

**All
Stories
Complete**

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STORIES

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The Bare Facts

by George H. Smith

illustrated by Emsh

It was downright indecent for a girl who was making an honest living as a stripper to be yanked into the future, where no one wore clothes!

DEAR MARGE,
I have no way of knowing for sure if you'll ever get this letter but the Professor says you will, so I'm sending it along. I guess you and the others have been wondering what happened to little old April. Well, to tell you the truth, Marge, for a while there I wasn't very sure myself.

It seems as if a girl never knows what will happen to her from one minute to the next. There I was out on the runway minding my own business and . . .well, maybe I better start at the beginning and tell you all about it.

I guess you remember that night . . .the night I disappeared, I mean. The night lil'

Marge was shocked—none of these people were wearing clothes!



ole April Dawn disappeared right off the runway in front of four hundred of her panting fans. The way I remember, it happened something like this. I'd just finished the bumps and grinds, had almost crawled up the curtain and was down to the old G-string. The boys in bald head row were really whooping it up when *bang*.

just like that...it happened. One minute I was there going over big (I'll bet even that old hag, Red Belle, would admit my act was a dilly that night!) and the next I wasn't there at all. I didn't hear anything, and I didn't feel anything, except a slight draft—which a girl in our business can't afford to be susceptible to. And then... there I was...not on the runway as I should have been, but up on a platform with a whole bunch of strange people standing around staring at me.

I took one look and you can't imagine, Marge, how shocked I was. There wasn't a one in the whole bunch that had a stitch of clothes on! You would have thought it was a stripper's convention, except that half of them were men, and they were quite a bit past the point when

they might have been interesting to look at. I blinked at them a couple of times, feeling real embarrassed, you know. I'm not used to seeing other people with no clothes on.

A SKINNY little bald-headed guy that was closest to me started wringing his hands and stepped closer, looking real upset. "Oh dear. . .oh dear," he said. "There must be some mistake."

"There certainly is," said a big, mannish looking woman right behind him. "You've blundered again, Jenkins."

"I'm sorry, Madam President," the little man said nervously.

By this time they're up real close to me and as naked as jaybirds. Being a lady I lower my eyes—especially since neither of them would take any prize for beauty.

"Young lady," the skinny guy said to me, "Young lady, I don't suppose that you are... No, no, you couldn't be. "

"I couldn't be what?" I asked, at the same time wrapping my scarf around me, which is all I have left of my

costume. At least I was modest even if they weren't.

"You couldn't possibly be Winston Churchill, the great 20th Century statesman. No, of course not. The few books we have on the subject say definitely that Churchill was a man and you're" . . . (and here he gave me a look, Marge, that proved to me that wherever—or maybe I should *whenever*—I was, men hadn't forgotten the difference between the sexes that keeps burlesque houses going).. "ahem! You are most certainly a woman."

The look I gave him back was something I save for what crawls from under rocks back home. "No," I said with dignity, "I most certainly am not the 20th Century statesman, Winston Churchill. I am the 20th Century strip tease artist, April Dawn."

THE LITTLE fellow looked more worried than ever and the big babe was scowling at him something awful as she said, "I might have known what would happen if we entrusted the Time Re-Intergrator to a man."

"I'm sorry. I'm very sorry,

President Meade," the skinny guy mumbled, and then he turned to me again. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Miss Dawn. I'm Professor Thomas Jenkins of the Institute of Pre-Destruction Research. We were conducting an important scientific experiment and . . . well . . . something seems to have gone wrong with our time machine."

"Time machine? I don't get it," I said, but there was a cold chill going up my spine that had nothing to do with my unclothed condition.

The Professor cleared his throat and started in again. "Yes, time machine. I'm afraid that some of our position coordinates must have been off, and so we didn't reach into the House of Parliament in ancient London to bring Mr. Churchill to our time."

"Ha!" I snorted, "you sure didn't! Brother, what you reached into was the House of Strip in 'ancient' Brooklyn and brought April Dawn to your time." Then I did a double take on the words I was using. "Yipe!" I yelled, "What do you mean *your time*? What is your time?"

The Professor looked real sorry for me as he said, "You would call this the 25th Century. We call it 525 P. D.... Post Destruction, that is."

"I wanna go home. I wanna go back to Brooklyn," I wailed.

