

# BULL-DOG DRUMMOND

The Adventures of a Demobilized Officer Who Found Peace Dull

By CYRIL McNEILE

"SAPPER"

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### "DANGER! DANGER!"

Synopsis.—In December, 1918, four men gather in a hotel in Bern and hear one of the quartet outline a plan to paralyze Great Britain and at the same time seize world power. The other three, Hocking, American, and Steinman and Von Gratz, German, all millionaires, agree to the scheme, providing another man, Hiram Potts, an American, is taken in. The instigator of the plot gives his name as Comte de Guy, but when he leaves for England with his daughter he decides to use the name Carl Peterson, Capt. Hugh (Bull-Dog) Drummond, a retired officer, advertises for work that will give him excitement, signing "X10." As a result he meets Phyllis Benton, a young woman who answered his ad. She tells him of strange murders and robberies of which she suspects a hand headed by Peterson and Henry Lakington. She fears her father is involved. Drummond decides to go to The Larches, Miss Benton's home, next door to The Elms, Peterson's place. Peterson and Lakington stop his car and look him over. While dining with Phyllis and her father Drummond leaves The Larches and explores The Elms. He discovers Lakington and Peterson using a thumb-screw on an American who signs a paper. Drummond rescues the American after a struggle and takes him to his home.

### CHAPTER II.—Continued.

"Compressed-air rifle—or electric," he muttered to himself, stumbling on, and half dragging, half carrying his dazed companion.

He was not very clear in his own mind what to do next, but the matter was settled for him unexpectedly. Barely had he got into the drawing-room, when the door opened and the girl rushed in.

"Get him away at once," she cried. "In your car. . . . Don't waste a second. I've started her up."

"Good girl," he cried enthusiastically. "But what about you?"

She stamped her foot impatiently. "I'm all right—absolutely all right. Get him away—that's all that matters."

Drummond grinned. "The humorous thing is that I haven't an idea who the bird is—except that—" He paused, with his eyes fixed on the man's left thumb. The top joint was crushed into a red, shapeless pulp, and suddenly the meaning of the instrument Lakington had produced from his pocket became clear. Also the reason of that dreadful cry at dinner.

"By God!" whispered Drummond half to himself, while his jaws set like a steel vise. "A thumb-screw. The devil's . . . the swine . . ."

"Oh! quick, quick," the girl urged in an agony. "They may be here at any moment." She dragged him to the door, and together they forced the man into the car.

"Lakington won't," said Hugh with a grin. "And if you see him tomorrow—don't ask after his jaw. . . . Good-night, Phyllis."

With a quick movement he raised her hand to his lips; then he slipped



"The Humorous Thing is That I Haven't an Idea Who the Bird Is—Except That—"

in the clutch and the car disappeared down the drive.

He felt a sense of elation and of triumph at having won the first round, and as the car whirled back to London through the cool night air his heart was singing with joy of action. And it was perhaps as well for his peace of mind that he did not witness the scene in the room at The Elms.

Lakington still lay motionless on the floor; Peterson's cigar still glowed steadily in the darkness. It was hard to believe that he had ever moved from the table; only the bullet imbedded in a tree proved that some-

body must have got busy. Of course, it might have been the girl, who was just lighting another cigarette from the stump of the old one.

At length Peterson spoke. "A young man of dash and temperament," he said genially. "It will be a pity to lose him."

"Why not keep him and lose the girl?" yawned Irma. "I think he might amuse me—"

"We have always our dear Henry to consider," answered Peterson. "Apparently the girl appeals to him. I'm afraid, Irma, he'll have to go . . . and at once . . ."

The speaker was tapping his left knee softly with his hand; save for that slight movement he sat as if nothing had happened. And yet ten minutes before a carefully planned coup had failed at the instant of success. Even his most fearless accomplices had been known to confess that Peterson's inhuman calmness sent cold shivers down their backs.

### CHAPTER III.

In Which Things Happen in Half Moon Street.

### ONE

Hugh Drummond folded up the piece of paper he was studying and rose to his feet as the doctor came into the room. He then pushed a silver box of cigarettes across the table and waited.

"Your friend," said the doctor, "is in a very peculiar condition, Captain Drummond—very peculiar. Can you enlighten me at all as to what he has been doing during the last few days?"

