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# The People That Time Forgot

By Patrick Tilley

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Okay. Hold it.

Is it all right

if we get back to work now?

Thanks awfully. Sorry to be such a bore.

Not at all, Lady Charlotte.

It's rather fun.

Mr. Graham.

Hogan, your job is to look after  
the amphib, not lug that stuff around.

Well, one of us has to be nice  
to the lady, major.

Plucky little woman. Bit of a responsibility  
on a trip like this, though.

Didn't have a choice, Captain.

We agreed to take a reporter  
from the newspaper that financed us.

- They sent her.

- Be fair, Ben, she does take good pictures.

Maybe. But she's one problem

I could do without.

If the weather holds, we should reach  
the last known position of your friend Tyler  
in 3 days.

At which point, we should sight the coastline  
of this mysterious ice continent  
he describes in his log.

You sound as though  
you still have your doubts, Captain.

If we did, major, The Royal Navy  
wouldn't be helping you.

No, it was the specimens that Tyler  
included in this canister.

And when Dr. Norfolk here,  
confirmed that they were genuine...

Why do you think

I went to the top man in Europe?

Oh, now, hardly, Ben.

Dr. Schenkelman in Vienna...

Oh, come on, doctor.

If it hadn't been for your word,  
The London Times would never have agreed  
to back this expedition, and you know it.  
I don't think I'll ever forget the day

when Major Ben McBride  
walked into my room at the Natural  
History Museum with that canister.  
- Almost spilled your hot milk, didn't you?  
- It was quite a moment, Ben.  
Tyler makes it sound  
a very dangerous place.  
A continent full of cavemen and dinosaurs?  
Do you really believe there's a chance  
that Tyler may still be alive?  
If I didn't, I wouldn't be here.  
Doc knows where I stand.  
- I don't give a damn about dinosaurs.  
- I'm still hoping to convert him.  
Boy, I'm sure glad  
we're going in by air, major.  
Me, too, Hogan.  
I'd hate to have to climb that.  
I'd say it was almost impossible.  
And I'm quite good at this sort of thing.  
- Did I ever tell you about the Matterhorn?  
- Once or twice.  
- Just how long have we got, Captain?  
- 3 to 4 weeks. Half what we planned,  
but we hadn't expected so much pack ice.  
If it closes in on us...  
Come on, Captain. This ship is built  
like the rock of Gibraltar.  
It may be, Mr. Hogan, but that ice  
could crush this hull like a matchbox.  
- And if that happened...  
- There'll be no trip home for any of us.  
Okay, Hogan,  
let's winch the amphibian into the water.  
The sooner we get airborne, the better.  
- Hogan!  
- Okay, let's go.  
McBride to Polar Queen,  
flying southwest. Altitude 3,000 feet.  
Still no breaks in the ice.  
Turning southeast,  
and climbing at 5,000 feet. Over.  
Roger. Polar Queen listening. Over.  
McBride to Polar Queen,

still no break in the ice wall.  
Course south by southwest. Over.  
Polar Queen to McBride,  
your signal is badly distorted.  
What is your present course? Over.  
Can't give you...  
Polar Queen to McBride, Say again. Over.  
Mainly static for the last 2 hours, sir,  
but they're still transmitting,  
and I think they're still airborne.  
At least they're alive.  
And they've flown over 200 miles.  
Must be well over the ice wall by now.  
Hey, what the...  
It's a pterodactyl!  
Absolutely magnificent!  
Coming in on the starboard, major!  
Here he comes. Look at the size!  
Look out! He's close!  
Hogan!  
Right.  
Coming in at port, major.  
Hold on! This may be a little rough.  
- I'll try to smooth out the bumps next time.  
- Nonsense. You did extremely well.  
- Still in one piece?  
- Just. How about the plane?  
- Hogan?  
- Yeah.  
- What kind of shape we in?  
- Well, not good. But it's fixable.  
McBride to Polar Queen,  
can you read me? Over.  
Polar Queen to McBride,  
your signal's very faint. Go ahead.  
We have been attacked  
by a giant pterodactyl.  
Good Lord!  
Damage to amphib...  
had to make forced landing...  
Polar Queen to McBride,  
this is Captain Lawton.  
How bad is damage to plane?  
McBride to Polar Queen,

acknowledge my message. Over.

I say again, how bad is damage to plane?

- No dice?

- It's hard to tell.

- Not much they could do anyway.

- Well, if they sail away, we're sunk.

Nobody's gonna sail away, Hogan.

There's plenty of time for everything.

- Any luck, Mr. Graham?

