

BULL-DOG DRUMMOND

The Adventures of A Demobilized Officer Who Found Peace Dull
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"SAPPER"
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FROM HEADQUARTERS.

Synopsis.—In December, 1915, four men gathered in a hotel in Bernes and heard one of the quartet, Carl Peterson, outline a plan to paralyze Great Britain and at the same time seize world power. The other three, Hocking, American, and Steineman and Von Gratz, Germans, all millionaires, agree to the scheme, providing another man, Hiram Potts, an American, is taken in. Capt. Hugh (Bull-Dog) Drummond, a retired officer, advertises for work that will give him excitement, signing "Xio." As a result he meets Phyllis Benton, a young woman who answered his ad. She tells him of strange murders and robberies by a band headed by Carl Peterson and Henry Lakington. She fears her father is involved. Drummond goes to The Larches, Miss Benton's home, next door to The Elms, Peterson's place. During the night Drummond leaves The Larches and explores The Elms. He discovers Lakington and Peterson using a thumbcrew on Potts, who signs a paper. Drummond rescues Potts and takes him to his own home. He also gets half of the paper torn in the fight. Peterson visits Drummond, departing with a threat to return and recover Potts and the torn paper. Hugh substitutes Mullings for Potts. The band carry off Mullings and Drummond to The Elms. When Peterson discovers the hoax Drummond is made to stay all night. Irma, Peterson's handsome daughter, warns Hugh he will be killed. He goes exploring during the night, returns into a cobra, escapes mysterious death and refrains from breaking Peterson's neck.

CHAPTER IV—Continued.
—8—
FOUR.

"I heard you were down here," she said gravely, holding out her hand to him. "I've been sick with anxiety ever since father told me he'd seen you."

Hugh imprisoned the little hand in his own huge ones, and smiled reassuringly.

"Don't worry, little girl," he said. "Years ago I was told by an old gypsy that I should die in my bed of old age and excessive consumption of invalid port. . . . As a matter of fact, the cause of my visit was rather humorous. They abducted me in the middle of the night, with an ex-soldier of my old battalion, who was, I regret to state, sleeping off the effects of much indifferent liquor, in my rooms. They thought he was your American millionaire cove, and the wretched Mullings was too drunk to deny it. In fact, I don't think they ever asked his opinion at all." Hugh grinned reminiscently. "A pathetic spectacle."

"Oh! but splendid," cried the girl a little breathlessly. "Tell me, where is the American now?"

"Many miles out of London," answered Hugh. "I think we'll leave it at that. The less you know, Miss Benton, at the moment—the better."

"Have you found out anything?" she demanded eagerly.

Hugh shook his head.

"Not a thing. Except that your neighbors are as pretty a bunch of scoundrels as I ever want to meet."

"But you'll let me know if you do," she laid a hand beseechingly on his arm. "You know what's at stake for me, don't you? Father, and—oh! but you know."

"I know," he answered gravely. "I know, old things. I promise I'll let you know anything I find out. And in the meantime I want you to keep an eye fixed on what goes on next door, and let me know anything of importance by letter to the Junior Sports club." He lit a cigarette thoughtfully. "I have an idea that they feel so absolutely confident in their own power that they are going to make the fatal mistake of underrating their opponents. We shall see." He turned to her with a twinkle in his eye. "Anyway, our Mr. Lakington will see that you don't come to any harm."

"The brute!" she cried, very low. "How I hate him!" Then with a sudden change of tone she looked up at Drummond. "I don't know whether it's worth mentioning," she said slowly, "but yesterday afternoon four men came at different times to The Elms. They were the sort of type one sees tub-thumping in Hyde Park, all except one, who looked like a respectable workman."

Hugh shook his head.

"Don't seem to help much, does it? Still, one never knows. Let me know anything like that in future at the club."

"Good morning, Miss Benton," Peterson's voice behind them made Drummond swing round with a smothered curse. "Our inestimable friend, Captain Drummond, brought such a nice young fellow to see me last night, and then left him lying about the house this morning. I have sent him along to your car," continued Peterson suavely, "which I trust was the correct procedure. Or did you want to give him to me as a pet?"

"From a rapid survey, Mr. Peterson, I should think you have quite enough already," said Hugh. "I trust you paid him the money you owe him."

"I will allot it to him in my will," remarked Peterson. "If you do the same in yours, doubtless he will get it from one of us sooner or later. In the meantime, Miss Benton, is your father up?"

