

# UNDER PRESSURE

## By George Agnew Chamberlain

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WNU Service

### SYNOPSIS

Joyce Sewell, on the eve of her twentieth birthday, rebels at her lot, dependent on her detested stepmother, Irma, and full of tragic memories of her mother's murder twelve years before and her father's death six months ago. Irma calls in Helm Blackadder, an admirer, to help her persuade Joyce to marry rich, young Michael Kirkpatrick. Mike, sent up to Joyce by Irma and Blackadder, demands a showdown on his proposal and is rejected. Reading her father's papers, Joyce realizes that La Barranca, a Mexican hacienda which her father had owned, legally belongs to her. Later, she receives a letter enclosing a warrant on the United States Treasury for \$10,000 compensation for her mother's murder at La Barranca. She confers with Mr. Bradley, a banker and only remaining friend of her father's. She decides that she wants to make a secret journey to Mexico. Bradley arranges all details for her. She departs by plane undetected. Dirk Van Suttart, second secretary of the American embassy in Mexico City, gives Joyce a chills reception and she loses her temper. She finds a Mexican woman lawyer, Margarida Fonseca, who takes her to General Onelia, right-hand man to the Mexican minister of war. Margarida reminds Onelia that the usurper of La Barranca is his dangerous enemy, General Dorado. The two make plans to send Joyce with a few picked men under Pancho Buenaventura to drive Dorado out. Adan Arnaldo, a young man who runs El Tenebroso, a night club, knows Dorado's present whereabouts, so they take Joyce there that night, where she notices Dirk. General Dorado arrives.

### CHAPTER IV—Continued

Arnaldo's strong hands darted out to seize the barrel of the gun and hold it pointed upward. The last of the lights were extinguished and with darkness came uproar. Five shots rang out in a steady spurt, crashed, women screamed, dishes tumbled, women screamed, men groaned and grunted. Joyce sat quite still, pressing back as if to push herself through the wall. Soon she reached out her right hand tentatively. General Onelia was gone. She pushed her left along the seat. It was empty—Margarida was gone.

At that instant a fumbling hand found her shoulder, shot down along her arm and seized her wrist. She felt herself being hauled along the wall by someone who seemed sure of his way. Who was it and why? Was it Onelia, Van Suttart or—Dorado? What did it matter if only she could get out? Something struck her in the face, enveloping her head. For a moment she thought she would suffocate, then realized it had been merely a plunge through heavy curtains. The next thing she knew she was dragging the sharp sweet air of the night into her lungs as her escort half lifted, half hurled her into the tonneau of a waiting car.

The chauffeur started so suddenly her head was thrown against the back of the seat. Then the cold cut into her; she shivered from head to toe and her teeth began to chatter with a steady rattle. Promptly the man took her in his arms, snatched the rug from its bracket and drew it over them both. She tried to calm herself—she must calm herself or she couldn't think. What did he intend? Where was he taking her? Then he did something which steadied her nerves at once; he tried to light a cigarette without disturbing her. At the flash of the match she looked up into Adan Arnaldo's pensive face.

A great many thoughts struck Joyce all at once, making her dizzy. She had escaped the scene of pandemonium to fall into what? "If you'll put me in a taxi," she said, drawing away from him. "I'll be all right. Then you can go back." "To help the scrubwomen?" asked Arnaldo. "There wasn't anything unusual about our closing to-night. I've seen eight people shot and killed in the last two years." "Oh!" gasped Joyce. "That's why I was wondering," he stated. "About what?" she asked. "You—a girl like you! I don't get it yet. Coming into a dump like that between two buzzards. What did they want?"

She decided at once to put Arnaldo off and in the same flash wondered if she dared try to draw him. "How should I know?" she replied, almost without a pause. "I never saw either of them before today."

"You're not lying?" "I came to Mexico only yesterday," said Joyce. "It's the truth. I wanted to see what was going on so I got Margarida Fonseca to take me."