- No, sir. They've stopped transmitting.

Will they get that plane

back into the air?

There's no way we can send

a rescue party in over those cliffs.

- What the devil are we going to do, sir?

- We're going to wait, Mr. Whitby.

We shall chart this section of the coastline,

and we shall stay here as long as we can.

- Mount a 24-hour listening watch, Mr. Graham?

- Aye, aye, sir.

But supposing the ice closes in, sir.

Let me worry about that, will you,

Mr. Whitby? Start work on the charts, please.

Aye, aye, sir!

Ready... heave!

Ready... heave!

Okay. Let's take 5.

What we really need is a winch.

- Yeah, well, we haven't got one.

- You know, what we really need is a winch.

Yeah.

We must remember to bring one next time.

Go easy on that stuff, Hogan.

It's just a little "nerve tonic," major.

The war, remember?

- Well, this isn't the western front.

- You're absolutely right. It's worse.

No, no, believe me. I was there.

Pterodactyls are far more

interesting than Germans.

Interesting?

Doc, you professor types are all the same.

Pterodactyls?

You give me the Red Baron any day.

Anyway, all I want to do is fix up that amphibian and get us the hell out of here. What are you talking about?

We just started.

We came here to get Tyler, and that's what we're going to do. You better call in the Navy, because we are going to need some reinforcements. You worry too much, Hogan. Get that prop fixed and check out the tail.

- How's it going?

- Oh, quite well, thank you.

Oh, could I have a photograph of you?

Well, yeah.

Where do you want me?

That rock will do fine. Makes a good background.

Right.

Okay.

Hold it.

I think McBride's found something you might like to look at.

Really?

You're a real barrel of laughs, you know it?

A fully grown stegosaurus.

Now, isn't that absolutely beautiful? I hope you appreciate this moment, Ben. Aren't they supposed to be very docile and very stupid?

- Well, in theory, yes.

- Especially the female of the species.

You know, I've got a feeling we've just found our winch.

Why don't we use him to tow the amphib out?

Actually, that's not a bad idea. It looks big enough.

But suppose he doesn't want to. All we've got to do is tie a rope to his tail and make him run away.

- They should make a good anchor point.

- Yeah.

- Is he going to feel this?

- No, not yet.

His nervous system works  
about 100 times slower than ours.

I hope you're right.

Hogan!

- Ready?

- Hold onto your hat.

Hey! Charly!

Get the hell out of the way, goddamn it!

Keep your shirt on.

Go on! Go on!

Go on!

Go!

She's clear!

Now, how are we going to stop it?

Major!

Attaboy, major!

Come on, major!

I'm going for the rocks!

Major!

Oh, boy.

Isn't it marvelous? It worked!

You almost got yourself killed.

Listen, your family's newspaper

may be paying for this trip,

but from now on, just quit

clowning around. Understand?

Come on. Now, don't get sore at the major.

Look, I was with him for three years

in France. He's all right.

He's just a little worried about what he's

got us into, you being a lady and all.

You promised to forget that, remember?

As for McBride, don't worry,

I can look after myself.

I'm going to have to cut about 10 inches

off each of those blades

to balance them off.

Then we're going to lose a lot of thrust.

Will it get us in the air?

If none of us has

too big a breakfast, yes.

How long do you figure it'll take?

Well, with the rudder and all  
the other items, it's going to be...  
it's going to be about 3 or 4 days.  
Can't afford to lose that much time.

- You two game to go in on foot?

- Yes!

- Yes.

- You're crazy!

For all we know, Tyler could be sitting  
just on the other side of these hills.  
We get up to that ridge, we may be able  
to see some of those peaks he described.  
We'll be heading due south.

In 3 days time, I'll send up a flare, at 9:00  
in the morning and 3:00 in the afternoon.

We could be back

before you're through here.

- What about the goddamn monsters?

- Trust me.

I looked after you in France, didn't I?

The way I remember it,

I was the one who saved your life.

That's what I mean, Hogan.

I owe you one, right?

Right.

Well, let's get started.

You still annoyed

at having to bring me along?

No, not really. It's just that certain  
kinds of girls are hard to take.

Oh, you mean my kind?

Well, the world's a changing place, McBride.

You know what the real problem is?

You just can't stand competition.

Lady, I believe in a man

doing a man's work, that's all.

- What is it, doc?

- It can only be one thing... prehistoric.

Definitely prehistoric.

That's human.

Ben!

- You hurt?

- No. Thanks.

A genuine cavegirl.



