

# REFUGEE SHIP

By LEW MERRILL

*In the guise of a Czech exile, Carter watched the passengers. Among them, he knew, was a Nazi spy. Somewhere among them, too, was the man earmarked for Gestapo vengeance.*



*Under the impetus of Carter's leap, the two of them rolled on the floor.*

CARTER watched the passengers come stumbling up onto the deck, and then he remembered his role, and tagged along in the rear. He was

inclined to forget sometimes that he represented the Immigration Department of the United States, so oppressed was he by the sight of this collective human

misery.

It is very seldom that an American of Pure Yankee stock can speak Czech well enough to pass for a native. Add enough German, Polish, Serbian for him to understand what was being said by nine-tenths of the passengers, and it becomes obvious that Carter was a very valuable man to his Department.

All which he owed to a native talent for languages and a boyhood spent in Prague, where his father had been employed as a technician in the city water supply. Carter had been seventeen when he returned to America, and even the English language had at first seemed strange to him.

Of course it was necessary for Uncle Sam to keep tab of the vast migration of refugees from Europe. So, in the guise of a Czech exile, he was here, on the refugee ship. Almost all the refugees had started from Haifa, Palestine, and they had spent months attempting to gain admittance, always to be refused by governments with enough problems of their own.

They had crossed the Atlantic on oil eagerly supplied by Britain in order to get rid of them. They had hammered in vain at the gates of Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Panama. They were lying off Havana now, and there was only one chance in fifty that the Cuban government would prove any more hospitable than the rest of the world.

Gray old M'Clintock, captain of the *Urania*, had sworn he'd find a haven for his boys and girls, as he called them, somewhere. M'Clintock was a skipper of the old type, a strong lover of liberty, and he was infuriated that human beings should be shipped and rejected, like infected cattle, from place to place, all over the globe.

So, with a skipper of that type, things hadn't been as bad as they might have been. There were some two hundred and

fifty passengers crowded into the steerage, and about three dozen more, who had some means, occupied the cabins along the deck. It wasn't paradise, for the food was scanty, and the old *Urania* rolled from bulwark to bulwark whenever the sea ran high. But the hope of emancipation, of finding homes, buoyed up all the refugees. There had been only four deaths since they left Haifa.

OF course Carter had kept a sharp watch on his fellow-passengers. Every shipload of refugees contained at least one Nazi spy, and Carter's business was to detect him. He had boarded the *Urania* at Recife, three weeks before, in the guise of a deportee, supposedly of Nazi sympathies. That was a good role, though it hadn't made him popular with his fellow-travelers. In fact, they had avoided him like the plague. All except one, who had penetrated his disguise from the beginning.

That was all right, because Carter had spotted him as a representative of the British government, also keeping tab. Anderson had revealed his name, and the purpose of his presence in the guise of a Polish refugee. Tall, distinguished, with a drooping mustache, and a slight limp—feigned, Anderson said—he looked the part of an officer of noble birth, who had escaped from a German concentration camp.

Of course, they had to pretend ignorance of each other, but they had exchanged information in hasty two-minute talks during those three weeks.

"There's a fellow on board whom the Nazi government is particularly anxious to get hold of," Anderson explained. "I've been aboard since the *Urania* left Haifa, but I haven't spotted him yet. Nor the Nazi agent, who must be on this ship. They're deuced clever, both of them. If they're

among that steerage crowd, it's pretty hopeless for my attainments don't go so far as to include a knowledge of Yiddish, or the ability to pass for one of them. If either of them is among our favored saloon crowd—well, that's different.

"I'll bet you one thing though, Carter. Something is going to break just as soon as permission to land is obtained, wherever that may be. My guess is that our Nazi friend has postponed operations until then, knowing it's difficult to get away with murder on an American ship on the high seas."

"Murder?" asked Carter.

Anderson shrugged his shoulders. "What else? Just to prove how long-reaching the arm of the Nazis is." Carter might have reciprocated with what he knew, but he was under a pledge of silence to his department.

**W**HATEVER he knew, he didn't know who was the man he was anxious to contact. He watched the passengers, as he trailed them up the deck. There were Rabbi Solomon, from Breslau, and his daughter, clinging to his arm, as always. Carter hadn't often seen such a devoted pair. But the tragedy that had overtaken them would naturally draw them together. On Saturdays—the Hebrew Sabbath—Rabbi Solomon held a service in the steerage, and the girl always accompanied him. Seen from the deck, the old, gray-bearded man looked like one of the ancient prophets as he held forth to his congregation.