The girl frowned.

"No—not yet."

"Then I will go and see him in bed. For the present, au revoir." He walked toward the house, and they



"Oh! but Splendid," Cried the Girl a Little Breathlessly.

watched him go in silence. And it was as he opened the drawing-room window that Hugh called after him: "Do you like the horse Elliman's or the ordinary brand?" he asked.

"I'll send you a bottle for that stiff neck of yours."

Very deliberately Peterson turned round.

"Don't trouble, thank you, Captain Drummond. I have my own remedies, which are far more efficacious."

CHAPTER V.
IN WHICH THERE IS TROUBLE AT GORING.
ONE.

The car slowed up before the post-office and Hugh got out. There were one or two things he proposed to do in London before going to Goring, and it struck him that a wire to Peter Darrell might allay that gentleman's uneasiness if he was late in getting down. So new was he to the tortuous ways of crime, that the foolishness of the proceeding never entered his head; up to date in his life, if he had wished to send a wire, he had sent one. And so it may be deemed a sheer fluke on his part, that a man dawdling by the counter aroused his suspicions. He was a perfectly ordinary man, chatting casually with the girl on the other side; but it chanced that, just as Hugh was holding the postoffice pencil up, and gazing at its so-called point with an air of resigned anguish, the perfectly ordinary man ceased chatting and looked at him. Hugh caught his eye for a fleeting second; then the conversation continued. And as he turned to pull out the pad of forms, it struck him that the man had looked away just a trifle too quickly.

A grin spread slowly over his face, and after a moment's hesitation he proceeded to compose a short wire. He wrote it in black letters for additional clearness; he also pressed his hardest, as befitting a blunt pencil. Then with the form in his hand he advanced to the counter.

"How long will it take to deliver in London?" he asked the girl.

The girl was not helpful. It depended, he gathered, on a variety of circumstances, of which not the least was the perfectly ordinary man who talked so charmingly.

"I don't think I'll bother, then," he said, thrusting the wire into his pocket. "Good morning."

He walked to the door, and shortly afterward his car rolled down the street.

With what the girl considered peculiar abruptness, the perfectly ordinary man concluded his conversation with her, and decided that he too would send a wire. And then, after a long and thoughtful pause at the writing-bench, she distinctly heard an unmistakable "D—n." Then he walked out, and she saw him no more.

Moreover, it is to be regretted that the perfectly ordinary man told a lie a little later in the day, when giving his report to some one whose neck apparently inconvenienced him greatly. But then a lie is frequently more tactful than the truth, and to have announced that the sole result of his morning's labors had been to decipher a wire addressed to The Elms, which contained the cryptic remark, "Stung again, stiff neck, stung again," would not have been tactful. So he lied, as has been stated, thereby showing his wisdom.

But though Drummond chuckled to himself as the car rushed through the fresh morning air, once or twice a gleam that was not altogether unamusement shone in his eyes. For four years he had played one game where no mistakes were allowed; the little incident of the postoffice had helped to bring to his mind the certainty that he had now embarked on another where the conditions were much the same. That he had scored up to date was luck rather than good management, and he was far too shrewd not to realize it. Now he was marked, and luck with a marked man cannot be tempted too far.

Alone and practically unguarded he had challenged a gang of international criminals; a gang not only utterly unscrupulous, but controlled by a master mind. Of its power as yet he had no clear idea; of its size and immediate object he had even less. Perhaps it was as well. Had he realized even dimly the immensity of the issues he was up against, had he had but an inkling of the magnitude of the plot conceived in the sinister brain of his host of the previous evening, then, cheery optimist though he was, even Hugh Drummond might have wavered. But he had no such inkling, and so the gleam in his eyes was but transitory; the chuckle that succeeded it more whole-hearted than before. Was it not sport in a hand flowing with strikes and profiteers; sport such as his soul loved?

"I am afraid, Mullings," he said as his car stopped in front of his club, "that the kindly gentleman with whom we spent last night has repudiated his obligations. He refuses to meet the bill I gave him for your services. Just wait here a moment."

He went inside, returning in a few moments with a folded check.

"Round the corner, Mullings, and an obliging fellow in a black coat will shovel you out the necessary Bradburys."

The man glanced at the check.

"Fifty pounds, sir?" he gasped.

"Why—it's too much, sir. . . . I . . ."

