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The Double-Walled Secret

By Edwin Baird

CHAPTER VIII

An Unforeseen Happening
They were 500 feet in the air before Kecey had time to look at the girl beside him. She was leaning against the back of the seat, her feet braced, her eyes big and frightened. The roar of the motor forbade speech, but with his eyes he comforted her. Soon she nestled closer to him, partly forgetting her fears in her admiration of his coolness and masterly handling of the biplane.

They sailed on and on and higher and higher into the blue sky; al-

though, when she leaned forward and looked down it seemed as if the air-ship stood still and the earth receded. Above the incessant hum of the propellers and the deafening reports of the engine it was impossible to carry on a conversation, and it was largely for this reason that he had suggested the trip—he wanted to lift her out of her brooding.

But with the passing of her first ecstatic thrill of confidence he saw he had failed. The sparkle in her eyes was replaced by inward fear, and it was not the sort of fear he would have seen in any other girl he knew, under similar circumstances. It was too profound, too dull, too melancholy, to be actuated by any present or immediate concern. He reflected that her apprehension must be powerful indeed to override the sensation of this her first aerial adventure.

He went as far as Lake Michigan, flying at an altitude of 2,000 feet, then turned back inland and took a diagonal course toward their starting-point. As they dipped gradually toward the ground she saw her father's house in the distance, and with a start she awoke from her brooding abstraction.

"Don't go too near!" she cried, with her lips close to Kecey's ear. Even then she did not divine his purpose. "I'm going down," came his answering shout above the roar of the machine. She read the words on his lips, rather than heard them.

In vain she mutely pleaded with him, pressing closely to his side, her white face uplifted, very earnest, very tragic, her gestures easy to understand. He had made up his mind to get at the bottom of the mystery surrounding her father, and he was resolved to go to the source.

But an unforeseen happening turned his plans away in a horrifying fashion. They were within 200 feet of the house, and she was still clinging to him entreatingly, still warning him to turn back, when he saw some men running about near the double wall as though maddened to a frenzy. Some waved their arms frantically about their heads, and some fell screaming to the ground, where they lay as if dead. Others fired revolvers and turned and ran, firing over their shoulders. One—a huge African—stood with his back to the stockade, clanking at something that apparently

clung to his neck. All at once he sank to his knees, then plunged, face downward, into the grass.

Bewildered, Kecey turned to Bonnie for enlightenment. "What is it?" he shouted.

"Higher!" she motioned, leaning forward and scanning the air. He steered upward into the air, wondering if she, too, had gone mad. When he glanced beneath him he saw several of the men lying motionless on the ground. The others were surging in a headlong, disordered rush toward the house.

Then he saw, close at hand, the outline of a swift-flying thing—a horrid, bat-like thing with venomous eyes—a thing that seemed flying straight at Bonnie. Before he could move it dashed past her face—missing her by a miracle—and was instantly churned to pieces in the propeller; but in that instant he knew it was something he had never seen before, a something uncanny, menacing, loathsome. But he had noted that its wings were black and shiny, that its wings were pointed and very powerful, and that it had a murderous beak that made him shudder.

"Higher! higher!" she waved excitedly, and the plane shot upward and away.

CHAPTER IX

The Secret of the Walls

They soon had flown several miles to the west, and while he could not grasp the full significance of what he had seen, he kept the biplane sweeping on as if fearing pursuit. It was nearing sunset when finally he turned back—all because of one word from her—"father!"

They found the place unnaturally still. There was no sign of life anywhere. He circled in big figure 8's back and forth above the double wall and at last ventured to alight. As he stepped cautiously forth she shuddered and followed. Not ten feet away he came upon the body of one of the hideous bat-like things. A little farther on he found the body of another, and nearby lay two of the Africans.

They found her father. He lay with his face to the sky and his skin was quite black. A dagger, clutched in one hand, was buried to the hilt in the body of the thing that had slain him.