Carter had noticed that the girl was totally unresponsive to her fellow-passengers. She never so much as gave any of them a glance when they sat at meals in the saloon. The pair would sometimes pace the deck, her arm drawn through her father's, but mostly she remained in her cabin, next to his, and a

little way down the passage from Carter's, on the opposite side.

She was attractive in a way, slender and dark, perhaps five and twenty, not at all like the stout, paunchy old rabbi, whose bulk had survived all the hardships of those months at sea. Carter had wondered about the mother, whether she had been a victim of the Nazi atrocities.

Carter wasn't the only person who was watching the two. The second was a lean, bespectacled man of middle age, definitely not Hebraic, for his broad head, with the truncated occiput, bespoke the Alpine race, and things like that were obvious to the anthropologist. He might have been a Czech or an Austrian. He might have been a Bavarian, or even a Prussian.

Carter had noticed that Slavinski had been watching the two since he had come on board, but he had never seen him in conversation with either of them. The name Slavinski of course meant nothing. It was very improbable that the man with the spectacles was a Pole.

Studying the old man and his daughter, as he went up in their wake, Carter noticed something more about the girl. The roots of her hair were fairer than the rest of it.

**O**LD M'CLINTOCK had a megaphone in his hand, and one of the passengers was standing beside him. "Attention-Achtung!" he shouted, using the only German word he knew. "It is possible that we shall be permitted to land at Havana, but the Cuban government has not yet made up its mind. We shall know in a day or two. Meanwhile the American Government is making strong representations to Cuba that you be permitted at least temporary residence in this country.

"We shall lie off the harbor until the decision is reached. Keep up your courage. If Cuba rejects you, we shall go on trying.

I shall never take the *Urania* back into European waters.”

The refugees, to the greater part of whom the words were unintelligible, were straining forward, eyes fixed intently upon the speaker. The feeling of suspense, coming to Carter from the packed mass of humanity upon the deck, was almost unbearable. When M’Clintock had concluded, the man beside him interpreted, first in Yiddish, then in Polish.

As he finished, a deep groan broke from the throats of the crowd. In that groan was all the hopelessness of which humanity can be capable. Their shoulders sagged, their heads drooped. They must have heard words like those many times before.

The ship’s stewards were already herding the steerage passengers below. They trooped down, leaving the decks clear for the saloon passengers, who walked dejectedly to and fro. There was the girl, with her arm linked through her father’s; there was Slavinski, trailing them, watching them as usual. Carter passed Anderson, who was walking alone, as was his custom. As they met, Anderson whispered, with hardly a movement of his jaws:

“I’ve seen that girl before.”

Carter walked to the bow, turned, and went back. “Where?” he inquired as he passed Anderson again.

“I don’t know, but I’m sure of it. I never forget a face.”

Again that walk. Carter passed the two, and again noticed how much fairer the roots of the girl’s hair were than the rest. Next time Anderson said:

“It must have been somewhere on the continent at Europe. This year, or late last year.”

The ship’s gong sounded for dinner. The saloon passengers trooped down. Carter’s place was near the end of the

table, nearly opposite Rabbi Solomon and his daughter. Slavinski was the second man on his right, and there was a stout, elderly woman between them. Anderson sat farther up the table, and was invisible to Carter. Captain M’Clintock, of course was at the head, with his chief officers on either hand.

CARTER ate in silence. He could affect broken English, but it was always an effort, and he preferred to pose as a Czech with little knowledge of it. There was little conversation at meals. The exiles were too dejected for light talk, and then too many languages were spoken to make a general conversation easy.

The meal consisted of thick bean soup, followed by corned beef hash and potatoes. It was the usual meal; sometimes it slightly varied, but there was always either the hash or the soup. There was bread without butter, and the drinking water was slightly saline. The meal was nearly over when M’Clintock rose.

“My friends,” he said, “I’ve got a treat for you. It was donated by sympathizers ashore. I hope their good-will is going to win for us what is in all our hearts.” He nodded to the steward, and sat down.

John, the steward, had a perfect Nazi face, pale, bleached hair, and two ice-blue eyes. Nevertheless he had always been considerate and deferential to the passengers. He went out, and came back with a great bowl loaded to the brim with oranges. There were cries of delight from all as he filled the three fruit dishes set at equal intervals on the table. Nobody had seen oranges since they left Palestine. Supplies had been taken on at various South American ports, but oranges had not been among them.