She'll suit you perfectly.  
She's all yours, doc. You're the expert.  
In fossils, perhaps.  
This is a little outside my field.  
Don't touch!  
She speaks English.  
- That's crazy.  
- No, it doesn't make sense.  
Ben. See this knife she's carrying?  
It's a Bowie knife.  
I don't know how the hell she got it.  
Well, yes, she must have been  
in contact with Tyler.  
- Tyler.  
- Good God! She knows the name.  
What is your name?  
Ajour.  
Ajour, listen, did Tyler teach you  
to speak our language?  
Yes. He teach you, too?  
No. Tyler and me learned together.  
Grow up together.  
Tyler is a friend of mine.  
I guess he's a friend of yours, too?  
Was good man...  
all gone.  
Gone now.  
Ajour has no friends.  
- No people.  
- Pull that photograph of Tyler.  
Ajour...  
Look.  
Go on... take it.  
Your friend Tyler seems  
to have made quite an impression.  
Why don't you...  
go and light a fire or something?  
Right, I've got the whole story.  
She comes from a race of people  
called the Galu.  
It's a Stone Age tribe,  
or at least it was when Tyler  
and a girl called Lisa stumbled into  
one of their settlements.

Lisa, wasn't that the girl  
that Tyler rescued?

That's right. The only other survivor  
of the original party.

Go on.

Well, it appears that Tyler and the girl  
were welcomed by the Galu  
- and lived with them for more than 2 years.  
- I'm glad somebody's friendly.

During that time,  
they taught the Galu farming skills,  
generally helped them advance  
from the Stone Age into the Iron Age.  
Why is she so upset over Tyler's picture?

Because another more advanced race,  
called the Naga,  
didn't like the competition.

They massacred every Galu  
they could lay their hands on.

Is... Tyler dead?

Well, there's a chance that Tyler  
and Lisa may have been captured.  
The Nagas usually sacrifice their prisoners  
to appease their volcano god.

Well, in this case, it would make  
more sense to keep them alive.

Their knowledge would help  
the advance of the Nagas.

Well, I hope not.

They sound a pretty vile bunch.  
Ayor was one of the few Galus to escape.  
And she's been on the run ever since.

- When did all this happen?

- About 4 months ago.

Then there's a good chance  
that Tyler may still be alive.

Can Ayor take us to where the Nagas live?  
Goddamn it, another one. I told you...

I told you what I was going to do.

I told you.

Don't these things ever sleep?

The island never sleeps.

Here.

Take it away! Take it away! Take it away!

Oh, God!

- That's a big one.

- Oh, that's a beauty!

That's a *Poecilotheria fasciata*.

It's not funny!

I don't believe it, Charly.

I thought nothing could faze you.

Hairy plane ride, Ajor's friend in the forest,  
you took them on without blinking an eye.

- And along comes this little spider...

- Little?

It was cute.

It was kind of cuddly, too, wasn't it?

Now, stop it.

You're making my flesh creep.

At least it proves you're human.

Well, everyone has  
their breaking point, McBride.

With me, it's spiders.

With you... it's me.

- What is it?

- Band-lu.

- A hunting party?

- I hope they're not hunting us.

In that case,

I shall try and get a picture.

Hold it.

Galu! Galu!

Flare pistol.

Ajor, no!

His name is Mikay.

He was good friend of Tyler.

Did he have time to say  
anything about Tyler?

He was taken with many others  
to mountain of skulls,  
the city where the Nagas live.

- Can you take us there?

- Yes. But it's hopeless.

Even if you can get in,  
you can never escape Nagoramata.

- Who's he?

- The volcano god of the Nagas.

He rules the land.

No one can go against his will and live.  
- Where's Ajor going?  
- She's looking for the entrance to a cave.  
If she finds it,  
it'll make life a lot easier.  
We'd be crazy to go over the top  
if there's a shortcut.  
Ben!  
Get out of here!  
You boulder!  
Leave me! Leave me!  
He's awake.  
Ben? Ben, can you hear me?  
Norfolk, Charly, you all right?  
We thought you were dead.  
Where are we?  
At the entrance of the Band-lu camp,  
behind you, up the slope.  
Any idea what they plan to do with us?  
I think we're some sort of offering.  
These stakes were in the ground  
when we got here.  
You mean a sacrificial offering?  
No.  
No, not religious.  
Something more practical.  
Somebody's dinner then?  
Sorry, Charly.  
You're okay, you know that?  
I think it's better not to talk.  
Some of them hunt by sound,  
rather than smell.  
Oh, good girl, my notes.  
I get for you. Band-lu not see.  
Great. No gun, no ammunition.  
God knows what we'll do if they follow us.  
They won't. They're afraid  
to cross over the boundary.  
Hogan to Polar Queen.  
Hogan to Polar Queen.  
Look, I can't hear you. I just hope  
you're still out there, all right?  
Our repairs to the plane are just about  
finished. I still have to test-fly the ship.

