

# BULL-DOG DRUMMOND

The Adventures of A Demobilized Officer Who Found Peace Dull

by **CYRIL McNEILE**  
"SAPPER"

Illustrations by **IRWIN MYERS**

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CHAPTER I  
In Which He Takes Tea at the Carlton and Is Surprised.

ONE.  
Captain Hugh Drummond, D.S.O., M. C., late of His Majesty's Royal Lomshires, was whistling in his morning bath. Being by nature of a cheerful disposition, the symptom did not surprise his servant, late private of the famous regiment, who was laying breakfast in an adjoining room.

After a while the whistling ceased, and the musical gurgle of escaping water announced that the concert was over. It was the signal for James Denny—the square-jawed ex-batman—to disappear into the back regions and

get from his wife the kidneys and bacon which that most excellent woman had grilled to a turn. But on this particular morning the invariable routine was broken. James Denny seemed preoccupied, distraught.

Once or twice he scratched his head and stared out of the window with a puzzled frown.  
"What's you looking for, James Denny?" The irate voice of his wife at the door made him look round guiltily. "Them kidneys is ready and waiting these five minutes."

Her eyes fell on the table, and she advanced into the room wiping her hands on her apron.  
"Did you ever see such a bunch of letters?" she said.

"Forty-five," returned her husband, grimly, "and more to come." He picked up the newspaper lying beside the chair and opened it.

"Them's the result of that," he continued cryptically, indicating a paragraph with a square finger, and thrusting the paper under his wife's nose.

"Demobilized officer," she read slowly, "finding peace incredibly tedious,



"Demobilized Officer," She Read Slowly, "Finding Peace Incredibly Tedious. Would Welcome Diversion."

would welcome diversion. Legitimate, if possible; but crime, if of a comparatively humorous description, no objection. Excitement essential. Would be prepared to consider permanent job if suitably impressed by applicant for his services. Reply at once Box X10."

She put down the paper on a chair and stared first at her husband and then at the rows of letters neatly arranged on the table.

"I call it wicked," she announced at length. "Fair flying in the face of Providence. Crime, Denny—crime. Don't you get 'aving nothing to do with such mad pranks, my man, or you and me will be having words." She shook an admonitory finger at him, and retired slowly to the kitchen.

A moment or two later Hugh Drummond came in. Slightly under six feet in height, he was broad in proportion. His best friend would not have called him good-looking, but he was the fortunate possessor of that cheerful type of ugliness which inspires immediate confidence in its owner.

He paused as he got to the table and glanced at the rows of letters. "Who would have thought it, James?" he remarked. "Great Scot! I shall have to get a partner."

With disapproval showing in every line of her face, Mrs. Denny entered the room, carrying the kidneys, and Drummond glanced at her with a smile.

"Good morning, Mrs. Denny," he said. "Wherefore this worried look on your face? Has that reprobate James been misbehaving himself?"

The worthy woman snorted. "He has not, sir—not yet, leastwise. And if so be that he does"—her eyes traveled up and down the back of the hapless Denny, who was quite unnecessarily pulling books off shelves and putting them back again—"if so be that he does," she continued grimly, "him and me will have words—as I've told him already this morning." She stalked from the room, after staring pointedly at the letters in Drummond's hand, and the two men looked at one another.

"It's that there reference to crime, sir, that's torn it," said Denny in a hoarse whisper.

"Thinks I'm going to lead you astray, does she, James?" He was opening the first envelope, and suddenly he looked up with a twinkle in his eyes. "Just to set her mind at rest," he remarked gravely, "you might tell her that, as far as I can see at present, I shall only undertake murder in exceptional cases."

He prepped the letter up against the toast-rack and commenced his breakfast. "Where is Puddington, James? and one might almost ask—why is Puddington? No town has any right to such an offensive name." He glanced through the letter and shook his head. "Tush! tush! And the wife of the bank manager too—the bank manager of Puddington, James! Can you conceive of anything so dreadful! But I'm afraid Mrs. Bank Manager is a puss—a distinct puss. It's when they get on the soul-mate stunt that the furniture begins to fly."

Drummond tore up the letter and tossed the pieces into the basket beside him. Then he turned to his servant and handed him the remainder of the envelopes.

"Go through them, James, while I assault the kidneys, and pick two or three out for me. I see that you will have to become my secretary."

"Do you want me to open them, sir?" asked Denny doubtfully.

"You've hit it, James—hit it in one. Classify them for me in groups. Criminal; sporting; amatory—that means of or pertaining to love; stupid and merely boring; and as a last resort, miscellaneous." He stirred his coffee thoughtfully. "I feel that as a first venture in our new career—ours, I said, James—love appeals to me irresistibly. Find me a damsel in distress; a beautiful girl, helpless in the clutches of thieves. Let me feel that I can fly to her succor, clad in my new grey suit."

He finished the last piece of bacon and pushed away his plate.

Denny was engrossed in a letter he had just opened. A perplexed look was spreading over his face, and suddenly he sucked his teeth loudly. It was a sure sign that James was excited, and Drummond glanced up quickly, and removed the letter from his hands. "I'm surprised at you, James," he remarked severely. "A secretary should control itself. Don't forget that the perfect secretary is an it; an automatic machine—a thing incapable of feeling."

