

BRIGHT STAR

By Mary Schumann

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CHAPTER X—Continued

Si Blewey, the caretaker, a tall weather-beaten native of the hills, met them at the door. Just behind him was Jim, the colored chef, smiling.

The hall was filled with trophies of moose and deer. Gun racks occupied one side. To the left was a living-room thirty feet long and about eighteen wide, with a gray stone fireplace, blackened at the lintel, a fire of beech logs blazing in it.

Doc showed it to Hugh with pride. "Here's where we spend our evenings. Tonight they'll sit up late, perhaps a poker game or talking guns and dogs, but tomorrow night, the first day of the season, one by one they disappear up the stairs. Can't stay awake."

Hugh and Doc occupied one of the seven bedrooms. The "bullpen," a long room with its eight cots, was left for the late arrivals. They had lunch in the big dining-room with its rectangular table, made of planks with birch log supports, then set out with Si Blewey and two or three members of the club from Tryon City to reconnoitre.

They tramped up to Wolf's Hollow, to the cherry grove, and in the old orchard they found fresh bear tracks. The bears had been feeding from the old apple trees, had clawed out the honey from a stump.

After dinner Doc showed him how to oil his gun, and discussed the value of 12, 16, and 20 gauge shotguns. Hugh refused to enter a bridge game, but sat behind Rap at the poker table for an hour. Then such a weariness came over him that he went up to his bedroom.

As he undressed he vaguely wondered what Dorrie was doing. She was staying with his mother while he was gone. She didn't want to take a vacation now. The only place she cared to go was Atlantic City, and she would rather go there at Easter. Strangely enough, she seemed removed, outside the periphery of his emotions, for the first time. He felt almost no interest in what she might be doing!

At six o'clock the next morning there was a banging on his door and Jim's voice announcing: "Breakfast, Dr. Hiller, Mr. Marsh." He went on down the corridor knocking at each door.

Hugh was half dressed when Doc raised himself on his arm, grinned sociably, said, "Hello! How'd you sleep?"

"Exactly like the infant you said I would. And I feel horribly hungry. Is that ham we smell frying?"

Doc rolled out. "Home cured ham."

They could hear voices downstairs and in the yard, the yapping of the dogs as food was brought to them. The darkness outside was rifted with gray and the air from the open window, damply chill. Later when they had breakfasted and set out in twos and threes for the different locations, the sun broke through. Hugh, wearing his new hunting coat and red cap, carrying his new gun, went with Doc.

"You're liable to get a bird before I do—beginner's luck. I never knew it to fail. I hope you do. It will make you enthusiastic—a real hunter."

Hugh drew on his pipe. "Thanks, Doc. Birds or no birds, this is good enough for me." He indicated the woods, quiescent and gleaming in the sun. Something in him balked at shooting anything living and free; but he couldn't tell Doc that.

"When Tobey flushes a bird, you fire first. I'll have the second shot if you miss. We're going to the grapevines. They'll be feeding there today."

"How far is it?"

"Another mile, I think. Hard to tell on this uneven ground."

Suddenly Tobey stood still, his tail a rigid line. There was movement in the underbrush to the left, a sudden whirring as two ruffed grouse rose in flight. After a second or two, Doc's gun spoke, but he missed them.

"You didn't shoot." He looked at Hugh reproachfully. "I waited for you—why didn't you?"

Hugh gave a deprecatory laugh. "I told you I was a poor one to go hunting with! I didn't know what it was all about, until you fired."

Doc gave him a push. "Still sleepy? Never mind. We'll probably see others. What's a bird or two compared to . . . say, you know I don't give a darn whether we get any."

"Liable not to—you will be handicapped from the start."

"I was going to say 'compared to having you along,'" said Doc, not looking at Hugh as he moved ahead.

Hugh's eyes dwelt on Doc's broad back. Something sturdy and dependable about that back.

"Got a match?"

Doc paused and pulled out his lighter.

Hugh kept his eyes down as he held the flame to his pipe. "Get this straight, old man—I'm not much for saying things, as you know—but your taking me on this trip means a lot to me. Think of the finest life-saving job you ever

accomplished in that hospital of yours—tumor on the brain, blood transfusion—what are some of the things you do to keep people alive?"

"Amputation."

