

The Road to Bagdad

By GEORGE GIBBS

CHAPTER III

SYNOPSIS: On board the Orizaba, Camilla Dean, beautiful American girl, has made the acquaintance of Joseph Asad, wealthy Syrian, and Michael Gay, American engineer going to the East to establish a bus line over the desert from Damascus to Bagdad. She becomes especially interested in Ronald Barker, who comes aboard at Marseilles, because the night before she has heard three men whispering outside her window that he must be put out of the way before the boat reaches Alexandria. Camilla meets Barker, tells him what she has heard and, to satisfy her curiosity, he tells her that he is an American educated at Oxford and now much interested in the Palestine situation.

There was singing in the bar. Slim's voice trying to do a sentimental ballad. Then a kind of half-silence, the swish of water alongside, the sounds of the ship as she plodded steadily into the East, the East that Slim held in such contempt, the East that Ronald Barker had made so peculiarly his own.

Then the sound of whispering voices, men's voices, beyond the shuffleboard where she could just see their shadows against one of the lifeboats.

Without planning, but moving instinctively, she got into her evening wrap again and went out into the corridor. Rallying her courage she ran along the gangway past Ronald Barker's cabin and peered out on deck. The shadows on the lifeboat were still there, but the voices were more muffled than before. She stepped out on deck and approached the group. They turned their backs to her, huddled together and looked out to sea. But their conversation stopped when she passed

them, going on to the forward end of the promenade. When she returned they had disappeared.

It was not until she went into the corridor again that she realized the risk she had taken on the deserted deck. And now her footsteps turned instinctively aft to the bar where Slim's singing of "Mandalay," though hideous, was masculine, friendly and comforting.

Camilla stood for a long moment framed in the doorway before Slim and Michael saw her. Then they rose apologetically and asked her to join them. But social conversation was not in her mind. "Slim, I want you to go up to the captain with me," she said in a rush of words without preamble. "You, too, Michael."

Explaining as they went, Camilla led the way up the after companion ladder to the upper deck and so forward to the captain's quarters. Captain Simpson was just taking a nightcap with his first officer whose watch it was.

The two men bowed her in with her companions and offered a drink.

But Camilla was already telling her story in brief broken sentences—the conversation she had overheard a few nights before, and of the belief that Ronald Barker was not safe aboard the Orizaba without a guard over his stateroom at night. From smiling incredulity at her fears, they found her sincerity at least compelling.

"You'd better not let Mr. Barker know, I don't want him to think I'm meddling in his affairs."

"Well, it's my affair more than yours now, Miss Dean," Simpson said. "I've got orders from the company to put Mr. Barker safely ashore at Alexandria and I'm going to do it."

Michael and Slim stood rather sheepishly while Simpson gave the orders. He had hardly completed them when a muffled sound of shots and a clatter of broken glass came from somewhere below.

With the excitement of the group rushing out of the captain's suite, there were other sounds, calls from men of the watch on deck, as Camilla, between Slim and Michael, ran down into the A deck saloon where a few of the passengers in various degrees of negligence assembled, asking questions.

"Just some drunken idiot having target practice at one of our electric bulbs," Simpson said.

The excitement among the passengers diminished as Camilla went with Janet Priestly to talk things over. Slim and Michael followed the captain down the corridor toward Ronald Barker's stateroom. He met them at the open door where some of his neighbors stood inquiring. "No damage, Mr. Barker?" the captain asked.

"None at all. Some silly ass out on deck having target practice. Woke me up, just the way it did the rest of you."

"But it's your window that's broken, Mr. Barker."

Slim glanced out of the window and examined a piece of window glass on the carpet. It was a corrugated glass that would let in light but not vision.

"Funny thing, Mr. Barker," he said. "How do you account for the fact that splinters of the glass have fallen outboard on the deck, instead of inside the cabin?"

"So they have! Quite remarkable! You mean that someone must have fired from the inside of the stateroom?"

"Sure thing," Slim said. "The impact of a heavy bullet—it would take some of the glass with it."

Captain Simpson sat on the bed, listening and watching. "You'd better tell the whole story, Mr. Barker," he said quietly.