He read the letter through rapidly, and then, turning back to the beginning, he read it slowly through again.

"My dear Box X10.—I don't know whether your advertisement was a joke; I suppose it must have been. But I read it this morning, and it's just possible, X10, just possible, you mean it. And if you do, you're the man I want. I can offer you excitement and probably crime."

"I'm up against it, X10. For a girl I've bitten off rather more than I can chew. I want help—badly. Will you come to the Carlton for tea tomorrow afternoon? I want to have a look at you and see if I think you are genuine. Wear a white flower in your buttonhole."

Drummond laid the letter down, and gazed out his cigarette case. "Tomorrow, James," he murmured. "That is today—this very afternoon. Verily I believe that we have impinged upon the goods." He rose and stood looking out of the window thoughtfully.

"You think it's genuine, sir?" said James.

His master blew out a cloud of smoke. "I know it is," he answered dreamily. "Look at that writing; the decision in it—the character. She'll be medium height, and dark, with the sweetest little nose and mouth. Her coloring, James, will be—"

But James had discreetly left the room.

**TWO.**

At four o'clock exactly Hugh Drummond stepped out of his two-story flat at the Haymarket entrance to the Carlton. For a few moments after entering the hotel he stood at the top of the stairs outside the dining room, while his eyes traveled round the tables in the lounge below.

Slowly and thoroughly he continued his search. It was early, of course, yet, and she might not have arrived, but he was taking no chances.

Suddenly his eyes ceased wandering, and remained fixed on a table at the far end of the lounge. Half hidden behind a plant a girl was seated alone, and for a moment she looked straight at him. Then with the faintest suspicion of a smile, she turned away, and commenced drumming on the table with her fingers.

The table next to her was unoccupied and Drummond made his way toward it and sat down.

He felt not the slightest doubt in his mind that this was the girl who had written him, and, having given an order to the waiter, he started to study her face as unobtrusively as possible. He could only see the profile, but that was quite sufficient to make him bless the moment when more as a jest than anything else he had sent his advertisement to the paper.

Her eyes, he could see, were very blue; and great masses of golden brown hair coiled over her ears, from under a small black hat. He glanced at her hands, and noted, with approval, the absence of any ring. Then he looked once more at her face, and found her eyes were fixed on him.

This time she did not look away. She seemed to think that it was her turn to conduct the examination and Drummond fumbled in his waistcoat pocket. After a moment he found what he wanted, and taking out a card he propped it against the teapot so that the girl could see what was on it. In large black capitals he had written Box X10.

She spoke almost at once. "You'll do, X10," she said, and he turned to her with a smile.

"It's very nice of you to say so," he murmured. "If I may, I will return the compliment. So will you." She frowned slightly. "This isn't foolishness, you know. What I said in my letter is literally true. I want you to tell me," and there was no trace of jesting in her voice, "tell me, on your word of honor, whether that advertisement was bona fide or a joke."

He answered her in the same vein. "It started more or less as a joke. It may now be regarded as absolutely genuine."

She nodded as if satisfied. "Are you prepared to risk your life?"

Drummond's eyebrows went up and then he smiled. "Granted that the inducement is sufficient," he returned slowly, "I think I may say that I am."

He saw that she was staring over his shoulder at some one behind his back.

"Don't look around," she ordered, "and tell me your name quickly."

"Drummond—Captain Drummond, late of the Lomshires." He leaned back in his chair, and lit a cigarette.

"My dear Phyllis," said a voice behind his back, "this is a pleasant surprise. I had no idea that you were in London."

A tall, clean-shaven man stopped beside the table, throwing a keen glance at Drummond.

"The world is full of such surprises, isn't it?" answered the girl lightly. "I don't suppose you know Captain Drummond, do you? Mr. Lakington—art connoisseur and—er—collector."

The two men bowed slightly, and Mr. Lakington smiled. "I do not remember ever having heard my harmless pastimes more concisely described," he remarked suavely. "Are you interested in such matters?"

"Not very, I'm afraid," answered Drummond. "Just recently I have been rather too busy to pay much attention to art."

The other man smiled again, and it struck Hugh that rarely, if ever, had he seen such a cold, merciless face.

"Of course you've been to France," Lakington murmured. "Unfortunately a bad heart kept me on this side of the water. Sometimes I cannot help thinking how wonderful it must have been to be able to kill without fear of consequences. There is art in killing, Captain Drummond—profound art."

He looked at his watch and sighed. "Alas! I must tear myself away. Are you returning home this evening?"

The girl, who had been glancing round the restaurant, shrugged her shoulders. "Probably," she answered. "I haven't quite decided. I might stop with Aunt Kate."

"Fortunate Aunt Kate." With a bow Lakington turned away, and through the glass Drummond watched him set his hat and stick from the cloakroom. Then he looked at the girl, and noticed that she had gone a little white.

"What's the matter, old thing?" he asked quickly. "Are you feeling faint?"

(To be continued tomorrow)

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