Kecey managed to get poor Bonnie to the house finally. The door was opened by Toto, who evidently had watched them from a window. Behind the hideous little hunchback crowded several of the ex-convicts, and behind these stood three of the Africans. Most of them were armed but as he was agreeably surprised to see that none of them made a hostile sign. Indeed, their welcome was as sincere as it was cordial. He soon perceived this was because of their master's daughter, for whom they would have done anything, braved any danger.

From their rambling, excited talk Kecey learned that only four of the deadly flying things had escaped, and these because of a bungling African, who had paid for his carelessness with his life. The rest were still securely locked behind the double wall. And from Bonnie he heard, between her sobs, the following astounding story:

Her father, a confirmed man-hater, had conceived a desire to destroy all human life in America and thus avenge the wrong that had been done to him by organized society. He had learned that in the interior of Africa there was a species of vampire whose bite was as venomous as that of a cobra. He went there and, after a lengthy hunt, he captured a pair of the creatures and brought them in a cage to Wisconsin, where he began to breed them. Free of all natural enemies, the things multiplied with frightful rapidity. The giant cage—the grating-covered double wall—that Kecey had seen was the incubator, and it was crowded to the utmost capacity. It was expected that when free they would propagate far faster than they could be destroyed, and that their swiftness, ferocity, and ability to attack at night, would enable them to kill everything in sight.

Stryker had estimated that in three years or five at the most, America would be a desolate waste. "We were to have left to-night," she ended, "and the cage was to be opened by a clock-work device the day we sailed from New York."

"It looks," said Kecey, feeling as if he had listened to the narration of a nightmare, "as though your father had changed his date."

"No, No!" she cried. "It was a blunder—an accident."

An hour later she stood on the porch with Kecey and watched the men carry bales of waste-paper and cans of kerosene to the long double wall where so much death and destruction was stored. Then when the wooden cage burst into flames, the soon destroyed everything within it, they, with their arms around each other, watched the red glare melt into the dusk. And when they turned and looked into each other's eyes they saw no shadow of parting there.

(The End.)

What He Wondered.

Little Frederick went with an aunt through the cemetery. Upon his return home he went to his father and said: "Father, I went for a walk with auntie through the cemetery to-day, and we read the inscriptions on the tomb-stones." "And what were your thoughts, my son, after you had done so?" asked the father. "Well, father," replied the child, seriously, "I wondered where all the wicked people were buried."

A bottle containing lime water and linsed oil (equal parts), should always be kept in the house for the treatment of burns. By applying it directly to a burn it will allay pain and keep the skin from blistering.

Paris is farther north than Quebec. Pittsburgh is a trifle farther west than the Panama Canal. Sitka, Alaska, is farther south than Petrograd, Russia.

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The Housewife's Corner

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I have never been overly fond of poetry and crocheting, two things which poetic and artistic readers of this department have frequently noted and taken me to task for. I do not know that I ever owned up to it before, but I'll admit it now, and confess it's a blemish in an otherwise perfect character. Not that I've anything against either poetry or lace, in their place. I have a sneaking fondness, in fact, for "Danny Deever," when some robust baritone growls it out. But when friend Browning smugly tells me, "God's in His Heaven, all's well with the world," I don't like poetry, because it doesn't look that way to me.

Lace, too, is all well enough in its place. I like lace on clothes and handkerchiefs and window curtains and in nice smoothly-rolled bolts in stores. But I don't like to make it. In fact, I think it is perfectly senseless to make it if you are a busy woman, already worked beyond the limit. And, personally, I should scream and tear my hair if I had to sit down and count stitches and make the right number of holes in the right places in a "scallop" after having done a hard day's work. That sort of thing would wear my nerves to a frazzle. But we're not all made alike and maybe it soothes the nerves of the lace maker. Perhaps that isn't so hard on them as rattling the keys of a clicking typewriter would be. Every man to his trade, and woman to her hobby, so ordinarily I let the lace makers alone so long as they return the compliment.

