

BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial by Herbert Jensen

Chapter 49 DELIVERY

JANICE heard a scream and a crash behind her. In an instant of dull bewilderment she realized she was not hit.

She saw an expression of stupid dismay in the face of the rifeman. His gun-barrel dropped.

She shrank against the cage in time to avoid the falling figure of the little beaver who had stopped the bullet. She saw brown arms striving to reach the flopping limpness that was the body of the paralyzed high priest.

To steady herself she put up the hand that held the knife. It came in contact with the 'hongs tying the cage gate. A sudden desperate thought swept her mind. At any cost the area of the great square must be cleared for the landing of the plane!

Her knife slashed at the thongs, the keen steel sliced through the leather as through grease. She was aware of snarling jaws, of yellow eyes wild with hate and frenzy.

The gate slammed back upon her. Tawny black-spotted bodies soared above as she stumbled down the steps.

She heard a deep-voiced scream. The multitude knew the cats were loose!

She was sobbing. Scarcely conscious now, she tugged at the limp body of Langton, hoping to drag him to the cage that now offered protection from the jaguars only from within. The figures were running everywhere. Suddenly the motors ceased their roaring. She heard vicious, staccato bursts, like short volleys from grouped rifles.

THERE was a crescendo of shouting—scattered rifle fire, then more bursts from the machine gun....

Strong arms gripped her about the waist; she struggled futilely, twisting away to reach the knife she had dropped to assist her companion. But with the arms came a voice, a voice that drew the strength from her and left her sobbing weakly.

"Janice... dearest... It's I: Frank. Dear—"

The arms lifted her to her feet. She buried her face in the stained and ragged shirt. Long, blissful moments later, it seemed, she withdrew. She smiled uncertainly and blinked away her tears.

"Frank... dear. Look to Billy. He was hurt—"

"I'm all right," came Langton's voice at their feet—weak but undoubtedly Langton's. "I... I was just resting."

"You dam' clown," muttered Frank, a curious softness in his voice. "You're as bad as Greene.... Here he is now."

Mr. Horatio Greene, press-agent extraordinary, was approaching with his ambling gait. He carried a monstrous pistol in one hand—monstrous in relation to the size of the little warrior—and over the other a gold, turquoise studded collar. "Got it off one of the leopards," he explained.

"Jaguars, Greene, not leopards," smiled Grahame.

"Jaguars or leopards they won't need these any more." He lifted the collar. "It's the one souvenir I'm going to take home from this—"

Suddenly he broke off. His eyes widened; slowly the color drained from his face. He moistened his lips and gently expelled his breath.

Frank put his arm about Janice's waist and firmly drew her against him. "Don't look, dear. It... it isn't—"

"Whew!" exclaimed Greene, drawing his forearm across his forehead. "Did you see what they did to the high priest—"

Suddenly catching Frank's eye, he hesitated.

He mumbled:

"Those leopards—jaguars, I mean—wouldn't make loving house pets. I'll... I'll just take the collar, thank you. Come along folks, Spin's waiting to us from the ship. You, Langton—I guess you're Langton—can you make it?"

"Fine. I'll give you a hand. We've gone to a lot of trouble about you."

and we can't slow down now. You're probably the best copy of the lot of us, and when Horatio Greene says you're good copy....

THE slanting rays of the afternoon sun flashed through the open ports. Despite the altitude it was warm within the plane once they had lifted above the zone of rain clouds. The cabin echoed with the drone of the motors and lurched in the bumpy air.

Langton was in the master-pilot's seat, delighted as a child with an old, familiar toy. Spin Winslow loomed next to him, behind the dual controls, yawning between spells of dozing. Three young men squatted in the rear of the cabin muttering a strange jargon. One wore an overseas cap with a tarnished insignia. The cap looked somewhat moth-eaten.