The stout woman and Carter grabbed simultaneously. The bowl was upset, and the oranges cascaded to the floor on the

opposite side from Carter. A half-dozen landed squarely in the lap of the rabbi's daughter. Startled for a moment, she picked them up and laid them on the table. Carter noticed that she still avoided his face as he apologized for his clumsiness.

Everybody began stripping off orange skins and eating, with gusto. Once Carter saw the daughter of the rabbi raise her eyes and shoot a quick glance at him. It was only for an instant; then she resumed her usual downcast indifference.

"It was good to see those poor people eat," said John. Carter had thanked him, as if the oranges had been his own gift.

"You've certainly been very attentive to them," said Carter.

"And why not? You must understand, *Herr* Cerny, we Germans are not all beasts. I fought in the war against Poland. I thought it was righteous war, until I saw the atrocities that were committed upon the helpless people. I knew then that Hitler was a beast, and not the divine *Fuehrer* I had imagined. And so I left the army and worked my way south into Turkey. And now I look for the day when the beast shall be overthrown. Are not these people human beings, with feelings like ourselves?"

"I wish more of your countrymen felt that way."

"Believe me, *Herr* Cerny," said the steward earnestly, "there are millions of us who live only for the day of Hitler's overthrow."

Carter went on deck. It was night, and the lights of Havana seemed so near, twinkling across the bay. All the saloon passengers seemed to be on deck, staring at those lights. But there were few at the rail on the lower deck, from which arose a subdued, melodious chanting, and, going toward the stem, and looking down, Carter remembered that this was Friday evening, the opening of the Jewish Sabbath.

He paced the deck slowly. For once, Rabbi Solomon's daughter had not accompanied him; she was standing at the rail alone, looking shoreward. Also alone was Anderson, and Carter stood beside him for a moment.

"How's your end of the game progressing?" he inquired in a low tone.

"I think I'm on a trail. How about you?"

"I've got one of my men," said Carter.

"One of them? You're looking for more?"

"I'm looking for a Nazi and a refugee, who is rather intimately mixed up with him. I'm not sure which of the two I've spotted."

"If you mean Slavinski," whispered Anderson, "I've had my eye on him from the beginning."

"I didn't mean Slavinski, though he may be the other one, of course," said Carter.

"Which of the two men do you mean?" inquired Anderson.

TWO of the passengers came up to the rail beside them. The movement was quite innocent, to all appearance, but one never could be sure, and Carter turned away without replying. He pursued his walk until he reached the place where Rabbi Solomon's daughter was standing, looking out toward the shore. He stopped beside her, and affected to be gazing shoreward likewise.

Speaking in German as execrable as he could make it, Carter said: "I guess you're hoping that we'll all be going ashore tomorrow."

"We're all hoping that," she answered. Her voice was low and melodious, and had that slightly husky tone that men find attractive in many women. Also it was completely indifferent. She hadn't looked at him as yet.

“That singing in the steerage is very melodious.”

“Yes.”

“You generally accompany your father, don’t you?”

“Mostly.” There was now a faint note of annoyance in the girl’s voice, as if she wanted to be left alone.

“I’m sorry that I upset those oranges. It was very clumsy of me.”

“It doesn’t matter.” For the first time there was a swift, fugitive glance at him, though Carter inferred it rather than perceived it in the darkness. The girl turned away again, and it was perfectly plain that she had no desire to continue the conversation. Carter left her, and began pacing up and down. When he got back to where the girl had been standing, she was gone. Almost the last of the passengers had gone below. The bow end of the vessel was deserted. Carter walked to the bow limit of the deck, and stood looking seaward.

He was pretty sure of his man now, but still he hadn’t got the key he needed. He was trying to think, to piece the bits of puzzle together. Then he perceived a man a little ahead of him, right at the bow rail, over which he was leaning, motionless.

He was in the attitude that one adopts when one has a sudden attack of seasickness. But the sea was perfectly calm, and the vessel lay at anchor with hardly a perceptible movement. Besides, one doesn’t often get an attack of seasickness after one has spent several months at sea. Carter watched the man for a while, saw that he made no movement, and went up to him.

It was John, the steward, and he was as dead as he would ever be, with a dark stain running down from the grisly wound in his back, which must have pierced through to the heart. There was no weapon in the wound. That would, of course, have been

thrown overboard.

