

fantastic

JUNE

1959

Volume 8

Number 6

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

Publisher

MICHAEL MICHAELSON

Editorial Director

NORMAN M. LOBSENZ

Editor

CELE GOLDSMITH

Art Editor

SID GREIFF



NOVELET

GIVE ME MY BODY!

By Paul W. Fairman..... 6

SHORT STORIES

BLURBLE

By M. G. Zimmerman..... 44

THE LURKER

By Rog Phillips..... 57

WHAT OTHER COLOR IS THERE?

By Jeanne Williams..... 67

A DESERT INCIDENT

By Will Worthington..... 77

THE FIFE OF BODIDHARMA

By Cordwainer Smith..... 85

CEDRIC

By Winston Marks..... 93

THE WORTH OF A MAN

By Henry Slesar..... 106

THE WARREN

By Richard Brian..... 109

BEDSIDE MONSTER

By Jack Sharkey..... 118

FEATURES

EDITORIAL..... 5

ACCORDING TO YOU..... 128

COMING NEXT MONTH..... 56



Cover: EDWARD VALIGURSKY

ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY, One Park Avenue, New York 16, New York, William Ziff, President; W. Bradford Briggs, Executive Vice President; Michael Michaelson, Vice President and Circulation Director; H. B. Sarbin, Secretary; Howard Stoughton, Jr., Treasurer; Albert Gruen, Art Director.



*Beauty, said the poet, is in
the eye of the beholder—and
he never even knew about*

CEDRIC

By WINSTON MARKS

WHEN I retired from pro tennis I followed the horses for several years, but now I follow Cedric Dearborn. It's more fun and much more profitable.

Money was on my mind the afternoon I first laid eyes on Cedric. The horses cost me plenty the past season, and I had drifted down to the Bahamas where I heard I might pick up a few nickels with a series of exhibition tennis matches. My old Davis Cup steam was about gone, but a tennis bum like me will trade on his name as long as he can lift a racket and fool the local highschool boys with a reverse twist service.

Well, the rumor was an empty one. My name was not exactly magic when I dropped it at the local tennis clubs.

Anyhow, there was no one around at the time worthy of a match.

So this particular afternoon I was sitting on the patio of a little resort, nestled in the palms, listening to the surf and watching a couple of dubs bat balls at each other on the hard court. I was awaiting the return of the resort manager to apply for a job as tennis pro for the winter, and I was even willing to do a little square-dance calling on the side, if necessary, to get my board and rum.

Because of just such "dry spells" in my erratic fortunes, I have always remained a bachelor. Even approaching forty, the ladies still find my lanky, Gary Cooperish frame, crew haircut and horse-face attractive. I can always rob

the recreation director of his job at these winter resorts if I stick around a week.

It was a stroke of luck for me that Cedric Dearborn chose this afternoon to make one of his rare mistakes. He was playing singles with a fat man in trunks and sandals. This fellow lumbered around the cement court like a gouty walrus, but he hit the ball hard and placed it well. He should have beaten Dearborn easily.

So I got interested when Cedric kept yelling the score which was piling up in his own favor. He was a neatly built little fellow, around fifty years old judging from his carefully combed gray hair. He came about up to my armpits, and he played an amateurish game of lob and chop with remarkable enthusiasm for his age.

As I watched I could see why he was winning. He had fat boy rattled. Cedric chattered pleasantly and incessantly. Such a practice is not normally good court manners. It can throw a fairly good opponent off his game.

When the set ended 6-3 in Cedric's favor, fat boy gave up, and I found Cedric standing before me in his brilliant shorts and white T-shirt, in-

roducing himself and challenging me.

"Sun's pretty hot out there," I apologized.

"Good for you," he insisted. "You have a gorgeous tan. Won't hurt you a bit."

"No, really," I lied, "my racket hasn't arrived yet."

"You can use George's. Hey George!" He trotted after his recent rival and came back with fat boy's racket.

"See here, Mr. Dearborn," I said, "I'm really not in the mood!"

Cedric took a step backward into the sunlight and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. The glitter of a rather large stone setting in his ring made me blink. He looked at me and said, "Come on, now, let's play some tennis."

