

THE RETURN OF FANNI HALL

In the Bishop on Bondage magazine (volume I, number 4—if you don't have it, you should), the man himself said, "Fanni is done and over, period." He went on to cite the time-consuming nature of the artwork and complexity of the plot as reasons why, and even went so far as to invoke my name—saying that Geoffrey Merrick thought the whole shebang was too convoluted anyway.



Well, I'm willing to openly admit it now; I idolize Bishop, and his Fanni Hall magazines were an important entertainment in my life. The idea that the tale which had brought me so much pleasure was over was distasteful, to say the least. And over in such a way! The last we saw of Fanni and company, they were all in dire peril. I couldn't let it end like that! Besides, I'm a writer, and an unfinished story is hateful to me.

But there was nothing I could do. Bishop's mind was made up. I was helpless... until I casually vented my frustration during my latest meeting with Tyler. I turned to him midway through the tirade to see him smiling a "I-know-something-you-don't" smile.

"What?" I inquired. "What?"

"Tell me this unfinished story," he suggested.

When I finished at the danger fraught cliffhanger, he was still smiling, but a calm look of certainty was in his eyes.

"What?" I blurted a third time.

"Fanni Hall," he finally murmured. "So that's what she's calling herself now."

"What!" I exploded. "What are you saying? That this whole story is true?" He just kept smiling. "It can't be," I stammered. "Fanni Hall is a fictional character."

"Like me?" Tyler quietly inquired. Well, that stopped me.

"Suggest to Bishop that he tell the rest of the story," Tyler recommended. "Or I will."

So, I suggested to Bishop what the ex-white slaver recommended. Bishop suggested that it would be too much work. I suggested that he not draw it as a comic strip, but write it up as a novel. Bishop suggested that that would still be too much wrist strain. I suggested that we do it as a four-part serial in Tyler's magazine. Bishop suggested I take my suggestions and put them where the moon don't show.

Still and all, the muse prevailed. I maintained that we owed it to perverted posterity to complete the labyrinthian adventure, and ultimately Bishop sardonically agreed. The result you see before you: the first part of a four-part novel, preceded by the four earlier Fanni Hall magazines. For those unfortunate enough not to be in possession of the rip-snorting previous quartet (numbers one and four are still available from HOM), here's the cast and conflicts.

OUR STORY THUS FAR:

Alicia (whose name later mutated into Alissa) was a shapely young lady with short blonde hair, the daughter of an immensely powerful (and just plain immense) corrupt businessman named Bertram B. Bertram. To teach his girl some respect, the scum ball hired Easa Ferret, a professional cock-tease-humbler, and sent A. Gorila, a hulking monstrosity, to kidnap the girl off a beach.

Dressed only in a leather bikini (and soon less than that), Alissa is subject to a staggering array of sexual degradations. Enter our Fanni Hall. Although she thinks she's trying to save Alissa from the white-slaving jaws of the Madame, a long-time enemy, Bertram has actually hired Hall to get her into the Madame's clutches. It seems that the Madame is selling some guns for the nasty man, and they've cooked up this whole deal just because they like being deviously perverted.

Unfortunately for Madame, Bertram doesn't like the buyers the slaver has sold the guns to, so he kidnaps everybody back. But the old coot has underestimated Fanni, who escapes, kidnapping the now kidnapped Madame away from the businessman's bad guys. The proverbial hell breaks loose at that point. The ever-clever Fanni realizes she can't run too long from the virtual army of Bertram's minions, so she puts herself into the clutches of another Bertram employee, the nasty Dawnelle.

While trying to get out of Dawnelle's house of sensual discomfort, Fanni stumbles over (almost literally) her own gorgeous female friends: black Alisha (not to be confused with Alissa, although there is little hope of that) and oriental Suni. Seemingly just to complicate matters, Suni is in love with Ian, an MI-6 agent who is always around to save the myriad characters' various asses.

After an enormous amount of shooting, blowing up, car chases, helicopter chases, and double, triple, and quadruple crosses (not to mention an inordinate amount of binding,

gagging, despoiling, and the shoving of do-dads up the wazoo), here's the score in this inning.

Madame and Gorila have Alissa bound and gagged; Fanni and Ian have Dawnelle bound and gagged; Bertram's boys have Alisha and Suni bound and gagged. Fanni, Ian, and Dawnelle are holed up in a cabin in the woods, along with several MI-6 boyos, while Madame, Gorila, Alissa, Suni, Alisha, and Bertram's men (led by the man's son, Byron) are raining all manner of devastation upon the log place. As you are plunged into this thing again, the defiant Dawnelle has just made a break for the front door. . .