So, omitting Camilla's share in the adventure, Mr. Barker told what had happened. He had been warned of a possible attempt on his life aboard the Orizaba. He had not believed in his danger at first, but after he had turned in he found himself thinking how easy it would be for someone on the outside to take a pot shot at him through the half open French window and get away before the alarm.

Barker had switched off the ceiling light, made as good an imitation as he could of a sleeping figure in his bed by stuffing coverlid and underclothing under the blankets, then turned the bed light in its box so that it was dim and lay on the lounge hidden from the deck outside. Perhaps his informant had been mistaken. He was just getting drowsy when the silhouette of a head darkened the window. Then everything happened very rapidly. He wasn't sure that the silhouette meant mischief until he saw the glint of light on a gun barrel. He fired quickly, while the silhouette fired also, aiming at the huddle under the bedclothes.

Barker went over to the bed and showed where two bullets had gone

through the pillow and the neckband of one of his best shirts. "Pretty close that," he said.

"Sure thing," Slim gasped. "And here's where the bullets went through the head of the bed. That guy must have been practicing in a shooting gallery."

"It's all my fault, Mr. Barker," Simpson went on apologetically. "Knowing about you I might have suspected something in a ship's company made up like this one is. But I'm going through with it with a fine-tooth comb before we reach Naples."

It seemed necessary in the morning for Camilla to get a new slant on the events of the previous day so that he thoughts would make sense. An important fact seemed to emerge. She had been most earnestly embraced by a man she had met only two days before. Another important fact was that she seemed to have liked it.

She took her coffee in her room and after her bath found herself with a new point of view which refused to accept Mr. Barker at his face value. She was glad when there was a clatter at the door and Josephine Holloway and Kitty Trimble rushed in. All night they had been ready to explode with curiosity, they said, for the story of Camilla's part in the affair was all over the ship, much distorted, making her a heroine of sorts.

"Well, Toots, you certainly put one over on Asad," Josephine gurgled. "and Slim and Michael, to say nothing of all the eligible females on this ark."

"What I came in to find out," Kitty Trimble said, "is what you've got that I haven't got. You haven't even got the experience of a handsome grass widow twice removed. And yet you walk off with the mystery man under my very eyes, lead him out into the moonlight, which makes every woman beautiful, so he can make love to you; and then, just to show him how indispensable you are to him, you save his life from a bunch of assassins."

"There's nothing to tell except that he's half American, working for the British government—very interesting and what you'd call a good egg."

"But who was it wanted to kill him and why?"

"You'll have to ask him." Josie gave a sniff of importance. "Seems to me you're awfully snooty about him. You warn the man and keep him from being shot and he doesn't even tell you—"

"It was none of my business." "Or ours, I guess you mean. Oh, well—"

A knock on the door and a steward entered. "Captain's compliments, Miss Dean, and if it's convenient for you he would like to see you in his office at once."

The other girls rose as the steward went out. Camilla slipped into her coat and with a wave of her hand hurried out toward the gangway to the upper deck.

She was surprised to find a number of people who almost filled the captain's cabin. Her glance passed over them quickly; passengers with those faces she was familiar. There were Slim, Michael, Donald Barker, the Russian—Stephanov, Astad, Torelli and several other men. A steward, a member of the crew apparently just off duty, came in and stood near the desk where Simpson sat with the purr, Mr. Disston.

"Captain Simpson asked you up here," Barker whispered, "on the chance that you might recognize some of these men or their voices. It's pretty hopeless, but he wants you just to sit in and listen while they talk." She nodded and took the chair he offered her.

The captain addressed them all. "I invited you here because the room stewards have reported that none of you had turned in before half-past one o'clock last night. It was after that hour that a murder was attempted on this ship. Someone sneaked along A deck, in the darkness, and fired through the port of Mr. Barker's stateroom. Mr. Barker fired at the intruder from the sofa where he was lying, but in the dim light his shot went wild."

Simpson went on, looking sternly at the faces of his visitors. "Now, the captain of a ship," he continued, "is also chief of police, judge, jury and public prosecutor. I've asked you here to testify as to what you were doing at that hour. Mr. Asad, you were on the promenade deck just before the occurrence. Will you stand up and tell me if you heard the shots, where you were, and what you did?"