"How did you come to go to her? Has she had herself listed as a guide?" "No," said Joyce. "She's my lawyer." "You've got me guessing," he declared. "When I saw you with those two zoploties I had a feeling you'd need help pretty soon and need it bad, but you don't seem to think so and I'm beginning to change my mind. Every man living has to be fooled by a woman ever so often and perhaps this is my night. Perhaps I'm a bonehead, blind in both eyes, and you're a bad egg."

"I'm not," said Joyce simply; "I'm exactly what you thought. Please take me home."

"Where?" She told him. He hesitated for a moment, then called out

the address to the driver. The car slowed, swung around the next circle and started back in the opposite direction.

"All right, I'll believe you. Since you say you're what I thought you were I'll take you straight to your hotel on one condition."

"What is it?" "That you never come into my place again."

"Don't worry!" said Joyce fervently. "I wouldn't anyway. I've never been so frightened before, and it wasn't the row that did it."

"No?" said Arnaldo curiously. "If that rumpus didn't scare you, what did?"

"A face. It was horrible. I'll never forget it."

"What face?" "That man in uniform—the one who started the trouble."

"Dorado," said Arnaldo slowly. "Pepe Dorado. So that's it. What do you want to know about Dorado?"

"Only—that that I'll never see him again."

"You won't; nobody will for a long while," said Arnaldo grimly. "Why?" asked Joyce quickly. "Did something happen to him?"

"Not yet, but I promise you it's going to. I give him until daylight. I won't see him out of town in person but I have a couple of partners nobody knows about who will. When they tell him to beat it he'll go and stay gone."

As the car drew up in the light from the hotel entrance she laid her hand on his arm and looked straight into his eyes. "Why have you been so good to me? Why?" He shrugged his shoulders. "A lot of us Mexicans play at hating



Pancho Buenaventura, in Uniform, Stepped Out to Help With the Luggage.

the United States, but not me. They were good to me up there, a lot better than I've been to you. We're different. It's like two worlds. There's one way to live in your country and another to live in mine, but let me give you a tip. It takes a strong head to stand mixed drinks. I have a strong head."

"So have I," said Joyce. He studied her thoughtfully. "Either you're right about your head or you're a fool."

"Why?" "Think it out for yourself. You don't know danger when you see it. You start out with the boner of coming to Mexico. You tie in with a couple of gringo-haters who wouldn't leave a lamb his bleat. You butt into El Tenebroso and when you're out riding with a buzz-saw you think you're playing with a paper pin-wheel. To top the list you decide to mix it with what—with whom? Pepe Dorado! No; there's only one way to make everything fit—you're a fool and I'm another."

"Perhaps I am," said Joyce soberly, "but I hope not." She pushed down the rug, stepped to the curb and gave him her hand. "I'll never forget you or what you've done; please don't forget me."

"I won't!" he assured her. "Get along in before you freeze."

At ten o'clock at night of the third day Joyce and her baggage were transferred by taxi to the railway station and then as a further precaution by another hired conveyance to Margarida's apartment. Onelia was there. He glanced at his watch and spoke in a tender voice which seemed to drip with regret at parting.

"It is time, my child. I shall stay here. Go down by yourself and slip into my car. The chauffeur already has your bags and I've given him the necessary instructions. Don't worry if he drives fast; it's only to make sure nobody can follow."

Joyce hesitated whether to kiss Margarida, chilled by the peculiar look in her eyes. Too impatient to

puzzle it out for what it was—a look of eternal farewell—she compromised by touching cheeks in the Latin manner, one cheek and then the other. That done she hurried down two flights of stairs to the street and within five minutes was being driven at vertiginous speed along the Paseo de la Reforma, through the umbrageous Bosque de Chapultepec, around Dolores cemetery and into a blind lane. There, blotted out against a clump of bushes, stood a dilapidated touring car with its tattered curtains in place. Sergeant Pancho Buenaventura, in uniform, stepped out to help with the luggage and motioned to her to get into the tonneau, but she knew better. Resigning that space to her bags she climbed into the front seat beside him. A moment later they were off and presently swung left into the Toluca road.