Dawnelle had almost made it to the door and might well have were it not for the hobble about her ankles. John's flying tackle, another Americanism he particularly liked, put both of them into a heap near the head of the sofa, where he adroitly snatched one of the huge leaking feather pillows and nested Dawnelle's face in it while he fished the wadded scarf out of his pocket. "Ride 'em, cowboy," he said, smiling. Dawnelle's twisting body and muffled squawks were the best fun he'd had all day.

Ian turned his direction to the long-range guns at the right end of the cabinet; he'd scanned the contents when Fanni removed the Heckler and Koch but hadn't paid much attention to the specifics other than to note the three turn-bolt guns off by themselves—Rugers, all three M77s.

The drawer beneath the guns yielded a collection of bright green RCBS reloading die boxes and three even brighter yellow plastic ammunition trays holding rounds for each of the three calibers.

John was done with his little errand, and the recipient of his packaging effort glared back at the two of them. No love lost there. And it was such a neat job.

"Here, you're a better shot than me," Ian said, brushing past John and beginning to slide all the windows open. John stuffed three of the beefy rounds into the magazine-well, then pressed the lot down and rode the nose of the bolt over the assemblage and dropped a fourth round into the chamber, then locked up the gun. Four little presents from Mommy. He smiled to himself, then walked to the window nearest the small knoll where he'd spotted the first of the visitors. Still there. About 200 meters. Probably where the gun's zeroed, he thought. I do so enjoy turkey shoots, gobble-gobble. Ian was sticking a 30-round magazine into another Ruger, a Mini 14, and 12-gauge shells into a Winchester 1200 riot gun. The man who'd been floundering in the stream had disappeared.

Ian had his eyes pressed to the small binoculars he seemed born with. "Any chance they're ours?" John whispered.

"Negative, mate. And they're not American either; Langley would've rung us up if they were sending up this bloody lot of Neanderthals." He paused to dart to another window and cautiously looked out. "Bloody hell, there's more of th—"

The glass at the side of Ian's head exploded, first into motes, then chunks, and finally sharded slivers that zoomed all over the insides of the cabin. Dawnelle jerked against her ropes, whining into the gag.

"Ian! Ian! My god, man, are—"

"Get the three on the hill—now! Do it! Do it!" John instantly turned from Ian's bloodied face, small chips of glass decorating it like a mosaic. The binoculars had saved his eyes. Small miracles and all that.

"Cluster, you asshole!" the tall man beside the sniper grated. "Now they know we're here! Adams and Chosen aren't even in position yet. Goddamned stupid shit!"

The air had gone all electric in its still-ness after the shot: a green and grey freeze-frame. Cluster could see Adams as an obscure blot paralyzed a few yards from the side of the house. "I'm sorry, Mr. Bertram. I thought I had a good shot." Goddamn old man's kid coming out to supervise a simple delousing and shoving his fucking weight around. Who's the ass-hole here? Nothing but a couple of broads in the house anyway. Jesus H. Christ!

"You'll shoot when I tell you... " And that's as far as young Master Bertram got with his righteous "I'm-the-employer-and-you're-the-employee" routine, because right about then the sniper's head above his nose, complete with one eyeball, exploded into a bright red and white flying stew with a sodden plop, closely followed by the astonishingly hard bark of the .338.

Byron B. found himself squatting next to a corpse so quick that it hadn't even begun to twitch, and himself covered with clots and gobbets of hair, cloth, bone, gristle, and reddish grey brain. He still had one finger raised to wave at the man and began to put it to his mouth as his stomach clawed up for air. Nausea and stark dis-belief were fighting for equal time when the second .338 caught him just above the right ear and further fertilized the bushes behind the pair. The third man, used to this kind of discussion, had burrowed himself right down into the ground and had begun to worm his way towards the trucks the instant the sniper had been killed. Already, he could hear feet running his way.

Both men inside heard the booming jump, John with a tight smile of glee. He jerked his head back towards Ian just in time to see the blur of another man's image flit past the window behind Ian, he still wiping the blood from his face and flicking tiny pieces of glass at Dawnelle as if the whole damned thing was her fault.

His hiss and pointing finger had Ian's head and his PSP aimed at the right place when Chosen stuck his head up for a look. Ian's shot was off in plenty of time, but his aim was bad and the slug took a good bite out of the window sill rather than out of Chosen. Adams snaked his way to another window and cocked his M-10.

Suni wore her cocoon of thin cords as before. None of them had slipped an iota. The enormous rubber plug still companionably filled her mouth. When the shooting began, she jerked and twisted against the filaments like a fish in a net, and just as uselessly. A single man ran, panting, through the trees to make the two of the three men still at the truck, who'd deserted their posts as the start of pleasantries. She slumped in exhaustion and pain, listening with one side of her head to the approaching voices and being jostled like baggage when they threw open the rear of the truck and dragged out a canvas-wrapped box.