Joseph Asad smiled cheerfully. "Gladly. I had come in from a walk on deck where I passed Miss Dean and Mr. Barker. I stopped for a while in the saloon to find a book and then went down the main gangway to B deck and stood aft talking to the chief engineer who had just come out of his office to

Proud Wife



Bobby Riggs, Chicago tennis star, is shown receiving the congratulations of his wife after he successfully defended his title in the 51th annual Sea Bright, N. J., invitation tennis tournament. He became the first player to take this important title four times.

Six-Inch Sermon

By Rev. Robert H. Harper

PETER ENCOURAGES SUFFERING CHRISTIANS

Lesson for August 17: I Peter 4:12-19; 5:6-11; Golden Text, I Peter 4:16

The problem of human suffering is as old as the world is. It was evidently a purpose of the book of Job to teach that suffering is not always the result of sin, as the ancient seemed to believe, but that it may be used to test a man—to prove how strong he is. In the present lesson Peter encouraged suffering Christians by telling them it was not strange that such and such had happened unto them but rather natural that fiery trial had come among them—to "prove" them.

In the fellowship of Christ it was natural that Christians should be partakers of his suffering. But Peter emphasized that if they suffered with Christ they would "at the revelation of his glory" also rejoice with "exceeding joy."

It is much better to suffer that which will end in glory than to suffer as a murderer or other evildoer. If the righteous scarcely be saved, there will surely be no chance for the sinner to escape the evils attendant upon his wrongdoing, and how heavy indeed will be his suffering!

In the second passage men are exhorted to humble themselves that they may be exalted, to be sober and watchful lest they be taken by the enemy of their souls. Somehow, although they may not know exactly why, the best in life seems often to be bought with tears and sacrifice. How greatly should suffering saints be encouraged when they know that in their suffering they may share the fellowship of their Lord and also share one bright day in his eternal glory!

go below to the engine room. It was while I was talking to the chief that the shots were fired. Chief Zimmerman will, of course, verify this statement if you wish it. We could not tell where the shots came from, but we went at once to the saloon on A deck where a number of other passengers were gathered. It was there that I heard who had been shot at. Aside from this I know nothing about the affair."

"You have no idea as to who might have attempted to murder Mr. Barker?"

"Not the least idea," Asad finished.

Captain Simpson made a signal for Mr. Asad to be seated and called on Mr. Jose Serrano to testify.

Mr. Surrano was a small man with a scrubby brown pointed beard, streaked with gray, which he stroked affectionately.

"Mr. Surrano, you are an Assyriologist?" asked Captain Simpson.

"Yes, sir," he said in excellent English. "I am on my way east to investigate some new discoveries in the Tigris-Euphrates valley."

"Did you ever hear of Mr. Barker?"

"In a general way, yes. Mr. Ronald Barker is very well known in Egypt and Palestine. I read his monograph on some of the Cairene diggings. I am very glad to meet him in the flesh."

"Can you imagine any reason why anybody on this ship should want to kill him?"

"I cannot."

(Continued Next Week)

N. C. Youth Day To Be Observed at Manteo

Manteo, Aug. 13.—Boys and girls from throughout North Carolina will participate in the observance of North Carolina Youth Day here Saturday and Sunday, August 16-17, under the sponsorship of the National Youth Administration.

Speakers for the occasion will include Congressman Herbert Bonner of the first congressional district; Dr. Frank P. Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, and John A. Lang, state NYA administrator.

The youth day will serve a dual purpose of enabling hundreds of North Carolina boys and girls to visit Manteo and enjoy its recreational facilities and to see the production of the famous "Lost Colony."

In addition to the addresses, other highlights of the day's activities will be a softball game between a team from the Raleigh resident center of the NYA and CCC Camp No. 436, an informal party for NYA officials and other guests, a fish fry, an amateur show featuring NYA youths, a sightseeing trip to Roanoke Island, swimming, dancing, fishing and other recreation, and a special service Sunday morning, which will be conducted by Major Leon M. Hall, chaplain of the United States army at Fort Bragg, who will speak on "The Influence of Sacred Places." Arrangements have been made by the NYA to enable youths attending the event to receive special privileges for swimming, fishing and other recreational features.

Youths attending the annual Youth Day will pay a registration fee of \$1.35, which will include lodging, the fish fry, dancing at the casino, attendance at the production of "The Lost Colony" and other features of the event.