"Here, here! Stop this nonsense!" It was the big gal, and scared me so bad I stopped crying and got mad. "Don't you know that you are in presence of Roberta Meade, President of the United Dakotas of America?"

"This is supposed to mean something?" I snapped. "I want to go home, and I want to go right now. I don't like it here. It looks like a nudist camp to me, and you all ought to be ashamed of yourselves."

"This is New Bismarck, the capitol of the United Dakotas," the Professor put in. "And these people are President Meade's Congress."

"I want to go home... I want to go back to the United States."

"Hm...well... I'm afraid, Miss Dawn, that the United Dakotas are all that's left of the United States. All the rest is radioactive, you know."

THIS BROKE me down but good, and I let loose with the tears for real. The Professor tried to comfort me while the Meade woman stood impatient-like behind him, muttering to herself, her double chins jiggling like mad.

"Now what good is this going to do us?" I overheard her say as I calmed down a little. "Bringing this silly little floozie here instead of Churchill."

"Hey, look out who you're calling a floozie, you big fat." The Professor put his hand over my mouth at this point but I was fighting mad now, and not taking any lip from this gal, President or not. I jerked my head free and went on, "I'll have you know that I've always been a lady and an artist, and that's more than I can say for you, running around without a stitch on at your age."

"Please, please, Miss Dawn. You mustn't talk to the President that way. You could be held in contempt."

"And contempt is just what I hold for her," I said as Jenkins dragged me away. "I want to go home."

"That is impossible. You see,

Miss Dawn, the Time Machine blew three tubes when it brought you here, and we'll have to send to Southern Rhodesia to get replacements."

"And how long will that take?"

"Well, it's a three-year trip by caravan and sailing ship."

"Three years! My God, I can't stay here that long. I've got a date with Mr. Papias tonight."

"It will be six years both ways, Miss Dawn. The caravan has to go through Northern Canada to avoid the radioactivity, and then they catch a ship at Port Nelson on Hudson's Bay. They have to wait for the ice to break, and then..."

I GROAN, "Six years! And me with only a G-String to my name. Well, Professor, I'll have to have some clothes. Get me some."

"Well...but...haven't you noticed that none of us wear clothes?"

"Yeah, I did, and all I can say is shame on all of you!" I told him. "Dignified people your age should have more dignity."

"But you see, Miss Dawn, things have changed. The climate has grown warmer since your time and materials are much, much scarcer and... well, people just don't wear clothes any more."

Marge, this was just too much. I had to sit down. Here I was, dragged against my will, mind you, into the 25th Century to find out they are so immoral they don't wear clothes at all. Now, I ask myself, how am I going to make a living? Six years I'll be stuck here and how can I stay decent and a lady if I can't take my clothes off to earn a decent living? In a place where everyone walks around with nothing on, who will pay money to see me take them off?

I began to cry again. "Professor why have you done this to me? I've always been a good girl and I got an aged mother to support and keep in good whiskey."

"Please, please, Miss Dawn. I assure you that it was an accident."

"Yeah, yeah, I know. You tried to get Winston Churchill and got me instead. Why did

you have to be playing around in time anyway?"

"I assure you, Miss Dawn, that I was not just playing around with time. We of the 25th Century were seeking help. At the Institute of Pre-Destruction Research, it was decided that this greatest of your statesmen might help us solve our problem."

I stopped sniffing long enough to ask, "What problem?"

BY THIS time we were in the Professor's laboratory. "A very serious problem, Miss Dawn. In fact, one that may destroy the human race where even the A-Bomb failed."

"Well, I guess you can wait until you get those new tubes and make another try at picking up Winnie."

"In six years it may be too late, Miss Dawn."

"That bad, huh? Say, professor, just what is this problem anyway?"

Believe it or not Marge, the Professor blushed, and this will kill you. .he blushed the whole way down! Honest! Guess people always do, but with clothes on we just never

notice. But it sure is funny to see. I giggled, I just couldn't help it, Marge, and the Professor blushed redder than ever.

He began to stammer and stutter and it went something like this, "It's. .it's a rather delicate. .ahem. .matter. Our people. .well. .they seem to have. .the men, that is... what I mean is.. well, after the war there were only a few hundred men left... that is to say, men who were. .ahem... capable of. .well, you know . . . men who were at all... shall we say... virile."