Drummond shook his head. "Haven't an earthly, doctor."

"There is, for instance, that very unpleasant wound in his thumb," pursued the other. "The top joint is crushed to a pulp."

"I noticed that last night," answered Hugh noncommittally. "Looks as if it had been mixed up between a hammer and an anvil, don't it?"

"But have you no idea how it occurred?"

"I'm full of ideas," said the soldier. "In fact, if it's any help to you in your diagnosis that wound was caused by the application of an unpleasant medieval instrument known as a thumb-screw."

The worthy doctor looked at him in amazement. "A thumb-screw! You must be joking, Captain Drummond."

"Very far from it," answered Hugh briefly. "If you want to know, it was touched and go whether the other thumb didn't share the same fate." He blew out a cloud of smoke and smiled inwardly as he noticed the look of scandalized horror on his companion's face. "It isn't his thumb that concerns me," he continued; "it's his general condition. What's the matter with him?"

The doctor pursed his lips and looked wise, while Drummond wondered that no one had ever passed a law allowing men of his type to be murdered on sight.

"His heart seems sound," he answered after a weighty pause, "and I found nothing wrong with him constitutionally. In fact, I may say, Captain Drummond, he is in every respect a most healthy man. Except—er—except for this peculiar condition."

Drummond exploded. "Damnation take it, man, what on earth do you suppose I asked you to come round for? It's of no interest to me to hear that his liver is working properly." Then he controlled himself. "I beg your pardon, doctor; I had rather a trying evening last night. Can you give me any idea as to what has caused this peculiar condition?"

His companion accepted the apology with an acid bow. "Some form of drug," he answered.

Drummond heaved a sigh of relief. "Now we're getting on," he cried. "Have you any idea what drug?"

"It is, at the moment, hard to say," returned the other. "In a day or two, perhaps, I might be able to—er—arrive at some conclusion . . ."

"Which, at present, you have not. Right; now we know where we are. As you don't know what the drug is, presumably you don't know either how long it will take for the effect to wear off."

"That—er—is, within limits, correct," conceded the doctor.

"What about diet?"

"Oh! light. . . . Not too much meat. . . . No alcohol. . . ." He rose to his feet as Hugh opened the door; really the war seemed to have produced a distressing effect on people's manners. Diet was the one question on which he always let himself go.

"Not much meat—no alcohol. Right. Good morning, doctor. Down the stairs and straight on. Good morning." The door closed behind him, and he descended to his waiting car with cold disapproval on his face.

"Excuse me, sir." The doctor paused and eyed a well-dressed man who had spoken to him uncomplacably. "Am I right in assuming that you are a doctor?"

"You are perfectly correct, sir, in your assumption."

The man smiled; obviously a gentleman, thought the practitioner, with his hand on the door of his car.

"It's about a great pal of mine, Captain Drummond, who lives in here," went on the other. "I hope you won't think it unprofessional, but I thought I'd ask you privately, how you find him."

The doctor looked surprised. "Captain Drummond, so far as I am aware, has never been better. I—er—cannot say the same of his friend." He stepped into his car. "Why not go up and see for yourself?"

The car rolled smoothly into Piccadilly, but the man showed no signs of availing himself of the doctor's suggestion. He turned and walked rapidly away, and a few moments later—in an exclusive West End club—a trunk call was put through to Godalming—a call which caused the recipient to nod his head in satisfaction and order the Rolls-Royce.

Meanwhile, unconscious of this sudden solitude for his health, Hugh Drummond was once more occupied with the piece of paper he had been studying on the doctor's entrance. Beyond establishing the fact that the man in the peculiar condition was Hiram C. Potts, the American multimillionaire, he could make nothing out of it.

"If only I'd managed to get the whole of it," he muttered to himself for the twentieth time. "That damn fellow Peterson was too quick." The scrap he had torn off was typewritten, save for the American's scrawled signature, and Hugh knew the words by heart.

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AM. C. POTTS.

At length he replaced the scrap in his pocket-book and rang the bell.

"James," he remarked as his servant came in: "You'd better know that as far as I can see we're up against a tough proposition."