"The laborer, Mullings, is worthy of his hire. You have been of the very greatest assistance to me; and incidentally, it is more than likely that I may want you again. Now, where can I get hold of you?"

"13 Green Street, 'Oxton, sir, 'I always find me. And any time, sir, as you wants me, I'd like to come just for the sport of the thing."

Hugh grinned.

"Good lad. And it may be sooner than you think."

TWO.

Inside the Junior Sports club, Hugh Drummond was burying his nose in a large tankard of the ale for which that cheery pot-house was still famous. A waiter was arranging the first editions of the evening papers on a table, and Hugh beckoned to him to bring one. Cricket, racing, the latest divorce case, and the latest strike—all the usual headings were there. And he was just putting down the paper, to again concentrate on his problem, when a paragraph caught his eye.

"STRANGE MURDER IN BELFAST"

"The man whose body was discovered in such peculiar circumstances near the docks has been identified as Mr. James Granger, the confidential secretary to Mr. Hiram Potts, the American multi-millionaire, at present in this country. The unfortunate victim of this dastardly outrage—his head, as we reported in our last night's issue, was nearly severed from his body—had apparently been sent over on business by Mr. Potts, and had arrived the preceding day. What he was doing in the locality in which he was found is a mystery."

"We understand that Mr. Potts, who has recently been indisposed, has returned to the Carlton, and is greatly upset at the sudden tragedy."

"The police are confident that they will shortly obtain a clue, though the rough element in the locality where the murder was committed presents great difficulties. It seems clear that the motive was robbery, as all the murdered man's pockets were rifled. But the most peculiar thing about the case is the extraordinary care taken by the murderer to prevent the identification of the body. Every article of clothing, even down to the murdered man's socks, had had the name torn out, and it was only through the criminal overlooking the tailor's tab inside the inner breast-pocket of Mr. Granger's coat that the police were enabled to identify the body."

Drummond slid down the paper on his knees, and stared a little dazedly at the club's immortal founder.

"Holy smoke! maddie," he murmured, "that man Peterson ought to be on the committee here. Verily, I believe, he could galvanize the staff into some semblance of activity."

"Did you order anything, sir?" A waiter paused beside him.

"No," murmured Drummond, "but I will rectify the omission. Another large tankard of ale."

The waiter departed, and Hugh picked up the paper again.

"We understand," he murmured gently to himself, "that Mr. Potts,

who has recently been indisposed, has returned to the Carlton. . . . Now that's very interesting. . . . He lit a cigarette and lay back in his chair. "I was under the impression that Mr. Potts was safely tucked up in bed, consuming semolina pudding, at Goring. It requires elucidation."

"I beg your pardon, sir," remarked the waiter, placing the beer on the table beside him.

"You needn't," returned Hugh. "Up to date you have justified my fondest expectations. And as a further proof of my good will, I would like you to get me a trunk call—2 X Goring."

A few minutes later he was in the telephone box.

"Peter, I have seldom been so glad to hear your voice. Is all well? Good. Don't mention any names. Our guest is there, is he? Gone on strike against more milk puddings, you say. Coux him, Peter. Make a noise like a surgeon, and he'll think it's civare. Have you seen the papers? There are interesting doings in Belfast, which concern us rather intimately. I'll be down later, and we'll have a pow-wow."

He hung up the receiver and stepped out of the box.

"If, Algy," he remarked to a man who was looking at the tape machine outside, "the paper says a blighter's somewhere and you know he's somewhere else—what would you do?"

"Up to date in such cases I have always shot the editor," murmured Algy Longworth. "Come and feed."

"You're so helpful, Algy. A perfect flock of strength. Do you want a job?"

"What sort of a job?" demanded the other suspiciously.

"Oh! not work, dear old boy. D—n it, man—you know me better than that, surely!"

"People are so funny nowadays," returned Longworth gloomily. "What is this job?"

Together the two men strolled into the luncheon-room, and long after the cheese had been finished, Algy Longworth was still listening in silence to his companion.

"My dear old bean," he murmured ecstatically as Hugh finished, "my very dear old bean. I think it's the most priceless thing I ever heard. Enroll me as a member of the band. And, incidentally, Toby Sinclair is running round in circles asking for trouble. Let's rope him in."

"Go and find him this afternoon, Algy," said Hugh rising. "And tell him to keep his mouth shut. I'd come with you, but it occurs to me that the wretched Potts, bathed in tears at the Carlton, is in need of sympathy. So long, old dear. You'll hear from me in a day or two."