They seemed very, very absorbed with the antics of two small red cubes with white dots on the sides. Juan was with them, and Greene was nearly indulging in his favorite occupation: talking. In a pair of seats halfway between the crash shooters and the pilots were Janice and Frank. They did very little else than to look at each other, smiling occasionally.

"... then, when Spin got our message—" Greene apparently did not think it worthwhile to address anyone in particular—"he picked up three young hoodlums he knew, arranged for this bus, got a machine gun, swallowed his lousy disposition—a record of some kind, a veritable Ripley, in fact—and in three hops, total elapsing time less than twenty-four hours, landed on the beach back there on the coast. We met him there. We took off just before dawn. Not seeing Janice and Billy at the valley, we went on to the city of the pyramid. We arrived just in time. We couldn't land until Janice let the leopards, I mean tigers, loose.... She did a good job there.... so we—"

Spin Winslow, striding back, asked in a loud voice if Greene had ever heard the story of the half-smoked stump of the Corona-Corona perfect cigar and the wad of chewing tobacco that were floating side by side down the Mississippi.

"No," replied Greene testily.

"What's that got to do—"

The three young men at the crash game looked up grinning.

"Well," answered Spin gravely, "the wad of chewing tobacco asked the perfecto, 'How far are we from New Orleans?' The perfecto replied, with an expression of distaste on its... um, gold band, 'Listen, punk: I'm too hundred miles from New Orleans. Where do you get that we stuff!'"

Frank chuckled at the discomfited look on Greene's face. The crash game continued. Finally Janice leaned toward Frank.

"You won't... you won't go away again, ever?" she whispered.

"The burnt child fears—" he began, but the tenderness in his eyes belied the implication of his word.

Janice wrinkled her nose. "You can take it," she quoted colloquially. "It was those darn dishes."

"Dishes?"

"You mentioned our doing the dishes," she stated firmly. "I hate 'em."

"Not even if I help?"

"Well," she replied consideringly, "Probably there's some dishwashing that has compensation." She looked up at him winningly. Her voice was honey-sweet with provocation. "But if we do camp out from time to time in one of your jungles, we'll have Juan along, won't we?" Her eyes coaxed. "And," she concluded brightly, "he can help too."

Frank laughed and nodded. Greene, sotto voce to Winslow, said, "And that means Spin, that the big palooka and Juan will wash and wipe the dishes between them."

The little man sighed. "And that means that when we get back to Hollywood tomorrow I hunt me another job."

"Another job?" queried Spin skeptically. "Why don't you go to work for a change, you bum!"

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THE END

ARMY CASUALTIES NOT HIGH, CLAIM

NEW YORK (AP) — Major General Benjamin D. Foulois, chief of the army air service, here from Washington to inspect Mitchell field, declared that army air casualties "have not been excessive in any way shape or form."

To support an expressed contention that fatalities have not been high due to the carrying of air mail by the army, he cited 50 army air deaths in the fiscal year, 1932, 46 in 1933. The fiscal year begins on July 1.

"To date," he said, "there have been 39 deaths. Of course, according to the law of averages there will

be more."

"The army carrying the mail has been the best thing in the world to test men and material."

It costs about \$1.75 per thousand board feet to haul logs a distance of eight miles with motor trucks.

WOMEN WHO RUNDOWN ARE

This is the experience of Mrs. Lala Sturtevant of 292 So. 20th St., Seattle, Ore., who says: "I was nervous and sleepless and headaches and their share toward making me miserable. At times I would have a heavy ache across my back. I used Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and I had no further trouble."

Write Dr. Pierce's Clinic, Buffalo, N. Y. New size, tablets 50 cts., liquid \$1.00. Laxative, safe, or liquid, \$1.25. "We Do Our Part."

NOTICE

Series "C" and series "D" Time Certificates of Deposit issued by the First National Bank of La Grande, Oregon on March 1, 1933 and due on December 15, 1935, and December 15, 1936, respectively, have been called for payment on April 2, 1934. Interest on same ceases after that date.

First National Bank of La Grande
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