### CHAPTER V

Back in Elsinboro Mrs. Sewell was pacing distractedly up and down her living room awaiting the arrival of Helm Blackadder. Why had he shouted at her over the telephone? Why had he said such things? It was she who had grounds for anger, she who had a right to feel hurt. Was it her fault he had been away—gone to New York without saying a word? Her soft brown eyes watered and then blazed. Everything she had done had been right; she had sacrificed herself to the limit; but she had done what was right. Abruptly Blackadder appeared before her, not having bothered to ring or knock. She hurled herself into his arms.

"Helm! Oh, Helm!" she sobbed. It was one of the cleverest moves of her entire career. Perforce he held her, patting her back, and the harder she clung to him the less could he find it in his heart to pour out the scathing words which a moment ago had been trembling on the tip of his tongue.

"Irma, how on earth could you stir up such a mess for yourself? Why didn't you find out where I was and call me up? Why couldn't you wait till I came back?"

She threw herself into a chair and covered her eyes. "Please don't, Helm. Please listen to me first. That child—that poor child! When she didn't come back after the week-end I telephoned Frances Holder and found she hadn't been there at all! Then I tried to telephone you; I did, Helm. I notified the police; then I thought of the radio."

"I'll say you did!" groaned Blackadder. "Hasn't it occurred to you Joyce isn't lost at all? That nobody kidnaped her? That nothing has happened to her except what she intended to have happen?"

"No, it hasn't. Do you remember what she said to us? Do you? Well, I do; the words are burned into my brain. This is what she said: 'You want to be rid of me—both of you. All right, I promise. If it isn't that way it will be another.'"

"Bunk," said Blackadder. "That girl? Never. How much money do you think she had?"

"Hardly any." Blackadder frowned. He went to the telephone and called up the station master. "Jim, this is Helm Blackadder. Did Joyce Sewell leave Elsinboro on a train?" Promptly came the answer: "No, Helm, she didn't. Naturally as soon as I seen about the reward I was satisfied with only checking up around here. I telephoned every crew from Buffalo to New York. You can take it from me she didn't get away on no train."

"Thanks, Jim," said Blackadder. He hung up and faced around to

ward Irma. "So there's a reward now, is there? How much?" "Five thousand dollars." "Holy pickerel!" Blackadder started pacing the floor. Suddenly he halted. His brow cleared as if by magic and he made a leap for the telephone. "Airport!" he shouted. "Get me the airport!" A moment later he was talking again. "Airport? I don't know you and you don't know me, but this is Helm Blackadder. Get it? Helm Blackadder. Have you reported to the police what day, what hour and where you took your last woman passenger?"

"No. Why should we?" "You know why. You see the papers, don't you?"

"Sure, you read 'em—and me and the pilot both—and that's why."

"I see," said Blackadder softly. "Now listen, you. I'm Miss Joyce Sewell's guardian. Quit worrying about that reward, if it's ever paid to anybody, which it won't be, I'll guarantee you'll get your share. You and your buddy don't want to be put behind bars for compounding a felony, do you?"

"Aw, say now, Mister, we ain't done nothing."

"You're right you haven't and you'll find there are cases where you can get in as bad for doing nothing as for pulling the trigger. They call it abetting, meaning to incite, to encourage."

"What do you want to know?" "When did she leave?" "A week ago today at four o'clock."

"Where to?" "We carried her to Newark."

"How much did she pay for her ticket?" "How do I know? She didn't buy no tickets from us."

"Nobody. She had her tickets with her."

"Did anybody meet her at Newark?" "No."

"Have you any idea where she went from there?" "Sure. She was a through passenger and would just have time to catch the plane south."

"Through? Through to where? Miami?" "No. Balbuena."

"Where's that?" "It's the airport for Mexico City, Mister, and much good may it do you to know it."

Blackadder turned to Irma. "Did you get it? Joyce is in Mexico City. She's been there for about four days."