"Indeed, sir," murmured his servant. "The gentleman is asking for you, sir." Mrs. Denny's voice from the door made them look round.

Hugh walked quickly along the passage to the room where the millionaire lay in bed.

"How are you feeling?" said Drummond cheerfully.

The man stared at him uncomprehendingly, and shook his head.

"Do you remember last night?" Hugh continued, speaking very slowly and distinctly. Then a sudden idea struck him and he pulled the scrap of paper out of his case. "Do you remember signing that?"

For a while the man looked at it; then with a sudden cry of fear he shrank away.

"No, no," he muttered, not again."

Hugh hurriedly replaced the paper. "Bad break on my part, old bean; you evidently remember rather too well. It's quite all right," he continued reassuringly; "No one will hurt you." Then after a pause—"Is your name Hiram C. Potts?"

The man nodded his head doubtfully and muttered "Hiram Potts" once or twice, as if the words sounded familiar.

"Do you remember driving in a motor car last night?" persisted Hugh.

But what little flash of remembrance had pierced the drug-clouded brain seemed to have passed; the man only stared dazedly at the speaker. Drummond tried him with a few more questions, but it was no use, and after a while he got up and moved toward the door.

"Don't you worry, old son," he said with a smile. "We'll have you jumping about like a two-year-old in a couple of days."

Then he paused; the man was evidently trying to say something. "What is it you want?" Hugh leaned over the bed.

"Danger, danger." Faintly the words came, and then, with a sigh, he lay back exhausted.

With a grim smile Drummond watched the motionless figure.

"I'm afraid," he said half aloud, "that you're rather like your medical attendant. Your only contribution to the sphere of pure knowledge is something I know already."

He went out and quietly closed the door. And as he re-entered his sitting-room he found his servant standing motionless behind one of the curtains watching the street below.

"There's a man, sir," he remarked without turning around, "watching the house."

For a moment Hugh stood still, frowning. Then he gave a short laugh. "The devil there is!" he remarked. "The game has begun in earnest, my worthy warrior, with the first nine points to us. For possession, even of a semi-dazed lunatic, is nine points of the law, is it not, sir?"

### TWO.

At twelve o'clock precisely the bell rang, announcing a visitor, and Drummond looked up, as his servant came into the room.

"Yes, James," he remarked, "I think we are at home. I want you to remain within call, and under no circumstances let our sick visitor out of your sight for more than a minute. In fact, I think you'd better sit in his room."

James, with a curt "Very good, sir," left the room. Almost at once he returned, and flinging open the door, announced Mr. Peterson.

Drummond looked up quickly and rose with a smile.

"Good morning," he cried. "This is a very pleasant surprise, Mr. Peterson." He waved his visitor to a chair. "Hope you've had no more trouble with your car."

Mr. Peterson drew off his gloves, smiling amiably. "None at all, thank you, Captain Drummond. The chauffeur appears to have mastered the defect."

"It was your eye on him that did it. Wonderful thing—the human optic, as I said to your friend, Mr. Lakington. I hope that he's quite well and taking nourishment."

"Soft food only," said the other genially. "Mr. Lakington had a most unpleasant accident last night—most unpleasant."

Hugh's face expressed his sympathy. "How very unfortunate!" he murmured. "I trust nothing serious."

"I fear his lower jaw was fractured in two places," Peterson helped himself to a cigarette from the box beside him. "The man who hit him must have been a boxer."

"Mixed up in a brawl, was he?" said Drummond, shaking his head. "I should never have thought, from what little I've seen of Mr. Lakington, that he went in for painting the town red. I'd have put him down as a most abstemious man—but one never can tell, can one? I once knew a fellow who used to get fighting drunk on three whiskies, and to look at him, you'd have put him down as a parson. Wonderful amount of cheap fun that chap got out of life."

Peterson flicked the ash from his cigarette into the grate. "Shall we come to the point, Captain Drummond?" he remarked affably.

Hugh looked bewildered. "The point, Mr. Peterson? Er—by all manner of means."

Peterson smiled even more affably. "I felt certain that you were a young man of discernment," he remarked, "and I wouldn't like to keep you from your paper a minute longer than necessary."

"Not a bit," cried Hugh. "My time is yours—though I'd very much like to know your real opinion of the Juggernaut for the Chester cup. It seems to me that he cannot afford to give Sumatra seven pounds on their form up to date."