"Amputation . . ." Hugh's hazel eyes held a sudden glint. "Whatever you do there," he said slowly, "you're doing now for me—d'you understand?"

Doc nodded. "Sure, I do." As he walked on he whistled a few bars of "Pack up your troubles" half under his breath.

That afternoon when they came in footsore and weary, they had two birds, both of which Doc had shot. After dinner Hugh wandered outside away from the smoke-filled, noisy living-room.

He saw a small animal swimming—perhaps a beaver. The lake was black, shot with a few reflections of light from the windows of the lodge; the opposite shore was shrouded in darkness. "Amputation." The word repeated itself, clung to him.

He raised his eyes. The faint radiance of early evening was in the sky. A single star, very brilliant, very large, hung above the top of a pine. It seemed to be challenging his attention. Bright star . . .

He gazed at it a long time. Its steady shining seemed to bear a message, one that his groping inner ear translated. He felt as if he had been lost in the labyrinth of an underground cavern, fumbling this way and that—falling—hopeless. Far off he saw the light of an opening which promised to bring him upward to the sunlight once more—to peace.

It was Friday night when Hugh came home. Doc stopped his car before the Marsh home; Hugh unloaded his bags, carried them up the walk. His mother met him at the door. "We didn't expect you so soon. Dorrie has gone over to the Lawrences."

"The Lawrences?" He took off his chamois jacket. "Who are they?"

Fluvanna looked startled. "Friends of yours, Dorrie said."

"Oh, yes," he gulped, remembering. He turned as Kezia came out of the living-room. "Hello, Kezia." "Hello, Nimrod! Any luck?" She kissed him twice with warmth.

He was pleased. "You haven't done that since you came from school."

"You haven't been away before and I'm glad to see you, Hughie. Bring anything for the family larder?"

"Three grouse and a couple of quail—but don't ask who shot them."

Jerry Purdue sauntered out of the living-room. "Good-evening, Mr. Marsh. Have a nice trip?"

"Yes, thanks." Hugh looked at him with surprise. Was Jerry now calling on Kezia? "If you'll excuse me I'll go wash up a bit."

He joined his mother in the library at the end of the hall a few minutes later, a pleasant room with a fireplace, and open bookshelves lining the walls. She had been reading something and the book lay on her lap.

"How long has this been going on?" He motioned toward the living-room.

"Quite a while."

"Do you approve of it?"

"No . . . I gave my consent because she was meeting him secretly."

"There's Ellen . . ."

"I know." Pain was alive for a moment in his mother's eyes.

"What will be the outcome?"

"She will tire of him—or she will marry him. She says she wants to marry him, now."

Hugh lit his pipe. "They'll be damnably unhappy, I predict."

He pulled on his pipe savagely. "Jerry smashing up Ellen—and Kezia wanting him to satisfy her vanity."

"I know those things, Hugh. And yet—"

"What?"

"I think that Kezia will get along with him better than Ellen. They have a common meeting ground—their selfishness makes them understand each other. Ellen has depth and loyalty; she is suffering now, but not so much as she might have done later."

"But, Mother, he won't make Kezia happy."

She turned her eyes on Hugh with a patient, infinitely gentle gaze. "I'm afraid not. And of course I want her to be happy."

There was silence between them for a moment then Fluvanna went on, "Hugh, that has been my goal in life—to have you children happy. But I am beginning to see—beginning to see"—her voice faltered—"that no parent can guarantee happiness to her children."

They both sat still and Hugh had a knocking presence that she knew . . . knew about Dorrie. "No parent can guarantee happiness," she had said, and had looked at him with compassion. Did she know? If she did, he felt sorrow that she would have his burden to bear—and a tremendous relief.

"Mother—"

"Mother—"

She opened her arms and he bent to her, put his head on her breast with aching yearning, felt her tenderness flood and envelop him.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Floyd Gibbons

Adventurers' Club

Hello Everybody!



"Door of Death"

By FLOYD GIBBONS
Famous Headline Hunter

TIME and again I've told you boys and girls yarns that—well—sort of proved that adventures happen to you most often, not when you go to some special place or on some special sort of trip, but in the familiar, workaday places that you're accustomed to visit every day of your lives.