The pockets of the steward’s uniform were hanging inside out. Evidently the murderer had searched his victim thoroughly. He must have searched quickly, because he had not taken the time to put the pockets back into position. The job had been a deft one.

CARTER got hold of a seaman and told him what had occurred. He volunteered to stay by the body while the man went in search of Captain M’Clintock. Before he had had time to try to figure out the problem, M’Clintock and the seaman arrived. The captain bent over the body, quickly examining it.

“When did this happen?” he asked Carter.

“I don’t know. I found the body three or four minutes ago.”

“You saw nobody near?”

“There was a crowd on deck. I was pacing the deck, but I didn’t come up to the bow until just now. There was nobody near here then.”

“Okay. The principal thing to do is to keep the knowledge of this from the passengers—tell them John’s sick. Later, if they don’t get permission to land, we’ll tell them he’s dead. No time for precipitating a wave of hysteria. I was afraid something like this might happen, but not to John, poor fellow.”

“He was telling me he hated the Nazis and looked for Hitler’s overthrow,” said Carter.

“And that was truth,” said M’Clintock emphatically. “John was one of the best. I picked him up at Istanbul. He had deserted his regiment. Bill, you keep this absolutely mum,” he said to the seaman, who was looking in horror at the body. “Come along. We’ll remove him to his quarters. Make him look as if he’s walking,” he added to the seaman. “I’d like you to come

too," he said to Carter.

"I'll help," Carter suggested.

"We'll manage this job. If you'll just walk behind, casual like, that's all that will be necessary."

OF course the news had to be broken to the dead man's mates. There was something of a stir, quickly hushed by M'Clintock. Carter remained just out of hearing. Then the captain came back and asked him to accompany him to his cabin.

Inside, he turned to him. "Sit down, please," he said. "What more do you know about this than you've already told me?"

"Do you mean I'm under suspicion?"

"Everybody's under suspicion, and you happened to be on the spot just after the murder was committed. By the way, *Herr* Cerny, what does your actual nationality happen to be?"

"I'm registered as a Czech, expelled from Brazil for supposed Nazi sympathies."

"I know that. If it's true, you're practically the first Czech who's ever played the traitor. I don't know how well you've fooled the passengers, but you haven't fooled me. Nor Oblonski either."

Oblonski was the alias of Anderson. Carter smiled. "You're pretty sharp, captain," he said.

"I have to be. Oblonski is an Englishman, of course. Secret Service, I'd say. You two stand out like chalk from cheese. Of course you don't have to commit yourself."

"I can't," said Carter, speaking perfect English now. "I'd like to come clean with you, captain, but I guess you can infer what the situation is."

"I understand what I think, but I've got to go by the records. You know our radio's broken down. I'm sending a launch ashore to wake up the port authorities. They'll

take you off for questioning, of course. This is just a tip to you, Mr. Cerny."

"And in the meantime?"

"Please go below, and stay below, and don't mix with any of the other passengers. That'll be all."

"If I'm arrested, please communicate with the American consul on my behalf," said Carter, rising.

He knew he'd scored there, knew that M'Clintock trusted him. He left the cabin and went slowly down the companion toward the passengers' quarters, thinking. If the steward, John, had really been in sympathy with the refugees, and his story of desertion from the German army was true, the long arm of Nazi power would probably have reached out to slay him, even though he had been only a private soldier.

Nothing was too large or too small for the Nazi web that was spun all over South America.

CARTER shrugged his shoulders. He wished it could be possible for him to complete his investigation before the Havana authorities intervened, but that seemed hopeless. He could make nothing of the killing. He reached the bottom step of the companion, and peered through the gloom. Owing to the breakdown of one of the dynamos, the electric light was turned off at ten o'clock to save consumption. Carter couldn't focus his eyes immediately, but, as he groped forward, a sudden instinct made him whirl. A figure leaped at him out of the dark, and the stunning blow that might otherwise have split his skull glanced off his left temple.

Nevertheless, the force of the blow sent him reeling. He saw his aggressor making at him again, with the right arm raised, pulled himself together, and hurled himself at him, avoiding the second blow,

which smashed into his shoulder, numbing his left arm.

The man went down under the impetus of Carter's leap, and the two sprawled on the saloon floor. Carter managed to get a grip on his assailant's wrist, so that the man couldn't use the implement again. It rolled across the floor. Sprawling there in the darkness, they interchanged savage blows. Carter got in a furious punch with his right, and caught the other on the chin. His grasp relaxed.