"Are you interested in gambling?" asked Peterson politely.

"A mild flutter, Mr. Peterson, every now and then," returned Drummond. "Strictly limited stakes."

"If you confine yourself to that you will come to no harm," said Peterson. "It is when the stakes become unlimited that the danger of a crash becomes unlimited too."

"That is what my mother always told me," remarked Hugh. "She even went further, dear good woman that she was. 'Never bet except on a certainty, my boy,' was her constant advice, 'and then put your shirt on!' I can hear her saying it now, Mr. Peterson, with the golden rays of the setting sun lighting up her sweet face."

Peterson leaned forward in his chair. "Young man," he remarked, "we've got to understand one another. Last night you butted in on my plans, and I do not like people who do that. By an act which, I must admit, appealed to me greatly, you removed something I require—something, moreover, which I intend to have. Breaking the electric bulb with a revolver shot shows resource and initiative. The blow that smashed Henry Lakington's jaw in two places shows strength. All qualities which I admire, Captain Drummond—admire greatly. I should dislike having to deprive the world of those qualities."

Drummond gazed at the speaker open-mouthed. "My dear sir," he protested feebly, "you overwhelm me. Are you really accusing me of being a sort of wild west show?" He wagged a finger at Peterson. "You know you've been to the movies too much, like my fellow, James. He's got revolvers and things on the brain."

Peterson's face was absolutely impassive; save for a slightly tired smile it was expressionless. "Finally, Captain Drummond, you tore in half a piece of paper which I require—and removed a very dear old friend of my family, who is now in this house. I want them both back, please, and if you like I'll take them now."

Drummond shrugged his shoulders resignedly. "There is something about you, Mr. Peterson," he murmured, "which I like. So masterful, so com-

elling, so unruffled. I feel sure—when you have finally disabused your mind of this absurd hallucination—that we shall become real friends."

"Tell me, why did you allow this scoundrel to treat you in such an offhand manner?"

"Unfortunately a bullet intended for him just missed," answered Peterson casually. "A pity—because there would have been no trace of him by now."

"Might be awkward for you," murmured Hugh. "Such methods, Mr. Peterson, are illegal, you know. May I offer you a drink?"

Peterson declined courteously. "Thank you—not at this hour." Then he rose. "I take it, then, that you will not return me my property here and now."

"Still the same delusion, I see!" remarked Hugh with a smile.

"Still the same delusion," repeated Peterson. "I shall be ready to receive both the paper and the man up-



"You're Such an Aggressive Young Man, Captain Drummond—and, I Fear, Not Very Tactful!"

till six o'clock tonight at 32A Berners street; and it is possible, I might ever say probable, should they turn up by then, that I shall not find it necessary to kill you."

Hugh grinned. "Your kindly forbearance amazes me," he cried.

"Should they not arrive by then, I shall be put to the inconvenience of taking them, and in that case—much as I regret it—you may have to be killed. You're such an aggressive young man, Captain Drummond—and, I fear, not very tactful."

"He spoke regretfully, drawing on his gloves; then as he got to the door he paused. 'I'm afraid that my words will not have much effect,' he remarked, 'but the episode last night did appeal to me. I would like to spare you—I would really. It's a sign of weakness, my young friend, which I view with amazement—but nevertheless, it is there. So be warned in time. Return my property to Berners street, and leave England for a few months.' His eyes seemed to burn into the soldier's brain. 'You are meddling in affairs,' he went on gently, 'of the danger of which you have no conception. A fly in the gear-box of a motor-car would be a sounder proposition for a life insurance than you will be—if you continue on your present course.'

"Where have you hidden Potts?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Portraiture on Jewels.

Probably the best bit of portraiture done on any jewel is that of the head of Mithridates, the ancient king of Pontus. This deep violet image was discovered many years ago in India. The largest sculptured or carved work with an amethyst as the medium consists of the bust of Trajan, the Roman emperor. This adornment, formerly in the possession of the Prussian court, mysteriously disappeared when Napoleon occupied the city of Berlin. Historians allege that some of his generals had taken ways. The work of art has been lost to the world since the time of this invasion by "the little corporal."

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