"Mexico City!" gasped Irma. "Why, how can she be? You don't travel to Mexico City on five dollars. I know because—"

"That's what's got me stumped," interrupted Blackadder. He proceeded to call up the heads of the three banks in town, leaving Mr. Bradley, known to have been Cutler Sewell's good friend, to the last. The first two made no bones about answering since their information happened to be negative; they had paid out no money as a loan or otherwise to Joyce Sewell. But when it came to the president of the City National, the reply was decidedly evasive.

"Let me get this straight, Helm," said Mr. Bradley's aggravatingly calm voice. "Have you taken out papers as Miss Joyce Sewell's guardian?"

"No," said Blackadder, controlling his temper with difficulty, "but her stepmother is sitting here beside me. Do you want me to put her on the phone—have her tell you you can say it to me and say it all?"

"No; I'll take your word for it. Now just what is it you want to know, Helm?"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

### Model Hayloft Is Placed in U. S. Farm Building; Seek to Standardize Crops

The most modern farm laboratory in the world has been opened by the Department of Agriculture in Washington in an effort to raise the standards of American farm products, writes a Washington United Press correspondent in the New York Herald Tribune.

In the new standardization building are located the bureaus directing regulatory and marketing agencies dealing with the principal farm products. Technological and economic research scientists also are housed in the air-cooled structure.

It also houses a modern hayloft—a combination standardization research laboratory and warehouse—with glass north front and scientific devices for analyzing quality and factors in hay.

Cotton experts prepare standards for use in domestic and foreign trade. The appeal board of review examiners, the final authority in the interpretation of standards, has its classing rooms in the building.

Along with cotton standardization and classical work, the physical and chemical properties of cotton

fibers, lint and seed will be studied, as a part of the expanded federal-state cotton research programs.

These studies and tests will be related to practical problems in the principal branches of the cotton enterprise from the production of raw cotton through to the finished products of cotton manufacture.

The building contains a fireproof cotton warehouse in which can be stored more than 1,000 bales of cotton to be used chiefly in preparation of copies of the official standards. It is the new headquarters for the Bureau of Agricultural Economics' South-wide cotton market news service.

Early Niagara Falls Visitor Father Hennepin, the missionary explorer, visited Niagara Falls in 1678, and sketched them and afterward published a description of them. He has long been credited with having been the first European to see them, and it is not unlikely that he was, although LaSalle visited the region of the falls in 1680, and Champlain was also in that part of the country before Hennepin.

## Improved Uniform International SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By REV. HAROLD L. LUNDQUIST, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. © Western Newspaper Union.

### Lesson for January 2

#### THE GOSPEL OF MARK: A PREVIEW

LESSON TEXT—Mark 10:35-45. GOLDEN TEXT—And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all.—Mark 10:44.

PRIMARY TOPIC—What Two Brothers Asked Jesus. JUNIOR TOPIC—Who Are the Greats? INTERMEDIATE AND SENIOR TOPIC—A Look at the Gospel of Mark. YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT TOPIC—Mark's Gospel: Author, Origin, Theme.

Beginning a New Year is always a thrilling experience. The thought of an unwritten record is a pleasant one and at the same time most solemnizing. We must take heed, you and I, what we write upon that page which lies before us with the inviting caption—"1938."

Next to having New Year's day fall on Sunday, it is most appropriate that the Lord's day should come between the holiday of yesterday spent with our family and friends, and the work-day on the morrow, when we begin the year's labors. Today we tarry in God's house to pray and counsel together in the light of his Holy Word regarding the new year of grace and opportunity.

We begin today a six-month study of the Gospel of Mark, which presents Christ as the Servant of God. It is the Gospel of the mighty acts of divine power, rather than of words. It is characterized by energy and spontaneity. It moves rapidly. The characteristic words are "straightway," "immediately," and "forthwith," which are used more than forty times. We look forward to a delightful and profitable series of lessons.

Before considering our lesson for today, we would undoubtedly like to "meet the author." John Mark was the son of the Mary in Jerusalem in whose home was "the upper room" where so many important events took place. He was a cousin of Barnabas and went with him and Paul on the first missionary journey. For some reason he lost heart and went home, much to Paul's distress. Happily we find that the young man redeemed himself in Paul's estimation and was later well spoken of by him (Col. 4:10, Phil. 24, and I Tim. 4:11). He was a servant (Acts 12:12) and the Holy Spirit chose him to write the Gospel of the Servant. The lesson text chosen for our "preview" of the Gospel is one which shows the weakness of human ambitions as contrasted with the true spirit of humble service which characterized Christ.

