

The Surprising Sanctuary

By Lucie Cargill

"Night Her, Herr Lieutenant!"

"Behr gut! Velleint die sind in Wasser."

The heavy iron door closed. "Whew!" Hugh gasped. "That was a close shave. Ellendorf thinks we might be in the water. What's wrong. Why don't you answer?"

But the strain had been too much. Muriel had actually fainted.

"All through the captain," she complained, upon recovery. "If he hadn't put the thought into my head I shouldn't have passed out. Fainting female fault!"

She harped on this string softly until Hugh, bending over to give a consoling kiss, was astonished to discover tears in her eyes.

"My dear, my dear," he said, wondering how to cope with the situation. "Don't lose heart."

"Would you mind very much if I put my head on your shoulder and had a good cry?"

For answer he pulled her into a comfortable position and behaved with extreme commonsense by saying nothing until she borrowed his handkerchief, and dried the last tear.

"Hugh," she murmured. "Captain Walsh knew what he was talking about—and I hate him for it. If ever you give me away I'll never speak to you again as long as I live."

Privately, Hugh feared that might not be long in any event, and the opportunity of further talk with the captain seemed a remote contingency.

"I'll be mum as an oyster," he promised.

She pressed his arm. "But you can tell pop, if you wish. I haven't any secrets from those I love best in the world."

Once more they fell silent and then were able to distinguish the dull throb of a petrol engine. The submarine rocked gently at her moorings.

**CHAPTER XVIII
A U-BOAT IN TOW**

To a layman, the inside of a submarine is as bewildering as the interior of a human being, and almost as much overcrowded with vital organs. The adventures of Mr. Pewsey Mason, Captain Walsh, Jenson and the two boatmen after Hugh and Muriel had parted company, were concerned, to a large extent, in dodging about among ballast tanks, electric accumulators, torpedo tubes and other impediments.

There had been an intention to put the machinery out of gear, but when it came to arranging this patriotic sabotage they did not know how to begin. If one section was destroyed the craft might fill with water, or blow up, or do something else equally inconvenient.

When the grim game of hide and seek with Ellendorf's crew was in progress, the opportunity for inflicting damage had passed.

Those isolated shots which had been heard in the aft magazine were fired by Mr. Mason. Having more respect for the interior fittings, the Germans avoided resort to firearms.

Inevitably, the struggle lacked orderliness. It was conducted without any nice regard for rules. Whenever a hand was available for hitting, somebody jabbed at it with anything heavy. McFergus and Oelvie were at their best in this kind of scrap. The skipper, in particular, went berserk. His great fist moved in and out like pistons, and as he smote, he sang snatches of Calvinistic hymns.

"Dinna curse—dinna curse," he implored the mate. "Tik that, ye luntnock!"

"Get on wi' the job and leave my morals be," Oelvie retorted. A hostile fist went the speaker's staggering. Catching hold of the

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first solid object, which happened to be a main switch, he saved a nasty fall, but plunged the engine room into darkness.

"Put her on, innon."

"I canna find it again."

"Where you'll never find them."

"Aye, cap'n, and my landlubber of a mate."

"Cling on to my coat. Mason and George are with an effort."

now! To the companion ladder."

A milling mob of enemies surrounded them. Still in unbroken formation they crowded into an alleyway a mistake impossible to rectify. Here were no delicate obstacles to disarrange the Germans. Lights went up all over the vessel, and Ellendorf in person, stood in the opening.

"I expected to meet four people, but not as you are. The good captain is out of the guard room, I notice. And these others came in the motor-boat which so great a puzzle was. Where is the Fraulein, and Edward?"

Mr. Mason exclaimed:

"Put your hands up! Up, I say!"

Walsh groaned audibly as the door of the prison opened again. Out came the two Germans, aggressive as ever, now that they had adequate support.

"If you reveal the whereabouts of our young friends it shall be made pleasant for you," Ellendorf promised.

"Can we trust that?" Walsh coolly rejoined.

"On my honour as a German."

Mr. Mason opened his mouth, but the captain motioned him to be quiet. "Very well," he lied valiantly. "They are on land."

"The Scottish mainland?"

"No, on this island, I regret they haven't got beyond."

"We shall see they do not."

"First catch your man, Lieutenant."

"You mock, yes," Ellendorf controlled himself with an effort. "I shall make you sorry."

"Is this the promised pleasantness?"

"I do not break my word, captain. You are excused from."

Which was something, as Walsh pointed out after the Germans left. "Being chained up to the last straw, I can tell you. As it is, we might."

"Might what?"

"Come to think of it, it doesn't do to talk here. Huns are up to every kind of trick."

"Like what—recording devices?"

"Wouldn't surprise me."

Dim daylight filtered in through a high grating. The insufficient illumination was augmented by Walsh's petrol lighter. "Might knock guard on head when food brought," he scribbled on the back of an old envelope.

They nodded, though not very hopefully.

Outside, a terrific commotion was going on. "If Muriel and..." Mason began. Walsh clapped a hand over his mouth to prevent any tactless remark.

Nothing, however, could stay the agonised cry of Oelvie when he recognized the starting up of his beloved motor. "To the de'il wi' them. They'll burn out every valve revving her that fast."

"Did ye no call 'em rattletrap the noot?"

"I dare say the government will make amends if your craft is damaged," Walsh intervened. "Providing we live through this. There's somebody at the door already." He lowered his voice. "Don't touch my yet."

(To Be Continued)

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