Dawnelle lay stock-still in the center of the room. She lay on her belly, knees akimbo with her ankles bound to her thighs and her wrists, and her body bent into a tight bow. Over her gag, John had wound a piece of rope and knotted it at the base of her skull. With that he had then pulled her head back into a continuation of the curve of her spine, anchoring the rope to her

ankles. Sweat and tears streaked her face. Dawnelle's eyes were huge and white over the gag. And God only knows what they'd done with Suni.

A distant clink from the knoll filtered through and Ian once again turned his attention to the business—the boyos were back. He could see them in the distance through the ruined front door and he leaned back against the far wall to pull out the tiny pair of binoculars with their new gritty cover.

A tow! Holy sweet mother of Jesus, he gaped. Either extract... or cauterize. He dropped the rifle and dived for the back door. Dawnelle snapped her head back to follow him, then back again to the front door. It is possible that she had some glimmering of what the distant pop from the hilltop signaled before the anti-tank missile flashed through the door and smacked into the back wall where Ian had just been, but it is doubtful if she had time to register fear before the stout little cabin opened up like a small melon with a cherry bomb inside. Timbers from the roof described graceful arcs both on the way up and on the way back down. The men on the launcher felt the explosion more as the oddly liquid bump of an earthquake than as the hard crack of the cartoons.

The thin streamer of smoke almost got lost in the background. Fanni missed it out-right at first as she ran through the trees. Then, seeing it in a break in the overhang, almost brought her up short like a late-night encounter with a clothesline. Too late! Too late! She ran on, a thin haze of tears blur-ring the periphery of her grey wet world into a tunnel. She missed seeing her watchers. And the shadow that followed.

Slamming doors and the building whine of the Gazelle slowed her more effectively than the sight of the cabin's death-streamers. Leopard-like, she oozed the remaining distance and looked out.

The cabin was a wet black crater. Some of the strewn timbers still smoked, but the rain was being industrious. With a muffled thump, the last of a number of body-bags was hoisted into an exhaust-wreathed Blazer. Its doors were slammed, and its form was thrown into the undergrowth with a quick spurt of power and a spray of mud.

The Gazelle was getting serious in its in-tents now. In a quick dart, it was out from beneath the branches that had provided such spacious protection from the elements. The pilot paused and swung the tail around, presenting the thing to her broad-side.

"Goddamned rotten bastards!" Fanni howled. "Murdering sons of bitches!" She raised herself to one knee and swung up the HK. The Gazelle floated across the lawn, both the pilot's intent on something back where the ship had been tied down. Fanni's screams of rage went unnoticed.

The copilot's head sat square atop the sight-post, and she had the trigger halfway back when the punch came. Kidney. Her scream was of a different kind now. Her body spasmed backwards, and the rifle flew off into the weeds.

An enormous hand muffled her entire face, and another huge hand and arm came up under her rib cage, lifting her bodily, dragging her back under the trees. She kicked back and down, catching a kneecap, and they both went rolling down a small embankment in a tumble.

Fanni clawed at the hand on her face and tried to pry out one of the huge fingers to twist. Her adversary rode her like a leech, his grip tighter and tighter. After one particularly spectacular lunge down an even larger embankment, the man's embrace seemed to weaken fractionally. Fanni was tensing herself to jam an elbow into the preferred target when the second blow came—same kidney, only harder.

It was almost like jumping, warm and dry, into freezing water, the pain was so incredible. She stretched open her mouth wide in a near-silent hissing rictus of agony.

As if on cue, the hand stuffed a wade thick and heavy and leathery, into her mouth and kept on stuffing. She shook her head against the hand, now pinning the mass inside her mouth, scrambling under his weight like an insect. A heavy wool scarf pushed the glove father into her mouth and bound it in place with several turns around her head, the final one going over her eyes, binding her as well as gagging her.

Her wrists were yanked behind her back after the man's huge weight had shifted to the backs of her legs to pin her. Something thin and hot as wire tied her thumbs together. It was if something was trying to bite them off her hands.

The man had reversed his position atop her back and now shuffled up her arms so that his mountainous buttocks squashed Fanni's shoulders and chest into the grass. She squinted her eyes against the rug of pine needles jabbing her face as the man yanked her right knee_ out and her right ankle up. The ankle was placed behind her left knee and then her left leg was pulled up to touch her rump, trapping her right leg. He then hopped lightly off her and pulled her joined thumbs back over the point of her left boot nearly to the ankle and tied off the remnant of the thong around her thumbs under her left heel. Completely hogtied and immobilized with less than a foot of cord. If she hadn't been in so much pain, Fanni might have admired the job.

To be continued