I. Selfish Ambition Rebuked (vv. 35-41).

Ambition is not in itself wrong, but when it becomes so extreme that it projects itself forward at the expense of others it becomes selfish and destructive. The fact that these men were evidently earnest and were, indeed, seeking a place with the Lord in his glory does not change the situation. They were selfish even in dealing with holy things.

James and John had asked for a great honor in the kingdom, but had not sought to share in the suffering that preceded it. It is as Luther said, "The flesh ever seeks to be glorified before it is crucified, exalted before it is abased."

Their own ignorance of what was involved, their own weakness, their observation of God's hand in the carrying out of his own plans, should have deterred them. There is such a thing as holy boldness, but there is also such a thing as unholiness. Let us walk softly before the Lord.

II. Sacrificial Service Defined (vv. 42-45).

Christianity is not organized after the manner of secular government (v. 42). Much of the mischief that has come to pass in the church is the result of "running the church" as an organization, when it should be allowed to develop as a living organism.

The way up is down. That is always true in the spiritual realm. The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, yea, to give his very life (v. 45). Shall not those who bear his name walk the same path of humble self-denial?

Anyone who observes with even a little care knows that the church of Jesus Christ is hindered most seriously by the presence of pride and selfish ambition. Some people will not work unless they can buy. Their money is withheld unless it buys for them a dominating interest. The pastor is persons non grata unless he recognizes the desires of the "right" people. None of these things are done as obviously as our words would suggest. There is much careful "fixing" and "wire-pulling" behind the scenes. But it amounts to exactly the same thing, and it is all entirely foreign to the spirit of Christ.

Are there then no Christians who humbly serve the Lord? Yes, praise his name, there are many, and wherever they are found they are the salt of the earth. God uses and blesses them to his own glory. They may not be (and often are not) in "positions of leadership," but they are actually the leaders of the church in its true work on the earth.

## Change Wishes to Stitches



"GEE, if I could only afford that darling dress I saw the other day—I'd give my left arm!" We who are addicted to pretty clothes and subject to the usual feminine foibles (but not too well-blessed financially) often make a wish like this, don't we? Ah, but here's good news, Milady! Thanks to Modern Sew-Your-Own you can make all your wishes come true on the "pretty percentage" basis. You may have "that darling dress" at half the price (you won't have to give up your left arm either). Why not decide today to sew, sew, Sew-Your-Own?

**Looking to Spring.** The frock at the left has never been in anybody's window, but you can bet your bottom dollar it's going to be seen this Spring wherever style is of first importance. It interprets the mode in a young and graceful manner. And because it's a Sew-Your-Own original it's the last word in simplicity. Make it either with long or short sleeves in lame, sheer wool, satin, or velvet.

**Pajamas for Madame.** Pajamas that make you wake up and live; pajamas that keep you sleep like a log—is that the kind you have in mind, Milady? You can depend upon today's model either in taffeta or velvet for leisure; cotton flannel, silk crepe or seersucker for sleepy time. Make this becoming style in duplicate while you're about it and be the perfectly groomed pajama girl all-around-the-clock.

**To Start the Day.** A good way to start your day, Miss Keep-the-Home-Beautiful, is to wear a dress that makes you pretty as a picture. The model at the right will do just that. Furthermore, you will be thrilled to see how easy it goes together. It's fun to Sew-Your-Own, because then you can choose the color that does things for you, and you may enjoy variety of fabrics with the difference you save by sewing.

Won't you join us today—one pattern will convince you that Sew-Your-Own "really has something there."

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Pattern 1372 is designed for sizes 34 to 46. Size 36 requires 4 3/4 yards of 35-inch material; with long sleeves 4 3/4 yards.

