift flour with salt and baking powder; add to first mixture and stir only until flour disappears. Fill greased muffin pans two-thirds full and bake in moderately hot oven (400°F.) about 30 minutes. Yield: 6 large muffins, 3 inches in diameter, or 12 small muffins, 2¼ inches in diameter.

Talent and Genius

Doing easily what others find it difficult is talent; doing what is impossible for talent is genius.—Henri-Frederic Amiel.

PENETRO

Many users say "first use is a revelation." Has a base of old fashioned mutton suet, Grandma's favorite. Demand stainless Penetro. Generous jar 25¢, double supply 35¢.

COLDS' COUGHING, SNIFFLES, MUSCLE-ACHES

Quick Reward

How quickly a truly benevolent act is repaid by the consciousness of having done it!—Hosea Ballou.

CORNS GO FAST

Pain goes quick, corns speedily removed when you use thin, soothing, cushioning Dr. Scholl's Zino-pads. Try them!

Dr. Scholl's Zino-pads

Easy to Forgive

It is easy enough to forgive your enemies if you have not the means to harm them.—Heinrich Heine.

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SING A SONG OF KITCHEN THRIFT

SINK YOUR DIMES IN WAR SAVINGS STAMPS

SNAPPY FACTS ABOUT RUBBER

In the modern automobile there are 32.5 pounds of rubber in addition to that used in tires and tubes.

Last summer's national scrap rubber drive brought out 6.87 pounds per capita. Even this gratifying amount represented only a scraping of the surface of the scrap littering the backyards, cellars and attics of the country.

There are some 3,065,000 miles of roads in the United States of which 40% are of the surfaced highway type. More improved roads than any other country in the world.

There are more than 10 motor vehicles for each mile of highway in the United States. Pre-gas rationing Sundays made this ratio seem like 10 cars to each 100 feet of road.

In 1940 it was estimated that the market value of passenger cars in the U.S. was $7,209,000,000; trucks had a value of $1,165,000,000.

Jerry Shaw

In war or peace

B.F.Goodrich

FIRST IN RUBBER

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