Drummond sauntered along Pall Mall. He had told Longworth more or less on the spur of the moment, knowing that gentleman's capabilities to a nicety. Under a cloak of assumed hippany he concealed an iron nerve which had never yet failed him; and, in spite of the fact that he wore an entirely unnecessary eyeglass, he could see further into a brick wall than most of the people who called him a fool.

It was his suggestion of telling Toby Sinclair that caused the smile. For it had started a train of thought in Drummond's mind which seemed to



"My Dear Old Bean," He Mumbled Ecstatically as Hugh Finished, "My Very Dear Old Bean."

him to be good. If Sinclair—why not two or three more equally trusty sportsmen? Why not a gang of the boys?

Toby possessed a V. C., and a good one—for there are grades of the V. C., and those grades are appreciated to a nicety by the recipient's brother officers if not by the general public. The show would fit Toby like a glove. . . . Then there was Ted Jerrold, who combined the roles of an amateur actor of more than average merit with an ability to hit anything at any range with every conceivable type of firearm. And Jerry Seymour in the Flying corps. . . . Not a bad thing to have a flying man—up one's sleeve. . . . And possibly some one versed in the ways of tanks might come in handy. . . .

The smile broadened to a grin; surely life was very good. And then the grin faded, and something suspiciously like a frown took its place. For he had arrived at the Carlton, and reality had come back to him.

"Mr. Potts will see no one, sir," remarked the man to whom he addressed his question. "You are about the twentieth gentleman who has been here already today."

Hugh had expected this, and smiled genially.

"Precisely, my stout fellow," he remarked, "but I'll lay a small amount of money that they were newspaper men. Now, I'm not. And I think that if you will have this note delivered to Mr. Potts, he will see me."

He sat down at a table, and drew a sheet of paper toward him. Two facts were certain: First, that the man upstairs was not the real Potts; second, that he was one of Peterson's gang. The difficulty was to know exactly how to word the note. There might be some mystic pass-word, the omission of which would prove him an impostor at once. At length he took a pen and wrote rapidly; he would have to chance it.

"Urgent. A message from headquarters."

He sealed the envelope and handed it with the necessary five shillings for postage to the man. Then he sat down to wait. After what seemed an interminable delay he saw the messenger crossing the lounge.

"Mr. Potts will see you, sir."

Hugh followed his guide along a corridor, and paused outside a door while he went into a room. He heard a murmur of voices, and then the man reappeared.

"This way, sir," he said, and Hugh stepped inside, to stop with an involuntary gasp of surprise. The man seated in the chair was Potts, to all intents and purposes. The likeness was extraordinary, and had he not known that the real article was at Goring he would have been completely deceived himself.

The man waited till the door was closed; then he rose and stepped forward suspiciously.

"I don't know you," he said. "Who are you?"

"Since when has every one employed at headquarters known one another?" Drummond returned guardedly. "And, incidentally, your likeness to our lamented friend is wonderful. It very nearly deceived even me."

The man, not ill-pleased, gave a short laugh.

"I'll pass, I think. But it's risky. These cursed reporters have been badgering the whole morning. . . . And if his wife or somebody comes over, what then? It wasn't like Rosca to bungle in Belfast. He's never left a clue before, and he had plenty of time to do the job properly."

"A name inside a breast-pocket might easily be overlooked," remarked Hugh, seizing the obvious clue.

"Are you making excuses for him?" snarled the other. "He's failed, and failure is death. Such is our rule. Would you have it altered?"

"Most certainly not. The issues are far too great for any weakness. . . ."

"You're right, my friend—you're right. Long live the Brotherhood." He stared out of the window with smouldering eyes, and Hugh preserved a discreet silence. Then suddenly the other broke out again. . . . "Have they killed that insolent puppy of a soldier yet?"

"Er—not yet," murmured Hugh mildly.

"They must find the American at once." The man thumped the table emphatically. "It was important before—at least his money was. Now with this blunder—it's vital."

"Precisely," said Hugh. "Precisely."

"I've already interviewed one man from Scotland Yard, but every hour increases the danger. However, you have a message for me. What is it?"

