

entertainment

Another happy ending. . . .

By Richard K. Anderson
In this, our final exciting segment, Roger Armstrong puts it all on the line, bets the entire bundle, courageously takes the plunge. Yes, Roger does battle with David Benzadrine himself!

In our story so far, our hero Roger Armstrong has been fighting an evil plot to do away with President Downey, but in the last issue Roger discovered that the evil David Benzadrine was impersonating our President, and the real James Downey was trying desperately to oust him!

David Benzadrine, known to all security agencies everywhere, is a cold blooded mercenary, operating for whoever will pay him the most. He came to UNB to obtain secret information on genetic research that is taking place in the Underground. The Underground is a vast research complex under the University, accessed through elevators around the city, whose existence has to be kept secret to function. Now President Downey has told Roger that if he can stop the evil David Benzadrine, he will be allowed to keep a briefcase of money Roger has that totals two point five million!

Roger has one day to try and foil the false President Downey. If he succeeds, the vital Underground will remain hidden, he will win the undying love of Tracy, the love interest in our story, and he will get to keep the two and a half million. If he fails...he may be killed!

Roger drove home with Tracy from the meeting with the real President Downey. It was only 9:30, but it seemed like hours had passed since he had found out that David Benzadrine was impersonating the President, and he had pledged to stop him. He was all too aware that he only had fifteen hours to do it in! The adrenaline coursed through his veins.

Tracy snuggled up against him in the car.

"Oh Roger," she said, "you are so brave! I mean to try to stop a man who I've seen rip telephone poles apart with his bare hands, a man whom no one has ever survived a confrontation with. Yes Roger, I am awful proud of you."

Roger began to sweat.

"Uh, Tracy," he asked hesitantly, "I was just wondering, what do you mean by telephone poles? I mean were they big telephone poles, and were they hardwood or softwood?"

"They were pretty big, made of four ply galvanized steel."

Roger began to drive erratically.

"You know Tracy, I've been thinking, and I really think I need some protection."

"But Roger honey, studies have proven time and time again that the pill is all that's really needed, and I take mine every day."

"No Tracy, I mean some protection from David Benzadrine when I see him tomorrow."

"But Roger, you're both men."

"Tracy, I think I need a gun."

"Oh, well why didn't you say so? Here, you can use mine."

Tracy reached into her purse and pulled out a .357 magnum.

"My God Tracy! Where did you get that?"

"Never mind that. Now here is the silencer. Don't be afraid to use it, it isn't registered."

She handed it to him.

"But where will I put it? I mean, this thing is the size of a small cannon."

"You can hide it in your knapsack."

Roger had his doubts, but he ended up taking the powerful weapon. After all, you don't visit David Benzadrine without packing a piece. Well, maybe you do, if you are David Benzadrine's mother, but you don't if you are Roger Armstrong and fond of life.

They arrived home at their apartment on Graham Avenue and went inside. Roger's adrenaline had stopped coursing.

"Well I'm going to have to stay up and plan tonight Tracy, so I will see you tomorrow morning."

"Don't be silly," answered Tracy, "I wouldn't let you stay up by yourself on the night before you meet almost certain death!"

"Aw Tracy. That's what I love about you, you are always around to boost my spirits when I need you."

So our hero and heroine settled down on the couch to spend a long, tender night together, each passing moment made all the more special by the knowledge that it might be one of their last.

Early the next morning Roger arose, Tracy made him breakfast, and he embarked on his quest. A quest for truth, for love, for higher education, for a briefcase full of hundreds.

First his master plan took him to the airport to visit a friend. There he completed phase one, and found his wallet several thousand dollars lighter. Then he visited

a clothing store and bought himself a blue suit, slightly big under his left arm. He immediately put it on, then crossed the mall to a shoe store to trade in his leather hiking boots for a pair of suede shoes. From there he visited a barber shop and had his hair cut, and then visited a sporting goods store where he purchased a shoulder holster.