But Carter was too groggy from the blow he had received to take advantage of his temporary success. As he tried to rise to his knees, he felt the saloon swimming around him. He struck out feebly, and encountered nothing. Then a moment of unconsciousness must have followed.

Then someone was gripping him by the shoulders, trying to raise him, and as Carter lashed out a voice said: "Hold on. It's Anderson. I came to look for you. I was afraid you were going to run into something."

**I**N Anderson's cabin, a stiff glass of whiskey quickly revived him. "I'm certainly obliged to you," said Carter. "Maybe I was off my guard. I didn't guess that I'd been spotted."

"You know who that fellow was?" asked Anderson.

"I'm not prepared to swear. But he looked to me like Slavinski."

"It was Slavinski all right," said Anderson. "I don't know yet how to proceed. It's a pity our paths don't run together."

"He's not my man," said Carter.

"He certainly went a long way toward proving that he was."

"He may be the other one."

"You mean the refugee? Refugees don't attempt to commit murder; they're trying to keep from being murdered

themselves."

"They might, under the influence of panic. He may have thought I was a Nazi on the vengeance trail. I've got the reputation of being one."

Anderson remained silent. It wasn't his play, and he was waiting for Carter to lead. Instead, Carter asked: "You're sure you've seen that girl before?"

"The rabbi's daughter? Positive. In some show, I think, possibly in Vienna. You may have noticed she has the stamp of the actress."

"Yes, I've seen that," said Carter.

"It's odd that I can't place her. My memory is usually almost photographic. Why are you interested in her, Carter? You think she is mixed up with Slavinski?"

Instead of answering, Carter said: "I'm not supposed to tell you this, but John, the steward, has been murdered."

Anderson's mouth opened. "What's that? When? How?"

Carter described what had happened. "Somebody must have slipped up in the dark," he said. "He'd killed John because he wanted something that he suspected him of possessing. His pockets had been emptied."

"Where have they taken the body?"

"To John's quarters. I'm telling you this because there's going to be a general inquisition in the morning."

"Well—thanks," said Anderson. "As I was saying, I'm sorry that our paths don't run parallel. But what makes you think that girl is mixed up with Slavinski?"

"She doesn't resemble her father," answered Carter.

"What do you want to do about Slavinski? Stay quiet and give him another chance of killing you?"

Carter shrugged his shoulders. "What is there to do?"

"M'Clintock would put him under



arrest. I've told you he's your man."

"I want both my men, the hunter and the hunted, at the same time," said Carter.

Anderson said: "My job is simply to trail Nazi agents on this ship. If you don't want Slavinski arrested, I'm willing to cooperate. You know your own business best."

"I'm obliged to you for my life, at any rate," said Carter. He left the cabin in rather a stiff silence.

**D**ESPITE Slavinski's Alpine head, Carter knew he wasn't the Nazi. Whether or not he was the one refugee who was of much more importance to him, Carter hadn't yet decided. His own belief was that Slavinski had simply made a mistake in trying to murder him.

It was imperative that this phase of the situation should be cleared up. Carter went into his cabin, unlocked his suitcase, and drew a small gun from the hidden floor of a harmless looking toilet-case, whose very obviousness would probably baffle any investigator of his belongings. He locked the suitcase again, slipped the loaded gun into his pocket, and went out into the passage.

As he passed the girl's cabin in almost complete darkness, he heard the low muttering of voices inside it. He listened, but could make out nothing. This fact, however, caused him to try the door of her father's cabin adjoining. As Carter had surmised, it yielded. The cabin was quite dark.

Putting his ear against the partition, Carter was still unable to hear a word of the continuous conversation, but it sounded as if the old rabbi was protesting vehemently, and that the girl was the aggressor in a quarrel. And that might have seemed odd, considering the apparently affectionate relationship between them.

There are certain things axiomatic in any sort of detective work, one of which is always to try a door before knocking, on the off-chance that it may be open. When Carter stepped out of the rabbi's room he moved along the dark passage to Slavinski's cabin, and did that. He didn't know anything about master-keys or burglarizing. This was just a preliminary to knocking and rousing Slavinski. But, to Carter's surprise, the door opened, and Carter slipped inside, closing it noiselessly behind him.

The cabin was not quite so dark as the rabbi's for a little moonlight entered obliquely through the porthole, sufficient to reveal the form of Slavinski stretched out under the blankets. Carter stepped softly to his side. He touched him on the shoulder.