Hugh rose and casually picked up his hat. He had got more out of the interview than he had hoped for, and there was nothing to be gained by prolonging it. But it struck him that Mr. Potts' impersonator was a man of unpleasant disposition, and that tactically a flanking movement to the door was indicated. And, being of an open nature himself, it is possible that the real state of affairs showed for a moment on his face. Be that as it may, something suddenly aroused the other's suspicion, and with a snarl of fury he sprang past Hugh to the door.

"Who are you?" he spat the words out venomously, at the same time whipping an ugly-looking knife out of his pocket.

Hugh replaced his hat and stick on the table and grinned gently.

"I am the insolent puppy of a soldier, dear old bird," he remarked, watching the other warily. "And if I was you I'd put the toothpick away. . . . You might hurt yourself."

As he spoke he was edging, little by little, toward the other man, who crouched snarling by the door. His eyes, grim and determined, never left the other's face; his hands, apparently hanging listless by his sides, were fingling with the joy of what he knew was coming.

"And the penalty of failure is death, isn't it, dear one?" he spoke almost dreamily; but not for an instant did his attention relax. Almost imperceptibly he crept toward the other man, talking gently.

"Hugh and his friends are gassed by the band."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

His Faith.
"A man should not put his trust in riches," advised the pastor.

"I knew it," agreed Old Moneybags. "But he should have sense enough to put his riches in trusts."



HOUSE OF SECRETS.

"I must show you the cellar before the rest of the house," said Master Thoughtfulness to the boy and girl who had come on adventures and who had now reached their journey's end at the House of Secrets.

"The cellar is dark and damp," Master Thoughtfulness continued, "and we don't want to stay there long. We want to see the best last."

They went down some dark stairs, and there they heard murmurs and mumbles and curious sounds, fighting to get up, it seemed.

"Here," said Master Thoughtfulness, "dwell the Things That Aren't True. They're kept down by the Things That Are True. Here dwell the evil thoughts and desires and wishes that are in people's hearts. They're kept down by the Things That Are True above."

"At times they get uppermost, but not often, for even if the evil thoughts do come up for a time they are quickly put down. Evil thoughts and mean desires are always in the cellar in the House of Secrets."

It was so dark they could hardly see, only they heard the mutterings, and from time to time they would hear a muffled voice saying:

"Oh, I hope she doesn't get the prize, maybe if I cheat no one will see me."

And there'd be a violent quarrel and the muffled voice would sink away.

"Oh, it's good to get upstairs again," said the girl after they had left the cellar.

"From room to room they went. Yes, they surely found out why they had had the bumps, for without them they would never have reached the House of Secrets, but would still be going backwards."

Now they could learn so many, many secrets.

The great center rooms were filled with dancers and with music.

There Brownie Joy and his dancers were, there was Brother Joker and Mrs. Get-the-Most-Out-of-Life was often to be found wandering through these rooms.

"You see," she told the boy and girl, "you had lots of signposts along the way in the people you met, as you can see now."

"And also many of those bad creatures like Doubt and Intolerance and the little Gnome who couldn't grow were sign-posts of what to turn your backs upon!"

Master Thoughtfulness introduced them to many new friends in the different rooms. How cozy and bright



"Down Some Dark Stairs."

and cheery the rooms were. Anyone at once could feel at home in them.

They weren't big and stiff and cold and formal, but they were just like rooms to be found in the home of a very nice person—where one could settle down and have such a good quiet read or chat, or where one could find gaiety, too, and laughter, and music and dancing.

It seemed as if there were everything in the House of Secrets, and the house wasn't so terribly large—it was big and it had enough stairways and rooms so one could play hide-and-go-seek when one was through exploring and meeting friends—but it wasn't like a castle where one would have to be thinking of how dignified one must be all the time.

And the great secret of all they learned was the secret of real brotherhood. Every secret was almost like a part of the big secret, or like a by-path which leads to the main road.

How happy every one was in the House of Secrets. How happy every one was not always quarreling to be the chief and most important one.

And the boy and the girl learned that real leadership was caring for people and not trying to boss them.

"Our adventures have been wonderful," said the boy.

"I will never forget this trip as long as I live," the girl replied.

"Never, never indeed," the boy answered, and Master Thoughtfulness smiled with pleasure and happiness.

Collecting Overdone.
Miss Madge was making her first trip in a train.

The ticket collector came along and called for the tickets. Madge readily gave up her ticket.

But later they stopped at a station and a station boy came down the platform calling:

"Chocolates!"

"Never!" cried Madge bravely. "You can take my ticket, but not my chocolates!"