Satisfied at last with his image, he phoned home to Tracy.

"Tracy, I am all ready. Is Benzadrine in his, I mean, President Downey's office?"

"Yes. It is 11:00 now, he plans to transfer the money at twelve, and catch his plane at 12:30. You have an hour and a half to save the Underground, Roger. If that transfer goes through, it will immediately be noticed, and questions will arise that we won't be able to answer. It's all in your hands. I'll see you soon...I hope."

Roger hung up, the adrenaline coursing through his arteries. He got in his car and coursed through the streets up to the Old Arts building, and walked in the building to David Benzadrine's office.

"I'd like to see President Downey, ma'am," said Roger.

"I don't think he has time to see you sir, he is wrapped up in very important business right now," replied the secretary.

A plan went coursing through Roger's head.

"Tell him David Benzadrine would like to see him."

Something about Roger's manner convinced the secretary to relay the message, and a moment later Roger found himself at his moment of truth, face to face with David Benzadrine!

Benzadrine/Downey smiled at Roger and rose to shake his hand, but Roger was wise to the old poison needle trick, and didn't take it.

"Well what can I do for you David?", asked Benzadrine.

"Cut the crap Benzadrine," said David, "I know who you are and what you are doing here."

"Really, and what are you going to do about it?" smirked the Prince of Evil.

"Just this," said Roger pulling the magnum from his pocket and pointing it at Benzadrine's chest. "Sit down, we are going to have to negotiate."

"What are you talking about," asked Benzadrine as he carefully sat down.

"Don't try any funny stuff or I'll blow your elbows off."

"Don't kid me buddy, if you do that your Underground is as good as discovered."

"I couldn't care less about the Underground," lied Roger, "I represent a country from the east. I want you out of here, and I want to put my own man in. It's come to my attention that you are going to steal a cool million, and that would give my man too many questions to answer. Now I will go to a certain amount of trouble to avoid having to cover up blowing you away, but don't press it. One way or the other, you are leaving here within the hour."

"You don't scare me buddy. There is no way you could get a body out of here without ruining your cover."

"But if I let you stay, you will ruin it anyway, so I don't have many options do I," said Roger.

"So here is what I'm going to do. You have two choices. You can either come with me to the airport right now, and to sweeten the deal I have one and a quarter million in my car to convince you, or you can call my bluff and I'll kill you and take my chances. Now what will it be."

Roger stared at Benzadrine. This was the crucial moment, on this instant hung the future of everybody. Roger's adrenaline coursed once or twice for good luck.

Benzadrine slowly turned his palms up.

"Alright, you win. In fact, I really prefer it this way. Downey has to deal with your man now, and I make an extra quarter million. Alright, let's go."

Roger sighed a huge inward sigh of relief. Benzadrine went to his desk and, under Roger's watchful gun, gathered some papers, the false data on the genetic research, and they went out to Roger's car. Roger made Benzadrine drive to the airport and when they arrived, gave him his one and a quarter million. It really hurt to give up half his money, but keeping half was better than none.

And that's what they did. President Downey moved back into his office, the Underground was saved, and a few days later Roger and Tracy flew to their hometown, got married, and then honeymooned for four months in Europe.

And maybe, one of these days, if Roger let's me, I'll tell what happened to them in the Swiss Alps.

THE END.

Contest announced

A \$1,000 grand prize will be awarded in the upcoming poetry competition sponsored by World of Poetry, a quarterly newsletter for poets.

Poems of all styles and on any subject are eligible to compete for the grand prize or for 99 other cash or merchandise awards, totalling over \$10,000. Says Contest Chairman,

Joseph Mellon, "We are encouraging poetic talent of every kind, and expect our contest to produce exciting discoveries."

Rules and official entry forms are available from the World of Poetry, 2431 Stockton Blvd., Dept. E, Sacramento, California, 95817.