"Wake up, Slavinski," he said. "And don't pull that gun from under your pillow. I guess you're awake. I'd like to know why you tried to murder me tonight."

Something dripped heavily upon the floor beside the bunk. Carter touched Slavinski's face, and discovered that it was cold. He dragged the dead man from underneath the blankets, and the head lolled upon one shoulder. The stab had been a brutal one. It had been delivered from the side, evidently while Slavinski was turned away, and it had severed not only the main arteries, but the spine itself, at the medulla oblongata, the breathing center. Death must have been instantaneous.

**T**HE dead man's belongings had been ransacked too. As Carter straightened himself, he stumbled against an open suitcase, then tripped over Slavinski's clothing, which was scattered over the floor. Then something cold was pressed against his cheek, and a husky voice said

quietly:

“Don’t move a hand, Mr. Cerny, or whoever you are. That’s not the muzzle that you feel; it’s the silencer. See if he’s got a gun,” she added to a second figure.

The rabbi took Carter’s gun. The girl said: “That’s better. Now we’ll go into father’s cabin, and talk. Get moving.”

Prodded by the weapon, Carter had no alternative but to comply. It was densely dark in the rabbi’s room, but the girl stood very close to Carter, the weapon against his ribs.

“You know what I want. Those papers!”

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“Don’t make me lose my patience. Do I have to explain to you that I’d spotted you from the first, and that your silly trick at dinner proved who you were? Do I have to go into your relations with the man calling himself Slavinski? He passed you those papers when he knew I was on his trail. Now—will you hand them over alive, or would you rather be dead?”

Carter said: “It’s not much use trying to explain to you, Miss Solomon. You’re too unreasonable. I can only say I’ve never seen those papers in my life.”

“I’ll count seven. That will give you time to refresh your memory. One—two—three—four—”

“Wait—wait!” cried the old rabbi tremulously. “It may be true what he says. Slavinski may have hidden them, or passed them to someone else. We don’t want murder—not another murder—”

“Shut up, you old fool!” said the dutiful daughter. “Five—six—” She hesitated. “Seven!”

The rabbi sobbed and moaned. Carter stood silent. He knew that the girl wasn’t going to shoot. Yet the few moments that followed were tense with anticipation. Then she laughed.

“All right, you’ve called my bluff,”

she” said. “But it wasn’t just bluff. I’d kill you now if I was quite sure you have those papers. I’ll make you an alternative proposition.

“You’ll go up on deck with me, strip to the skin, leaving your clothes behind, and jump overboard. You’ll swim for shore. Whether you make it or not is no concern of mine. If you’re taken, of course there won’t be any question as to who killed Slavinski. And this time I mean business. Yes or no?”

“Yes,” said Carter.

HE was hoping, as he was prodded up the stairs, that there would be no intervention on the part of Anderson or anyone else. His chance was pretty desperate, but he had no intention of stripping and jumping overboard. He was relieved that they encountered no prowlers. The starboard side of the ship, on which they emerged, appeared to be deserted.

The girl said: “It’s no use trying any tricks. Get your clothes off as quick as you can, and jump. I’ll give you three-quarters of a minute.”

“I don’t like lightning calculators,” said Carter, beginning to peel off his coat. The girl was only a blur before him, and he was calculating which side to spring before running in for the knockout. To the right, and he might get a slug through the heart; to the left, and it would probably pierce his liver. That was a weird thought, he reflected, as he pulled the coat over his face and, leaping to the left, flung it over the girl’s head.

The gun coughed, and the slug impacted itself in the deck between Carter’s feet. Carter leaped, but the rabbi had acted still more quickly. He had the girl by the gun arm, and the other was about her shoulders, straining her back. “Quick! Quick! I can’t hold on!” he

panted.

As the girl flung him off and tore the coat from her face Carter let his right go in a mighty blow that caught her on the jaw, and stretched her out instantly, unconscious. The gun clattered to the deck. The rabbi clung to him, sobbing. His voice rose into a screaming wail that brought men running along the deck.

The first of these was Anderson, and M'Clintock followed, together with the sailor who had helped carry the steward's body from the rail. They stared at the girl, prone on the deck, at Carter, and the still screaming rabbi.

M'Clintock said, "Stop that damned noise! Do you want to start a panic among the passengers?"

"Oy, oy," moaned Rabbi Solomon, "he was my curse. It was in an evil day we met."