It's a tale of subway adventure that we're going to hear today—a story told to me by Matthew Creegan of Jamaica, N. Y. Matt left his home and went down into the Lexington avenue subway one day in 1921—Tuesday, November 13, to be exact about it—and before he got out of it, he had the most hair-raising experience his life has had to offer, either before or since.

Matt started to pay a visit to some friends of his who lived on Staten Island. He went down to the subway platform, and, when the right train came along, he got in the first car. He stayed on the train until it reached South Ferry, and then he started to get off.

His Foot Was Caught in the Door.

Matt was the last passenger to get off that car. The door was closing as he went through it. As he stepped onto the platform with his right foot, the door closed in on his left foot and held it tight.

It was the sort of accident that happens once in a million years. You know how those subway doors are built and how they operate. The train can't start until every door is fully closed and automatically locked in place. But in order to save people from being hurt by the doors as they slide shut, they've put a big soft cushion covered by a rubber flap on the side of each one. That cushion has three or four inches of play in it. That three or four inches was just enough to catch a firm hold on Matt's foot, and shut and lock at the same time.

Matt twisted around and tried to pull his foot loose, but it wouldn't come out. Then, suddenly, Matt's heart froze as a jar shook the whole train. IT WAS STARTING! The closed locked doors had been the motorman's signal to go ahead!

Matt let out a yell. There was a guard standing between two cars just twenty or thirty feet away, but he didn't hear. The train began to pull out of the station. Matt looked around frantically for something to grab hold of. If he could get a good grip on a post or a handle of some sort, he might wrench his foot loose. He might hurt that foot pretty badly, it's true. But even breaking it clean off would be better than being dragged and taking a chance under the wheels of the car.

Dragged Along, Head Downward.

But there was nothing to catch hold of. Matt fell to the platform and was dragged along. The train moved on, picking up speed as it went. Matt let out one last yell as the end of the platform came moving up to meet him, but no one heard that yell, either. And then his body was falling—over the platform's edge—down toward the tracks. In a split second he was HANGING HEAD DOWNWARD from that subway door, while the train bowed along toward the next station.

Matt is short of stature, and for the first time in his life he was glad of it, for his head did not quite reach the tracks. Had he been just a few inches taller, the top of his cranium, dragged over that concrete floor studded with hard wooden railroad ties, would have been battered to a pulp before the train had gone half a block. As it was, that head of Matt's was in danger, from the various obstacles and projections that lined the side of the track.

Matt remembers trying to hold himself tight up against the side of the train to avoid those projections, as well as the pillars that went flashing by. The train was going full speed now. It was an express train, and Matt also remembers being glad the accident happened to him downtown, where the express trains stopped at every station.

The next station was Bowling Green, for the train had swung around the loop at South Ferry, and now was on its uptown trip. Would he still be alive when he got there? Matt wondered about that.

Unconscious, But Saved.

Something caught Matt's coat—ripped it from his back. A few yards farther on, his vest went the same way. His shirt was being torn to ribbons. The roar of the wheels—terrifyingly close to his head—filled his heart with horror. That upside-down position was causing the blood to rush to his head. He felt weak from the shock of it all. Suddenly, HIS HEAD HIT SOMETHING. A great light flashed before Matt's eyes—and then he was unconscious.

The train was slowing down now—though Matt didn't know it. It was rolling into the Bowling Green station. If the guard opened the door of the car, Matt's foot would be released and he would fall to the track. But the guard didn't open the door. There were no passengers waiting to get on up at that far end of the platform. Doors of other cars opened and slid shut again. But the one that imprisoned Matt's foot remained closed.

The train was ready to roll on to the next station—and there's no telling what would have happened to Matt then—when a watchman, standing on the platform, saw the foot thrust through the door. He took a flashlight from his pocket and looked down into the crack between the train and the platform. There was Matt—DANGLING—SENSELESS.

The watchman notified the guard. The guard opened the door, and Matt's body fell to the track. The motorman blew the emergency whistle, and some men working near the station came and dragged Matt out. He woke up in the Broad Street hospital.

Matt pulled out of it all right—and if there's one thing he's thankful for it's that he's a small enough man to fit in the space between a subway door and the ground without dragging. The big guys can have their six feet if they want it. "The bigger you are," says Matt, "the more things you knock your head against."