I found myself being led to the court, and a moment later he chirped, "Service!" and lashed at the ball. It floated over the net after a while, and I dinked it back. The game was on.

A few minutes later I was still wondering what I was doing out here with this gabby little runt, when he announced the end of the first game. He had won it!

I won my serve, but he forced me into a deuce game first. Then he won his service

again. With one eye on the driveway watching for the manager, I slopped around the court, chasing his short chops that dropped just over the net like lead footballs, or else spun up into the glaring sun making me squint and stretch. Soon it was 5-2, his favor.

This was ridiculous. We had only one spectator, a small-bodied girl in a big sun hat, but that was enough to ruin my reputation as a tennis teacher if this clod beat me.

So I bore down hard. I took the next game by sizzling in some serves, and I managed to win another by generating a lot of sweat. Then I focused my mind to the task. What was he doing to me? His chatter began to register in my ears. And then the amazing fact became apparent. *He was calling my shots for me, and I was obeying.*

He'd move to the right court, hold out his racket and yell, "Right here, please—that's a good fellow!" and damned if I wouldn't plant my return right where he'd asked for it!

Well, I'd fix that. Instead of crossing him up, I simply threw a little forearm into my drives and blistered the fuzz off the ball.

"Out!" he called, cheerfully. "Forty-thirty—point set!"

He served, called for my return to his deep backhand, and I smashed his lob right at his racket, but it was an inch too high. "Out again!" Cedric called delightedly. "That's my set. Thanks. I've had enough now."

"Just a minute," I said, jumping over the net. "Let's you buy me a drink."

"Swell, fine." He turned to the spectator and said, "Come on, honey, meet Mr. Seadon. Hugh Seadon, this is Sally Dearborn, my wife." She nodded, but I was too distracted to pay her much attention.

We took a secluded table and ordered drinks. When the waiter had brought them and gone I said, "Mr. Dearborn, do you realize you just won a set of tennis from a former U. S. singles champion and member of the Davis Cup Team?"

"Well, my little game is improving." His small, straight nose crinkled with pleasure. Then the smile faded like a bed sheet pulled straight with a snap. "You are kidding, of course."

"I'm not fooling, Mr. Dearborn. You made me look a little ridiculous. And that's important. I am here to get a job teaching tennis to the guests. Luckily, only your

wife witnessed the drubbing you gave me. I'll have to ask you to keep our match a secret. Your wife too."

"Aren't you being a bit of a poor sport in this matter?"

I bit my teeth together so the muscles stood out on my jaw the way Cooper does when he's facing six-shooter odds. "I am being practical, Mr. Dearborn. You practiced a little black sportsmanship yourself out on that court, and if you boast to your friends of beating me I'll pound you into your tall silk hat with your rabbits!"

"Black sportsmanship? Tall silk hat?" He spread his hands as if feeling for rain, and the look of innocence on his narrow, sensitive face was of professional quality.

"Okay," I said, "I'll draw pictures. I have played around with hypnotism enough to catch your little act out there. I missed your original gimmick, but you were a little obvious with your suggestions, Mr. Dearborn. You must like to win very much."

His hands were both on the table wrapped around his whiskey glass. He sloshed his drink around, and his ring glinted at me. "I do like winning at tennis," he admitted. "I never lose an argument,

either. *Observe the small, black, automatic pistol in my hand.*"

His hands never left the table. They simply separated. In his left was the high-ball glass, but in his right hand was the gun he described. I'm afraid a little of the menace went out of my jaw muscles, but I stuck to my point. "You are still at it. There is no gun in your right hand."

Cedric chuckled mildly. "If I pull the trigger you will have a beastly time convincing your subconscious mind that you do not have a .38 caliber hole in your sternum. Now we will go for a walk on the beach where it isn't so quiet. You precede us—leisurely. Do not speak, please."

My feet gathered under me. I arose casually and strolled down to the beach. There seemed to be no compulsion in my mind. I raged inwardly, tried to swear outwardly and sent a dozen murderous commands to my legs and arms. But my whole body was in free wheeling. With the sound of the waves I couldn't hear their footsteps in the soft, dry sand, but their voices told me I was not alone.

Sally was saying, "You did it again. Your silly pride in your tennis, this time. Now we'll have to move on. Cedric,

I like it here. Why did you have to go spoil it?"