Send your order to The Sewing Circle Pattern Dept., Room 1020, 211 W. Wacker Drive, Chicago, Ill. Prices of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

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**Uncle Phil Says:**

**Charged for Ignorance** There are no new laws of Nature, but men never seem to learn the importance of those that already exist.

If we must gossip, let us gossip about the important people dead and gone. That's what most of the new biographers do.

**We envy the Indian for at least one thing. He doesn't make excuses.**

Man is said to be the only animal that can laugh, but we believe that a dog does.

Everything is in the top drawer of the chiffonier and if you search long enough, you'll find it.

**CATCHING COLD? CAUGHT A COLD?**

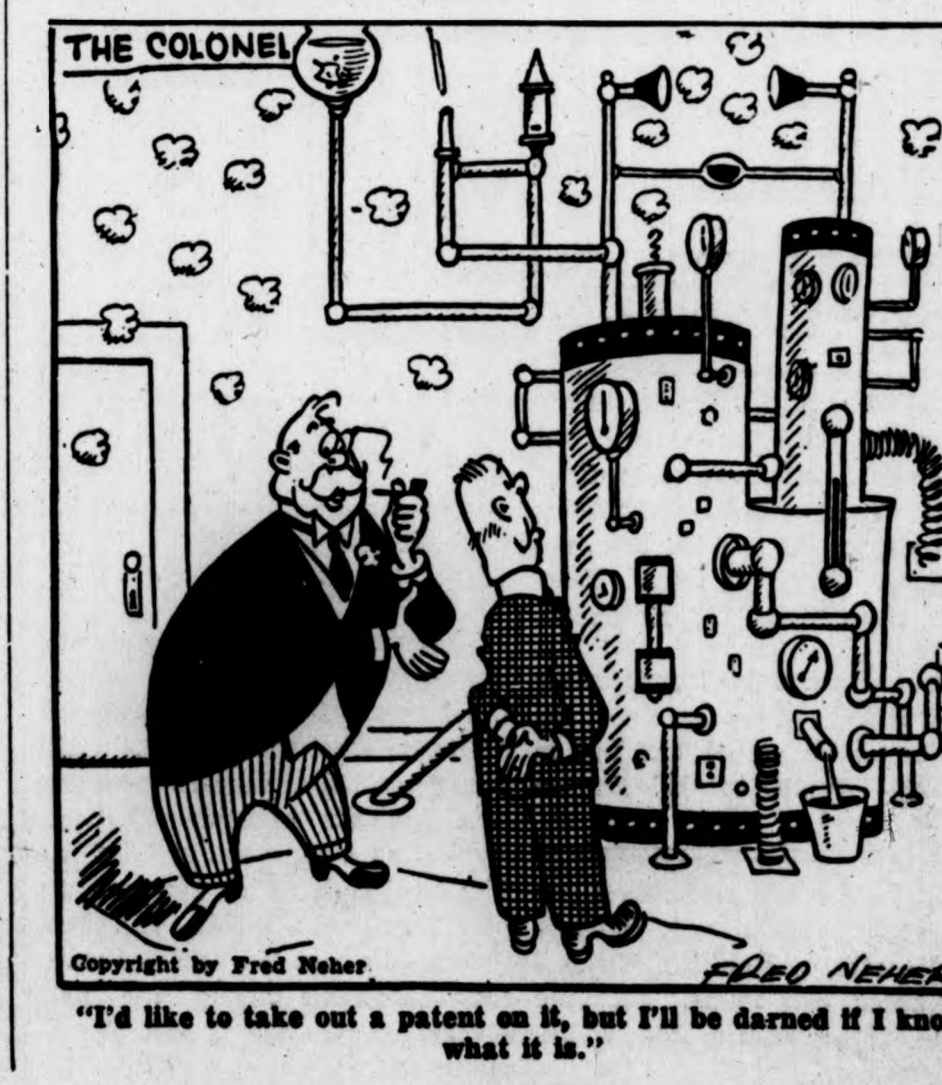
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### LIFE'S LIKE THAT By Fred Neher



"I'd like to take out a patent on it, but I'll be darned if I know what it is."