If she checks out all right,  
then I'm going to look out for the major.  
From what I've seen of this place,  
there's going to be a problem  
in trying to find somewhere to land.  
Anyway, the deal is, if they're not back  
after 3 weeks, I fly out on my own.  
So don't you go on off  
without me, you hear?  
Some deal.  
Anyway, it's nice talking to you.  
This is Hogan. Out.  
What do you think of it, Norfolk?  
Absolutely remarkable!  
Do you think it's safe?  
There's only one way to find out...  
Keep moving.  
Charly.  
Come on! That's it, that's it!  
Okay, baby, don't you let me down!  
Okay, let her go! Move it up!  
This is the country of the Nagas.  
- Looks pretty grim.  
- So are the Nagas.

**It's 9:**

Nagas!  
Welcome.  
You are surprised I speak your tongue.  
Your friend Tyler,  
he has taught us much already.  
- We heard he was a prisoner.  
- And you came to rescue him?  
Did that creature  
fill you with these lies?  
Tyler's a man of great power  
who honors us with his presence.  
It is he who sent me  
to welcome you. Come with me.  
I can't believe Tyler  
talking these guys around.  
- Well, you always said he was a survivor.  
- Yeah, but how did he know we were coming?  
Good question. Unfortunately,

we have to visit the mountain of skulls  
to learn the answer.

Goddamn it! When I put you  
together, you stay together!

Oh, no!

No, no, I haven't heard from the major yet.

Should be back any day now.

I'll call you tomorrow, all right?

Okay, Hogan. Over and out.

Hogan? Yeah?

If I don't get out of here,  
you're gonna go bananas.

Yeah.

- I thought you were going to see Tyler.

- So did I.

Hold your tongue! Only Sabbala speaks.

Take your hands off me!

Let me go.

Let me go!

Nagoramata.

Good fortune smiles upon you.

Soon you will become brides of Nagoramata.

Ben?

- Ben McBride!

- Bowen!

No... it's not possible!

Yes, it's me.

- It's Tyler, he's right next door.

- Wonderful!

You son of a gun, we'd almost  
given up hope of finding you.

Yes, we had a rough time getting here.

Anyway, thank goodness we found you.

- You mean, you came here to find me?

- Sure. We got the message from the canister.

Yeah, it was picked up off the coast  
of Scotland at the end of 1917.

Oh, my name is Edwin Norfolk, by the way.

Good to meet you, sir.

Ben.

Sabbala say,

"soon your bodies will feel warmth

"of Nagoramata's love.

Your heads will help build new temple

"in his honor."

Did he say when?

At the rising of his sister...

the sun.

Ben.

I...

- I'd given up hope.

- Yeah, I know. Me, too.

My folks, Ben, how are they?

Your ma and pa are both fine.

In fact, it was your pa

that got me into this thing.

He hasn't changed much, has he?

It didn't take much persuading.

Ben... the war?

It's over, Bo. There'll be plenty

of time to talk about that.

Right now, the girls

who came with us are in trouble.

Girls?

- Sabbala?

- Yeah, and he looks like bad news.

He is.

Well, in that case,

we haven't got a moment to waste.

One of the girls is a friend

of yours... Ajor.

Ajor, the Galu?

Yeah. I'll explain later.

Where have they got Lisa?

She's dead.

Sabbala killed her.

We wouldn't cooperate with the Nagas.

Looks as though they gave you

a pretty rough time.

They smashed 2 years of hard work.

Wiped out a whole race of people.

Sacrificed Lisa to the volcano.

No!

Ben, my stick.

Barricade the door.

Nagoramata! When he speaks, all die!

Ben, we gotta go down here.

It's the only way.

