

Tramp In Haiti

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side my cheek. I was just about to fire when she threw the gun aside.

It was empty!

She ran on but I started gaining, shortening the distance between us. There was a knifing pain in my head and black spots were dancing before my eyes as I drew closer to her, close enough to try a flying tackle because all of a sudden I realized that a few more feet of this running would lay me out colder than a mackerel.

I went through the air, struck out with my hand. It caught her ankle and she hit the ground. But, like a wildcat, she whirled . . . kicking . . . biting . . . scratching. Her long nails raked my face leaving furrows of blood. Striking out, my hand caught her blouse ripping it open and leaving the entire upper part of her body almost exposed. A ripping sound came from her skirt as she kicked desperately at my face and I got a glimpse of pink garters and tapering thigh.

Then, she made a powerful lunge for my gun, for the instant leaving her face exposed. My short jab struck her flush and she went out without a murmur.

MONITA was standing beside me when I came to. The room was familiar. It was her house! She was standing there, a smile on her face and a cold compress in her hand. My eyes roved around the room, fell on Sergeant Wilson and a tall stranger. I started to speak but Monita put a cool finger on my lips.

"That's right, Monita," said Wilson. "We'll do most of the talking."

He stood grinning before me. "It's a lucky thing for you, Carmody, that you forgot to return them papers to me I asked for. Because when the *Bolivar* hoisted anchor without any okay, I sent McGregor and his plane to stop her." He paused, then remembering: "Oh, this gentleman"—he indicated the tall stranger—"is Lieutenant Heath of Naval Intelligence. He was after Peeper John's sister."

Heath smiled and shook hands. "We've suspected her for a long time," he said. "She's much cleverer than her brother. He was just big and stupid. When she learned del Orto and Quesada had arranged to sell Carras a cargo of sulphur for belligerents, she planned to hijack it. The profit in it would be enormous, so she told her brother that if he and Quesada wanted to be smart they could get double pay for it; especially with Carras out of the way."

Heath grinned. "You, of course, messed things up a bit, Carmody, when you showed up at the Nacional. Both Peeper and his sister were making a getaway. She stopped to wire the tramp steamer, *Steuben*, which was loitering around. Peeper, in the lobby, saw you and told his sister. So she hung around waiting to learn what you had found. In the meantime, my office had intercepted Peggy's code message and started me here."

I groaned. "But there was