"Oh fine," I said. "This to add to everything else! April Dawn sure must have been born under the unluckiest star that ever was. What a place for a stripper! Now I can't even... Never mind. Not that I want to, of course, but it's always nice to know that you have something to fall back on."

"I'm afraid I don't understand, Miss Dawn."

"Skip it, Prof. Go on with what you was tellin' me."

"Well, at first it wasn't too bad. The men who hadn't been

harmed did their best to carry on the race."

MY SENSE of humor was beginning to come back now, Marge, and I must say I found all this kind of funny. "Well now," I said, "I'm mighty glad to hear that, Professor. But I'll bet those guys were busy as one-armed Shamrock pickers on St. Patrick's day." I giggled again and the Professor blushed again, the most beautiful shocking pink you ever saw, Marge.

"Well...I...yes, I suppose they were." The Professor paused, and he seemed to have lost all track of what he was saying. My scarf and G-string seemed to have caught his attention, and I pulled them still closer to protect my girlish modesty.

"Let's keep our little minds on the business at hand, Professor," I said sharply to snap him out of it.

"Ah yes. Well, as I was saying, it wasn't too bad the first few generations. However, about a hundred years ago it was noticed that the number of virile men were not increasing in proportion to the increase in

population. We have been investigating it ever since, and have come to the conclusion that the rapidly falling rate of virility is due not to physical but to mental causes—psychological causes, we might say. And if it goes on for a few more years, Miss Dawn, the birth rate will take a fatal drop and the race itself will just... well. peter out."

Marge, honey, at this I just nearly doubled up but the Professor was so serious I controlled myself and asked, "And this is why you wanted to get in touch with Mr. Churchill?"

"Oh, yes. We felt that such a great statesman would surely be able to help us."

"Well...I don't know as that's exactly what you boys needed," I says, trying to be real intel...intelec...oh, you know what I mean, Marge. Real smart like. "Seems to me what you need is one of them head shrinkers like...what's-his-name? Freud. But—and it's a big but, my friend—all you got is me."

THE PROFESSOR, at this point, gave me another of those looks of his and said,

"Yes, Miss Dawn, all we got is you." Now, Marge, when a man of the Professor's skull power uses my kind of talk, he's pretty well gone—and all of a sudden I know how I can earn my way in this blasted 25th Century.

"Professor," I asked in my sweetest tones, "are you pretty much like the rest of the Joes in this United whatever-it-is? Would you say you were one of the more virile type?"

Again we do the shocking pink from head to foot bit. "Well...well, Miss Dawn...I must admit that up to now...well, I just haven't given such things much thought." He reached for me and I don't mind telling you, Marge, that for a minute or two there it took some doing to keep him at a distance. Finally I got a table between us and started talkin' turkey to him.

"Listen, Prof," I told him, "I think I can help you folks."

This got his full attention and stopped his leers for the moment. "You, Miss Dawn?"

"Yes, me," I said, real firm like. "I think I know how to help you and also make a livin' for myself."

At this he laughed and lunged across the table. "I know how you can help me right now, Miss Dawn."

This time I didn't move fast enough, Marge...but I found out that I had the right idea.

WELL, MARGE, I seem to have used up a lot of paper and you're probably getting bored, and besides they tell me the Time Machine is ready for its second trip to the 20th Century. I have to have this ready to mail so I'll close fast as I can.

As I was saying, I figured out right then and there what I was going to do to make a living in the 25th Century. And I've been doing it ever since. In fact, I'm doing so well at it, that I won't be coming back at all. You see Marge, I've become a dresser. These guys never saw a woman with clothes on before and it, well, you know how the guys in bald head row behave, honey?

I figured it out as soon as I saw how the Professor was looking at my G-string. It was the first time he had ever seen a woman he couldn't see all of, and it went to...well not ex-

actly his head. So I'm not only making a living but I'm helping to save the human race as well. Honest, Marge, it does things to these guys that nothing ever did before. Guess the local males just got tired of women with no clothes on and now when they see me putting them on. well...

Well, baby, this is all the time I've got. The enclosed jewels are part of my honest

earnings with which I'm trusting you see that my poor old mother is kept in good bourbon for the rest of her natural life.

Give my love to all the gals and guys in the show.

Love

April D. (Dawn) Perkins

P. S. You can keep the mink that Mr. Papias gave me. There just ain't no place to wear it here.