"We haven't had this problem in quite a while," Cedric reflected. "It would spoil our fun to have him around—unless—"

"You aren't going to put *him* on your blackmail list, surely!"

"My dear Sally, I dislike murder as much as you, so what else is there to do?"

There was a brief silence, and I felt as if I were being scrutinized like a slightly over-aged side of beef that a careless butcher is debating whether he dare grind into hamburger. We were approaching a rise to a low cliff with white surf churning and grinding into jagged coral reefs below it. I'm no mind reader, but I was sure we all three had one possibility in mind.

Unexpectedly, Cedric said, "Seadon, I release you. Act as you will!" I tripped over my own feet and sprawled in the sand. Before I could get up he sat down facing me and drew Sally beside him. "If you are looking for a job, Mr. Seadon, you must need money. I have a suggestion to make—"

Involuntarily I glanced down at his ring, but he had rotated the stone into his palm, and only the gold band

showed, matching the one on Sally's ring finger. He smiled. "I should have said proposition. I like your looks, your tennis and your apparent intelligence. Would you care to join up with us?"

I guess Sally was more startled than I. Her blonde head swiveled so sharply that it twisted loose from the over-size straw hat which caught in the breeze and flipped off. For the first time I got a good look at her. And what I saw *belonged* on a sunny beach in a Paris playsuit. She was the kind of morsel a jaded bachelor my age has to dream of to maintain interest in the opposite sex. She was that and more. They copied her eyes when they decided upon the color for a tropical sky. Her golden hair wafted horizontally like a delicate floss, even in the gentlest of Bahamas' zephyrs. The clean, fine lines of her face and all the rest of her was why people spend money on television sets and Broadway revues.

I stared at her. She stared at Cedric, and after a long moment I knew Cedric was staring at me. "Come to, Hugh, and I'll elucidate."

I tore loose my raptured gaze, and Cedric went on. "Unless you are one of these

typical cardiacs who ruin their lives with the ambition to own everything in sight, I think you will like being with us. Your duties will be relatively light and, I trust, pleasant: teach me better tennis, amuse Sally—and keep your mouth shut at appropriate moments. In return I shall buy for you an annuity which will be validated the day we part company, provided we do so amicably. It will pay you \$500 a month for the balance of your life, and until I put it in effect I shall provide you with what cash you need. Except that you may not accumulate a yacht, real estate or a lot of unnecessary baggage with my funds. We travel, you see. The price and quality of toothbrushes is pretty much the same wherever you go.”

The man must be chairman of the board of Murder, Incorporated, I decided. But another look at Sally and it was still mighty tempting. “Would you consider it prying if I asked you your business?” I inquired.

“Not at all,” he said pleasantly. “I was a crystallographer. Now I have an independent and very legitimate income, you might say. I control Hollywood and I own television. By proxies, of course.”

Whoops! The man was get-

ting silly. I addressed Sally for the first time. “Are you his nurse or his keeper?”

She flashed an indulgent smile with teeth right from selected oysters. “Neither. I tumbled to his little hobby a year ago. I’m just along for the fun. He promised me an annuity, too.”

Cedric slipped a thin bill-fold from his shorts. “Money talks,” he said, “even to skeptics. Here’s some change.” He handed me two one hundred-dollar bills.

“You’ll get used to Cedric,” Sally said, pouring white sand over her slender ankles obviously enjoying the sensation.

She lied. I never have gotten used to Cedric.

I have often dreamed of fabulous jobs, but nothing that ever stacked up to this deal. We fooled around the resort for a couple of weeks. I’d play an hour or two of tennis with Cedric, demonstrating and practicing flat strokes. Then we’d all have a cold drink, a five-dollar lunch and siesta. Cedric would read while Sally and I went exploring along the beach. Evenings we danced and drank ourselves to a congenial glow, took a late dip in the surf and went to bed.

The part that made it so

good, though, was the part that made it so rough. Sally.

I was so much in love with her you could scrape it off me with a putty knife. At first I considered it was just one of those things I had to endure, but then I learned that Cedric and Sally lived in separate suites.

This discovery broke down my resolve to keep my lip buttoned. I had feared asking any more questions lest my golden bubble go pop! The thought that all was not as it should be in the Dearborn marriage, however, turned the moths loose on my self-restraint. I had to know.