- My camera!  
- Forget it.  
No, look, it's just in there.  
Along with your notes.  
- Yes, yes, I'll get it. I'll get it.  
- Norfolk!  
Norfolk!  
Hurry!  
Stay where you are!  
Wait till they settle down.  
- Charly, this is no time for pictures.  
- Shut up and help.  
Okay, now, you've got to wind  
that up there, underneath.  
And that sets it off there,  
but don't forget to close your eyes.  
Get set to run on the count of 3.  
1... 2... 3.  
Ben...  
you go on ahead. I'll slow 'em down.  
Give you a chance to get through that cave.  
How you gonna stop 'em? With rocks?  
No dice, Bo. I didn't come  
all this way to leave you behind.  
What the hell, Ben?  
I buy it here or I buy it later.  
We may get away from the Nagas,  
but we'll never get home.  
Once we get to that amphib,  
we're home and dry.  
The land'll stop you, Ben. It's alive.  
That volcano is its heart.  
It controls everything.  
- How can the land be alive?  
- Ask Ajor if we can get out of here.  
Only wish I had something  
to hold them off with.  
Here, take this.  
And this spare magazine.  
- Move! Norfolk!  
- Go on.  
Go on!  
In! Go in!  
Bo!



- Stupid, goddamn stunt.

- No!

Easy.

Remember...

- when we were kids, Ben?

- Yeah.

I always wanted to play the hero.

Easy.

Only then...

arrows weren't real.

- Easy.

- Ben...

I told you...

there's... there's no escape.

Goddamn it.

Where's Tyler?

Ajor!

Hogan calling Polar Queen.

Hogan calling Polar Queen!

Are you receiving me?

Come on! Get off!

Oh, no!

Come on! Steady.

Dirty old nag!

Come on!

Get out of it!

Come on.

Come on, come on.

Let go! Help! Let go!

Ajor, get back! Get back!

Move!

Ben!

Get out of here! Get out of here!

Go on!

We've got to move now, sir.

If those icebergs close in...

Very well, Mr. Whitby.

Get her underway, will you?

We'll move back 5 miles. Be ready to transmit our position in case they make contact.

- Aye, aye, sir.

- Engine room, prepare to get underway.

- You okay?

- Oh, just.

I didn't believe what Tyler said about this island.

- I'm beginning to think he was right.

- It's a complete and utter disaster.

Come on, it's not as bad as that.

We're doing okay.

I'm not talking about that.

I've lost my satchel in there.

All my notes and everything!

Don't worry. I've still got my camera.

Boatswain reports channel clear, sir.

- Very good, Mr. Whitby. Keep her moving.

- Very good, sir.

Band-lu. Make them go away with fire gun.

- I've run out of flares. How about you, Ben?

- Three shots left.

For heaven's sake, I'm sick and tired of running away from those dreadful people.

Get up.

Get going, Charly. Otherwise I'll kick your butt from here to the plane.

You'd never be a major

in the British army.

Goddamn it, major, where the hell are you?

- Anything at all, Mr. Graham?

- I'm afraid not, sir.

Keep transmitting our position. And let them know we're moving out in the morning.

I'll be damned! Major!

Come on!

Okay, let's move it.

Come on!

- You didn't get Tyler?

- No, but I brought you a present.

- Got any of that "nerve tonic" left?

- Yeah, I sure have.

You cut it pretty fine, major.

I was worried this whole place was going to shake apart before you got back here.

It's about to.

We're being followed by a volcano.

Yeah... what?

Ajor, don't worry.

Everything'll be all right.

We've lost a lot of thrust  
on that cut-down prop, major.  
You'll have to open her right up on the chocks  
or we'll never get out of here!  
Hogan!  
All clear! Let's go, major!  
She won't climb any higher.  
We have to lighten the ship.  
Norfolk, throw out everything you can!  
It's our only hope. Out!  
My camera! My camera!  
Major! We did it!  
McBride to Polar Queen. McBride to  
Polar Queen, how do you read me? Over.  
What the devil's going on?  
Any luck, major?  
The ship! The ship!  
Great going!  
Look, sir!  
It's them! The amphib!  
He has no power.  
By God, they've made it!  
- Muster rescue party.  
- Very good, sir.  
"Congratulations on incredible escape.  
Safe voyage home."  
May I also add my congratulations to that?  
And also, for...  
Mr. Graham, you... and also for bringing  
back such a charming souvenir.  
Oh, yes, sir. It's all rather fun.  
Why, that's not bad.  
That's not bad at all.  
You know, I can't wait to walk you down  
the main street of North Flats, Nebraska.  
Nebraska? No volcanoes?  
No, but they're sure gonna explode  
when they see you.  
You know, Hogan,  
this is rather like your "nerve tonic."  
Professor, have some of the real thing.  
Thank you.  
That makes life look a lot rosier.  
You know, my uncle will have a heart attack

when we get back empty-handed.

In fact, he'll probably fire me.

Maybe you weren't meant

to make your name in pictures.

- Got any other ideas?

- I'll think of something.

- Charly?

- Yes?

Why didn't you tell me about that gun

you had stashed in your camera case?

I was keeping it

in case we got into a jam.