Lace is all well enough in its place, as I said before. But there has come a time when its place is not on any Canadian woman's work table nor in her knitting bag. There is only one bit of pick-up hand-work which has any business there now. That is knitting. It marvels me much how any woman can square it with her conscience when she spends hours and hours crocheting lace for herself, while soldier boys are in need of socks, mittens, helmets, sweaters and other knitted comforts.

The plea is, I know, that the knitted things are so heavy they tire ones arms and hands, while the lace is light and easy to handle. But surely a pair of wristlets or of mittens are not so heavy as a crocheted bread-spread. And I've known at least one woman to complain of the weight of the yarn while she calmly crocheted a slip for her spread, using heavy cotton and a large hook. And there is the plea that they simply can't learn how to turn the heel and make the thumb. Yet the most intricate

pattern in lace making never phases these confessedly dense women.

I have no quarrel with the women who do not knit; I know there are many women in Canada who haven't time to knit—they are too busy darning socks and making over father's pants for Benny. But there are dozens of women in every township who, while they talk beautifully about the hardships our boys must endure, and babble charmingly about what they would like to do, never come across and back their words with their deeds. If they knit at all, it is to make a sweater for themselves, thereby hurting the cause in two ways—by using wood which is needed elsewhere, and taking time which they might better put into war work. Their spare time is spent in making yards of useless lace.

Pertinent Paragraphs.

Now that the fresh summer vegetables are nothing but a pleasant memory the woman in the home is turning her attention to the winter variety now safely stored in the cellar. To make vegetable chowder, take 4 potatoes, 3 carrots, 3 onions, 1 pint canned tomatoes, 2 tablespoons fat, 3 level tablespoons flour substitute, 2 cups skim milk, 2 teaspoons salt. Cut potatoes and carrots in small pieces. Add enough water to cover, and cook for 20 minutes. Do not drain off the water. Brown the chopped onion in the fat for five minutes. Add this and the tomatoes to the vegetables. Heat to boiling point. Add two cups of skim milk and thicken with flour substitute.

Every precaution should be taken to see that no windfall apples go to waste this year. Gather every one and dry those that are not used in any other way. Prepare the apples for drying by peeling, coring and slicing them one-quarter of an inch thick. Then drop them in brine made with 1 tablespoon salt to 2 quarts of water. This keeps them white. Spread them on clean towels to absorb excess moisture. Then put them on trays and dry them either in the sun or by artificial heat. Finally store them in the cellar or attic.

If you are fortunate enough to possess turkeys, let them develop and grow fat. Do not kill them off before maturity. Turkeys put on weight rapidly and economically at this season of the year and a young gobble that weighs ten pounds in October will weigh twelve or thirteen

pounds 60 days later, if given a little extra feed towards the end of that period.

Canada's Fisheries.



The fisherette idea is taking strong hold in the East and the number of girls now engaged in cleaning and skinning fish for the market is increasing. Clad in oilskins and sou'westers they are bravely plying knives on cumbersome, slimy fish. They are taking the places of brothery and sweethearts who are overseas.

The King.

Where is the King? Walking through the hospitals, cheering, comforting, sympathizing with his fellow-men. Making them forget awhile, the sufferings they endure. They only yearn to fight for him again. Kind is the King.

Where is the King? Gone down to the shipyards and finishing for himself. What the grievances and troubles are about; Discussing man to man the wisdom of this thing or that. And ways and means to straighten matters out. Wise is the King.

Where is the King? Studying conditions of his country and its needs. Ordering his household to perform. The strict and firm economy that others have to do. That he may bear his share of stress and storm. Just is the King.

Where is the King? Off across the Channel waves to better understand. The wonders of his fighting men in France. Going midst the shot and shell, regardless of himself. Taking, like other men, his chance. Brave is the King.

Where is the King? Everywhere and anywhere that his duty calls. (He remains on duty every day) Working ever for the Kingdom, rather than the King; So for King and all he stands for, let us pray. God save the King.

A simple milk and potato soup may be given relish with celery salt.