The following afternoon I got Sally out in a glass-bottom boat. We puddled around a small lagoon for a bit, then I threw it at her. "Are you really married to Cedric?"

"Nope! Oh, look, there's another one of those flat ditties with the purple fringe. I want it." She flipped off her big hat and went over the side in a splashless but sensational dive. She came up empty-handed, hair plastered around her neck and face like golden silt. "Stuck to the bottom," she gasped as I pulled her up and over. There was so little to her Bikini that she barely dripped after one good shake.

I took her little shoulders

in my hands and pressed her down to the bottom of the boat. She smiled up at me. "Don't look so tragic, Hugh. I won't hold out on you. What do you want to know now?"

"If you aren't married—how come, then?"

"Convenience," she said. "It causes less notice for a couple registered as man and wife to live in separate rooms than it would vice versa—if you follow me."

"You mean you aren't—you don't—?"

"Cedric hates women and stool pigeons. When I found out his little secret like you did, he had the same three choices he did with you: murder me, pay me blackmail, or keep me with him. His blackmail list was getting so big and complicated it worried him. He said I was too beautiful an art object to murder, so here I am, same basis as you, with a slightly different set of functions."

"Which are?" By now my heart was pounding ripples in the hair on my chest. I wanted to hear the worst and get it over.

She stirred under my hands, and I let her sit up. She began drying her hair. "Well, I ward off other women by wearing this," she showed me

the plain gold band sans engagement ring. "And I protect his anonymity. You see, his name is not Dearborn. Among his business associates he is well known for his women-hating tendencies. His bachelorhood is legendary on Wall Street and in Los Angeles. So when he drops out of sight, I appear, and we make like rich ranchers from Wisconsin."

Now the big question. "And what do you think of him?"

"I like the life he leads," she said simply. She looked up from the cave of the oversize towel. "Now, let me ask one. We've been together for almost two weeks, and you haven't even tried to kiss me. You say you are a bachelor, too. For the same reason as Cedric?"

I started to reach for her to supply the obvious answer, but the rattle of oar-locks stopped me. It was Cedric. His dory bumped along-side of ours. "Hi!" he said pleasantly enough. "Just dropped out to tell you that tongues are clucking ashore. I guess I over-rated your intelligence, Hugh. Can't have my wife involved in a local scandal."

He rotated the ring on his slender finger. The tropical sun caught in the stone, and I waited his words with cold

fear. He would command me to kill my love for Sally, I was sure. And I knew if he did our pleasant arrangement was at an end. He might as well cut my heart out.

But he did something even worse. "I don't understand what you see in Sally," he said calmly. "See how hooked her nose is. And that dreadful stringy black hair, and those thick ankles. Look, Hugh! See those ugly splotches of freckles all over her fat body."

I looked, and of course it was so.

Cedric nodded and started to pull shoreward. "You'll thank me for this, Hugh. It was either this or lose your-- shall we say, friendship?"

It was such an obscene thing to do that if Sally hadn't grabbed my arm I would have dived over the side and tried to drown Cedric. "Hold it, Hugh," she said quietly. "You haven't lost anything you had before. I hadn't decided whether to fall in love with you, and probably it would have been a mistake. Life can get complicated awfully fast. It will be easier this way. Without a daily ration of your adoring looks, I think I can keep my head better, too." But two tears rolled down her long hawk-like beak and splashed ludicrously on the glass bot-

tom. A little striped fish nosed the spot where they hit and darted to the depths to relay the gossip to the shellfish.

I stared at Sally, head to foot, until she shivered from my expression, covered herself completely with the beach towel and turned her back to me. But I couldn't superimpose my mental image of her real self on the revised painting that Cedric had set before my eyes.

"What kind of damned black magic is this?" I demanded.

Sally's voice was calm. "Cedric has a terrible power, Hugh. But he rarely uses it for evil purposes. Don't judge him too quickly. Talk to him this evening."

I rowed in and went to the bar, but six shots of rye failed to dispel the coldness in my stomach. I was as confused as a highschool boy who sees his girl kissing the football captain.

