

# The Merry ASSASSIN

By RICHARD MACAULAY

**Larry Gray was fast and tricky, both in and out of the ring. The trouble was that he just couldn't seem to take the fight business seriously. But I had to. I was his manager**

I STOOD chewing on a cigar, watching Barney Duchel punch the heavy bag. It wasn't a pretty sight; and yet, he was the best I had.

A tall, skinny kid, carrying a little canvas bag, came up beside me. "Mr. Doyle, I'm Larry Gray."

I grunted, "What do you want?"

"A manager," he answered. He was grinning, as if this was a funny remark. I looked over his skinny frame and thought maybe he was trying to hustle me a rib.

"For what?" I barked.

"For fighting." He smiled again as if this was a very humorous remark.

Still expecting a rib, I told him sharply, "As far as I know, they haven't got a skeleton class. Forget about it, go to school, go to work, do something constructive."

I started to turn away but the kid, still smiling, said, "You're not giving me much of a chance, Mr. Doyle. Would it help if I told you I was the welterweight champion of the 189th Division?"

"Not any more than if you told me you were the best left-handed tennis player in Idaho." I looked him over again. "Go away, put on forty pounds, and then come back to see me."

The kid grinned and said, "But that would make me a heavyweight, and I might get hurt."

"You'd get hurt if a good featherweight hit you," I snapped. "How tall are you and how much do you weigh?"

"Five eleven—about 140."

"Do you realize," I asked him, "that some welterweights have arms like heavyweights? And can you imagine what would happen to you if one of them hit you?"

The kid smiled a big, wide smile again and replied, "Well, I'll tell you, Mr. Doyle, I've worked out an easy solution to that. I don't let anyone hit me."

"That's in the bush leagues," I said.

The kid nodded. "Right. And I'm tired of not getting hit in the bush leagues. I want to change—I want to not get hit in the big leagues."

As I looked him over, I discovered that he didn't smile every time he said something. It was just that he never quit smiling. It wasn't a set smile—it just looked like everything he saw, heard and said was funny to him. Not a belly laugh, but just kind of funny.

"Look, kid," I said. "Personally, I think I could hit you. But even if you're half as good as you think you are remember this: *Everyone* gets hit. They never made a Fancy Dan who couldn't be hit. Corbett got hit. McLarnin got hit. And if you get hit by a good boy who can punch, you won't have to worry about anything any more."

The kid, not looking at all offended, merely smiled and said, "I'd still like to show you what I can do. What have you got to lose?"

"I don't want to get mixed up in any homicide cases. Have you got trunks with you?" The kid patted his little canvas bag. "Get dressed."

I arranged for the kid to go a couple of rounds, if that long, with Duchel. Duchel was no Fancy Dan, but he was a sharp puncher who'd fought a couple of semiwindups and knew his way around the ring. Before they started, I asked the kid, "What makes you think you want to be a fighter?"

"Money," he said, smiling.

I looked at the ribs sticking out on his small chest, the skinny arms and the knobby knees. Then I indicated a few choice, punchy characters of the type who frequent gyms and said, "All these guys thought they were going to make a lot of money. Now, if they're real bright, they pick up an occasional five or ten waving a towel. And they had meat on their bones!"

"Yeah," the kid smiled, "but what did they have between their ears?"

The smile was beginning to get me down a little. I said, shortly, "All right, get in there with Duchel."

The kid crawled in the ring. Duchel, who was already in, looked at the kid, then looked down at me, as if this was a joke. I gave Duchel a wink which meant "Pour it on, brother—give him the works." Someone crawled in the ring and started them off.

WELL, nothing happened, and I mean, *exactly* nothing. For three rounds Duchel never laid a glove on the kid, who, in turn, never even threw a punch at Duchel, beyond a few jabs with his long skinny left, just to keep him off balance. Finally Duchel got sore and started swinging wild, and I stopped it.

While this was going on, Ted Norton, who promotes the cards up at St. Mark's Arena, came up beside me.

"That your boy, Pat?" he finally asked.

"Yes," I said quickly.

"Doesn't look like much, does he?"

"That's what Duchel thinks," I said, crisply.

"He can't see him enough to hit him."

"No wonder," Ted replied. "If that kid turns sideways, his friends think he's left town. What's his name?"

"Gray. Larry Gray." (Continued on page 61)

"He wants to be a doctor," she said, "but if he ever starts fighting, he'll forget about it. I want you to leave him alone!"







AIR FORCE PHOTOS

On war-crowded Tinian, now far behind the Pacific battle lines, members of the 509th Composite Bomb Group waited through weeks of briefing. Then, with only good weather needed for a fateful sortie, they got the weatherman's all clear on August 5, 1945. The Hiroshima news was about to burst upon the world

# The BIGGEST BLAST of them

*It was just four years ago that the world shook to the opening of the Atomic Age. Preparations had been top secret. Aside from Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, Jr., commanding officer of the 509th Composite Bomb Group, no one on the project at lonely Wendover, Utah, had the slightest inkling of what their efforts were to produce. Strange-looking objects were taken out of wraps and from them the first dummy of the atomic bomb was assembled*

## CONCLUSION

**T**HEY finally told Captain Charles Begg, the commanding officer of the 509th Composite Bomb Group's 1st Ordnance Squadron (Special Aviation), what he had built when, in the fall of 1944, he took three boxcars full of mysterious parts and painstakingly fitted them together into a shape.

Six weeks after he had assembled the strange object, Begg was put in a plane and flown from the bomb group's secret base at Wendover, Utah, to Albuquerque, New Mexico. At Albuquerque, he

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was transferred to an automobile containing several other men, including Professor Norman Ramsey, of Columbia University and Los Alamos. Once out of Albuquerque, on the road to Los Alamos, Ramsey told him the secret.

"It's a dummy atomic bomb," he said.

Begg wouldn't have known. There had never been any written instructions for the assembly of the test bomb. It was a curious thing, but Begg saw no written instructions for the assembly of the bomb until after its counterpart—the actual atom bomb—had been dropped on Hiroshima and had already been pronounced obsolete.

The 1st Ordnance Squadron had its own production line at Wendover, both to modify existing parts and to manufacture new parts for the bomb. The production line, like everything else at the 509th, had been built mostly by divine inspiration, because nobody knew at first what it was supposed to be producing. But it worked.

Atomic scientists came up from Los Alamos to Wendover every two weeks with changes and modifications. As soon as they arrived with their new ideas, the squadron tore down its production machinery, set up a new line, and within hours was turning out parts for a new version of the bomb.

Then, while B-29s from the 509th tested that bomb, the scientists went back to their empire at Los Alamos, pondered the problems once more, and in two weeks were back at Wendover with more changes and modifications. Warily, the ordnance men dismantled the production line and started over from the beginning.

Difficulty in building the atomic bomb lay mostly in the wiring and electronic equipment; the fissionable material was no great problem when they came to that. One scientist put the secret this way: "Take some fissionable material in several pieces, as pure as possible, and slap them together, as quickly as possible." Comparatively simple. But the wiring—that was something else again.

And the sound the Bomb made coming down! When it was finally turned loose, it descended on

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