TEACHER CONTRACTS HELD TO BE CONTINUING AGREEMENT

Attorney General Harry McMullan ruled Saturday that if a school superintendent "inadvertently" fails to notify a teacher of his or her rejection by registered mail prior to the end of the school term, the teacher's contract continues in effect.

The 1941 general assembly enacted legislation providing that teacher's contract continue in effect from

year to year unless they are notified of rejection by registered mail prior to the end of the school term.

Approximately 900,000 electric heaters are produced annually, according to the census bureau.

CARD OF THANKS

We wish to express our appreciation for the kindness, sympathy and helpfulness shown us during our recent bereavement.

MRS. ILA BINGHAM & FAMILY.

SISTER KENNY'S TREATMENT FOR INFANTILE PARALYSIS

An intimate picture of the personality and revolutionary methods of the Australian "Bush Nurse," whose remarkable theories are now being tested by medical science. An intensely interesting and informative article by Robert D. Potter. One of many features in the August 17th issue of

THE AMERICAN WEEKLY
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NOTICE

North Carolina, Watauga County.

Pursuant to the power and authority contained in that certain mortgage deed dated the 2nd day of June, 1941, executed by Blane Hodge and wife, Mary Hodge, to Ed S. Williams, which mortgage deed is duly recorded in the office of the register of deeds for Watauga county in Book 3, page 408, securing a certain note payable to Ed S. Williams, and default having been made in the payment of the said note as provided in said mortgage deed, the undersigned will offer for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash at the courthouse door of Watauga county at 12 o'clock noon, on the 8th day of September, 1941, the following described real estate, to wit:

Beginning on a stake in the branch in F. E. Kirby line and runs with his line to a stake in Stout and Robinson line; thence with Stout and Robinson line to F. E. Kirby's corner; thence with his line to a stake in Warren's line on top of the ridge; then down said ridge with Warren's and F. M. Greer's line to F. E. Kirby's corner; then with F. E. Kirby's line to the beginning, containing 12 acres, more or less.

This August 7, 1941.
ED S. WILLIAMS,
Mortgagee.

§-14-4 p.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE USERS

Never before in history have our long distance switchboards been so busy. Long distance calls this year have already far exceeded 1940's record-breaking average, and the volume grows greater every day.

Industries with vital defense orders and booming Army and Navy posts are relying heavily on long distance service. In addition, calls from the general public have increased by leaps and bounds.

Despite our "all-out" effort to meet these rapidly expanding demands, our facilities are at times operated at near capacity. Occasional delays may be expected on some long distance calls. "Hold-the-line, please" service is not always possible.

To relieve the situation we are engaged in an expansion program costing millions of dollars. Many thousands of miles of new long distance circuits have been placed in operation this year, and more are on the way. Additions to many switchboards have been installed. Others are being set up as fast as they can be secured and our men can place them in operation.

But manufacture and installation of telephone equipment takes time, and defense priorities are making it increasingly difficult to secure essential materials.

Long distance telephone users can do their part in this present emergency by avoiding as much as possible placing calls during the peak long distance hours of 9 to 11 a.m. and 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The understanding and cooperation of those we serve will be most helpful and will be genuinely appreciated.

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	Quarterly	Yearly	Benefit
One to Ten Years	10	40	\$ 50.00
Two to Twenty-nine Years	20	80	100.00
Thirty to Fifty Years	40	160	100.00
Fifty to Sixty-five years	60	240	100.00

Auction Sale

35 Head High Grade Milch Cows & Heifers

—at—

Appalachian College Dairy Farm

Boone, N. C.

Wed., August 27th

2:30 P. M.

Included in this sale are 12 Jerseys, 2 Holsteins, 4 Cross-Bred Holstein and Jersey, 9 Holstein Heifers and 8 Jersey Heifers.

Some of these heifers are bred. All cows have been tested for Bang's disease. Come and buy them at your own price. We are also offering at private sale a few good prebred Holstein bull calves at farmers' prices.

For further information about these animals, write D. B. Dougherty, Business Manager, Appalachian College, Boone, N. C.

Appalachian State Teachers College Dairy Farm
Boone, North Carolina

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