If a man's emotions of love were so completely dependent upon the vapid imagery of his eyes, how could he trust any of his senses? I took my misery to my \$25-a-day room and let my liquor-soaked brain whirl itself to sleep.

It was after six when I awakened. Cedric would be

dressing for dinner. I went to his suite and knocked. He let me in. "I expected you." He lifted the phone and asked room service to send up two orders of duck. "Sally said she'd like to eat alone, and I think you want to talk. So let's eat here, eh?"

"Fine!" I said belligerently. He stretched out on a pillow-banked couch, and I straddled a straight backed chair. Soft South American music came from the wall-speaker. The open balcony doors let in the rank sweetness of the nearby plantations and strips of intervening jungle growth. It was a night for romance, complete with a low-climbing crescent of moon. So here I sat with a misogynist in his bachelor apartment.

He beat me to the first remark. "You say you like to hunt and fish. I love it. We'll fly up to Florida and do some deep-sea fishing next week. Later we'll go after some big game in Africa. I find your companionship pleasant. I hope nothing changes it. It's worked out so well to now."

I ignored the amenities. "What you did to Sally, or rather, to me, this afternoon. That's got to stop! If you throw a hypnotic nocsc around me every time I have a normal impulse that dis-

pleases you I'll be a walking zombie," I said.

Cedric laughed shortly, then again and finally broke out into a mild convulsion. When he caught his breath he spoke to the low-raftered ceiling of stained hardwood. "I free him of a compulsion that has him drooling around like a seven-foot ape in mating season, and he accuses me of turning him into a zombie!" He chuckled some more. "Perhaps a woman's attraction for the average male is not properly termed hypnotism, my friend, but I assure you it can be no less compulsive. Which is the key-stone of my aversion to woman-kind."

His face approached near sobriety. "No, as long as you are with us, I promise you I will not lift my command to look upon Sally as you found her this afternoon. But if it is diversion you want—"

He bounced to his feet, poured me a stiff drink and squatted cross legged under a lamp. His ring flickered, and the irridescent sparkles flashed around the darkened room like the old ballroom crystals in the colored spots. "Picture three dancing girls—" he began, and his voice took on a delighted dramatic whisper as he described them to me. He

told me of the music to which they danced and their costumes and movements. And they appeared before us. Right out of the lushest Hollywood spectacle I witnessed a typical harem performance complete with veils and oriental head-jerks.

In the midst of the demonstration the waiter knocked, pushed the room service wagon into the middle of the dancers. Cedric waved him out. So genuine was the illusion that I expected the girls to trip and stumble over our duck dinners, but they danced right through them until Cedric clapped his hands and said, "All right, girls, back to Hollywood. Phtt!"

They disappeared, and so did the food cart. I said, "Cedric, would you mind materializing the dinners? You overdid the vanishing act." He laughed again. "You concentrate so beautifully. You must enjoy movies very much. Very well, Hugh, you may see the food cart again."

It was there all the time, of course, and I knew it, but my eyes refused to acknowledge it until he spoke the words of release. He offered me a platter of duck, but I wasn't hungry now. The illusions themselves weren't upsetting, but the conflict with reality was

giving me a slight case of head-spin.

Cedric looked concerned. "You are, perhaps, despising yourself for the ease with which I have manipulated your senses." He tore into the duck and spoke between mouthfuls. "I will restore your self-confidence. You are no different than any other subject in your vulnerability. No different from myself."

"That can't be," I objected. "Every one knows that many people can't be hypnotized at all. So I'm not like all people."

"Quit abusing your self-esteem. Ordinary hypnotism is a clumsy operation and barely penetrates the basic mind. Many can resist such crude bludgeoning of the mind. But no one resists Cedric!" He caressed the gem on his finger.

"What the devil is your gimmick?" I demanded.

"You wouldn't understand," he said. My expression of annoyance at his patronizing remark caused him to smile.

"Very well. This handsome stone has a tiny chip of specially polarized crystal at the apex. A flicker of light from it sensitizes the subconscious mind to any sensual suggestion. For a moment the conscious mind is helpless to censor or resist these sugges-

tions. And as you have experienced, a properly planted command has the power of compulsion. Now, if you want the neuro-semantic background to this explanation—"

"Skip it," I told him, "I'm lost already. But how do you cash in on it? You don't go around mesmerizing bank cashiers, I hope."