"Who are you talking about?" snapped the captain.

"He means that fellow masquerading as a girl," said Carter. "Lock him up, and put irons on him. He's a slippery customer. He killed Slavinski and the steward."

**I**N the captain's cabin, Anderson said: "I knew I'd seen that fellow before; it was the female role that baffled me. He's Schweitzer, the female impersonator who was all the rage in Berlin five or six years ago. He was decorated by Hitler—I don't know if you'll recall the circumstance. But I confess I didn't see through the disguise. How did you spot him, Carter?"

"Well, of course you'd noticed that the hair was dyed. That didn't necessarily mean anything, except that most women are very particular not to give themselves away like that. Then I saw that she had a man's knees. You don't have to be an anthropologist to know that a woman's knees are set quite differently.

"I wasn't sure, though, until I tried the famous old trick of tossing oranges into her lap. When her knees came together, instead of spreading, I was sure. Unfortunately, Schweitzer was smart enough to know I'd caught him.

"I knew I had my man, but I was more interested in the refugee, and was still not certain that was Slavinski, until Schweitzer murdered him."

"But Slavinski tried to kill you," said Anderson.

"That was pure terror on his part. The papers he was carrying were so important, he suspected everyone who came near him. He'd detected something not real about me, and I suppose imagined that I was the Nazi who'd been set to get those papers. Or maybe it was my reputation as a Nazi that influenced him."

"Then why did Schweitzer murder John?"

"I can explain that," said Anderson. "John was working for me, and Schweitzer had spotted me as a British agent. He may have killed him in rage, or panic, but probably he thought you and I were in collaboration, and had passed those papers on to John.

"My job was simply to trail Nazi spies, I didn't know anything about any papers. That was your own show, Carter."

"Well, Mr. Solomon, it's up to you to do a good deal of explaining," said M'Clintock.

The rabbi stepped forward. He was still shaking with hysteria. "Yes" he said, "I shall tell you. Well, I had known *Herr* Slavinski in Breslau in the old days. He was my friend. Also he was experimenting on a new method of radar, which will prove of inestimable value to whatever government gets hold of it.

"But his mother was Jewish, and so Slavinski was sent to a concentration camp. Later, when the Nazis realized the

value of his discovery, they released him to carry on his work. He escaped, carrying the papers that showed his formula.

“That devil, Schweitzer, who had been commissioned to get that formula, discovered that I was Slavinski’s friend. He knew my old mother was being hidden by friends, and threatened to betray her to the Nazis unless I fell in with his plans. She is over eighty, and blind, captain. I could not let her go to a concentration camp. I was compelled to let him pretend that he was my daughter. Ach, what a nightmare I have lived through! But now, praise God, my old mother will die in peace.”

“The point is, what happened to the papers,” said Carter. “Unless Schweitzer got them, and concealed them somewhere—”

“No, gentlemen,” said Rabbi Solomon, “Slavinski knew he was being followed, and he passed them to me. And that is where I outwitted Schweitzer who never suspected for a moment. I have them in my underclothes.”

**P**ANIC had swept the refugee ship when it was known there was a Nazi murderer aboard, and that the harbor police boat had taken away the bodies of two murdered men, but not the killer.

As a matter of fact there had been considerable argument on that point, for the police claimed the right to adjudge the matter, since the murders had occurred in Cuban waters. M’Clintock had stuck to his

guns. Schweitzer’s crime had been committed aboard an American ship, and the criminal would be conveyed to the United States for trial.

There had been another government boat, and officials had been with M’Clintock for a considerable time, so that, when he summoned all the refugees on deck, there was terror, and wild surmise.

“Attention – Achtung!” M’Clintock shouted through his megaphone. “The Cuban government has given its permission for all passengers who are refugees to disembark, and will extend its protection to them until definite arrangements can be made for them. You tell them,” he added to the interpreter beside him.

But already the substance of his remarks was known. The reaction was dramatic. The refugees were sobbing and clinging to one another, as the black shadow of fear that had so long oppressed them was lifted from their lives.

Carter turned to Anderson. “I’m sorry I wasn’t allowed to tell you more,” he said. “Maybe some time we’ll get the chance to work together.”

“I’d like nothing better, Carter. But, as a matter of fact, you’ve been doing my work for me. The papers weren’t up my alley. I was looking for a Nazi, and you found him for me.”

Carter stood at the rail, watching the nearing harbor of Havana, and the happy, tearful faces of the refugees.