Famous War Horses

In olden times, war horses pulled wagons, chariots and catapults. Later the Arabs bred fine, fleet horses on which they overran most of the Mediterranean world. European knights developed powerful horses capable of carrying a man in full armor. These were the ancestors of our modern draft horses. One of the most famous war horses was Bucephalus, owned by Alexander the Great. Nobody else could ride him. Another, says a writer in the Washington Post, was Marengo, a gentle white Arabian that carried Napoleon through many campaigns. He needed to be gentle, for Napoleon was such a poor rider he frequently tumbled off.

No Textbooks; No Exams

Sarah Lawrence college at Bronxville, N. Y., has no examinations, no required courses, no marks and uses no textbooks. The college is said to be the first to pledge allegiance to experimentation. Acceptance for admission is based on a general intelligence test. The student's progress in her course is recorded by three reports, one by the instructor, one kept by the student's don and one made by herself.

Witch Hazel

Witch hazel is not merely a somewhat smelly, mildly alcoholic skin wash in a bottle. That is extract of witch hazel. The witch hazel bush, from which the extract is made, grows in our moister woodlands. You would not be likely to notice it in summer, says Science Service, but if you go on a winter hike through the timber it may startle you. It is the only fairly common shrub that blossoms in the winter. To be sure, its flowers aren't in the peony or dahlia class; they are just straggly stars of stringy yellow petals. But they are real flowers and their regular blossoming time is from late November to March.

King Had Baptismal Custom

In the year 1387 a Polish king required all of his subjects to be baptized, and the men were divided for this purpose into two companies or divisions. Those in the first classification were named Peter, and those in the second were named Paul. Similarly, the women were divided into two classifications, the first all being christened with the name of Catherine and those in the second with the name of Margaret.

Simplicity That Intrigues



THIS is the problem: Sister wants to entertain the Girl Scouts, it's Jule's turn to have the Bid-or-Bi club and Rose insists she can't put off the Laff-a-Lots a minute longer. And each of them has just finished a new dress and is anxious to wear it for the occasion.

Sister's Choice.

Sister's bit of intrigue is, as you can see, a dress worth wanting to show off (Pattern 1223). It is made of velveteen this time and a little later on she's going to blossom out in a bright crisp gingham version for school. The smart collar, flattering flared skirt and puff sleeves are good reasons for this frock's popularity. It comes in sizes 6 to 14 years. Size 8 requires 2 3/4 yards of 39 inch material.

Jule's Entertaining Dress.

Jule knows a neat trick when she sees one whether on the table or in a page of fashions, and she didn't mislead in choosing Pattern 1998. She'll wear this snappy shirt frock when she's "it" to entertain and because she chose broadcloth it will look more trig and lovely after each washing. The diagram shows why a few hours is all that's needed to sew this grand number. You may have it in sizes 34 to 46. Size 36 requires 4 3/4 yards of 35 inch material. With long sleeves 4 3/4 yards.

It Was Easy, Says Rose.

They didn't believe Rose when she said she made this startlingly pretty dress (Pattern 1224). She did though, even the buttonholes! However, the same stunning effect can be had by sewing the buttons on for trimming only. The elegance of the princess-like lines, the éclat of the heart shaped sleeves and withal its ease of construction make the question read "How can I help but make this dress?" It is available in sizes 12 to 20 (30 to 40 bust). Size 14 requires 4 3/4 yards of 39 inch material, plus 1/2 yard contrasting. With long sleeves 4 3/4 yards required.

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Foreign Words and Phrases

Abseit omen. (L.) May this bring no evil omen.

Canaille. (F.) The rabble.

Dos-a-dos. (F.) Back-to-back.

En effet. (F.) In effect; just so; really.

Fidus Achates. (L.) Faithful Achates; i. e., a true friend.

Hoc tempore. (L.) At this time. In perpetuum. (L.) Forever.

Mauvaise quart d'heure. (F.) A bad quarter of an hour; an awkward or uncomfortable experience.

Nee. (F.) Born so-and-so; i. e., her maiden name being so-and-so.

Ora pro nobis. (L.) Pray for us.

Punica fides. (L.) Carthaginian faith, treachery.

Qui transtulit, sustinet. (L.) He who transplanted, still sustains. (Motto of Connecticut.)

Re infecta. (L.) The business being unfinished.

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