"Not selectively," he said. "But anyone who likes movies or television contributes indirectly to my enterprises. You see, all cinema screens and television view-plates are coated with my crystals. How else do you suppose intelligent people could be induced to become absorbed in grade B pictures and the hog-slop commercials that are the essence of profit in entertainment and advertising?"

"I've wondered about that," I admitted.

"Have some duck," he invited.

I told him no thanks. At that moment I would have more enjoyed breaking bread with a snake-charmer. I had a case of mental indigestion to settle before I could think of eating. I told him thanks for the confidences and I thought I'd turn in early.

I got half way to the door when it burst open, and Sally

moved her ungainly, stodgy little body into the line of my retreat. She was high. "Lo, everybody. Have a drink!" She had half a magnum of champagne in her freckled hand, and she insisted that Cedric and I drink a toast with her. She went to the liquor cabinet, turned her back to us and poured two goblets full. She delivered them to us and came back with the bottle which she hoisted on high.

"To the three of us," she said happily. Cedric and I drank off the tingly stuff and watched Sally struggle with the long neck jug. I thought her ridiculous long nose must certainly get in the way, but she managed to slip past it and spill the pale amber wine down her chin.

Suddenly she dropped the bottle, grabbed me by the hand and said, "Come on, I want to dance. 'Night Cedric!" He looked at us curiously, grimaced at me as though to say, "Sorry, chum," and waved us good night. I guided Sally to the door with some difficulty, and she slammed it shut with abandon.

It was no sooner closed than she straightened up and beckoned me across the hall to her suite. Inside she shushed me and left her own door open a

crack. In about a minute she apparently heard what she had been waiting for. She pulled me back across the hall and into Cedric's apartment. He was sprawled on the floor, head cocked and snoring heavily.

"What's this about?" I demanded. Ignoring me she reached over and gently peeled back one of Cedric's eyelids. The pupil was rolled back out of sight.

"I may not be as subtle, but I'm just as effective, you must admit," she said brightly. "He's out. Now let's talk. You and me."

She pulled up a chair opposite mine and looked me in the eye. I stared back. She was cold sober. It was still almost shocking to note the transformation of her appearance, but some of the curse was removed by the silvery evening gown she was wearing. The ugly ankles were concealed, at least. As I looked the essence of her seemed to emerge once more. I closed my eyes, and there she was before me. She spoke again and I kept my eyes closed.

"Hugh, I've been thinking."

"Yes, Sally?"

"I—I don't like your not seeing me—as I am. It bothers me. A lot!"

The tinkle of her voice

strengthened the angelic vision against my closed lids. "Vanity," I said.

"It's worse than that," she said sadly. "Cedric may have solved your problem, but he loused me up. Somebody once wrote that it was a man's eyes that makes a woman truly beautiful. And, Hugh—since this afternoon I don't feel beautiful in anyone's eyes. I guess Cedric sort of made up my mind for me."

I opened my eyes and this time there was no shock. I took her in my arms, long nose, freckles and all. We kissed and two weeks' pent up flames burst between us. I made a fascinating discovery. At last there was a bonus for closing my eyes when I kissed a girl.

About two minutes later I put her down on her feet once more and told her about my mental image when I closed my eyes.

"That," she said, "won't be necessary." She pried open Cedric's palm and, averting her own eyes, she flashed the revealed gem in mine.

"From now and forever,

Hugh Scadon, see me as you saw me early this afternoon!" It worked. I made another grab for her, but she evaded me, closed Cedric's hand up again and replaced it on his heaving chest. "What he does not know now he'll never discover from us. Let's get out of here."

Nor has Cedric ever learned our secret. It takes a good deal of restraint to keep my eyes off Sally when the three of us are together, but I manage. We slipped off and got married during one of Cedric's brief sessions with his business associates, and that was probably the most unusual feeling I'll have in a long time.

I have long since gotten used to seeing her like that on the street, in the most formal dining rooms, on the African veldt and even in a Roman Cathedral, but the day we stood up before the minister her Bikini bathing suit almost made me forget to say, "I do."

It was the only time I ever tried mentally to *dress* a lovely woman with my eyes.

THE END

