

Caught in the Wild

By Robert Ames Bennet
WNU Service
Copyright by Robert Ames Bennet

THE STORY

CHAPTER I—As Alan Garth, prospector, is preparing to leave for his mining claim in the Fox North, a plane banked at the airport emergency landing. In it are Burton Ramill, millionaire mining magnate, his daughter, Lilith, and Vivian Huxby, pilot and mining engineer. Believing him to be only an ignorant prospector, the men offer to make an air trip to Garth's claim, although they refer to the platinum-bearing ore as merely "worthless." Lilith Ramill, product of a joss age, plainly shows her contempt for Garth.

CHAPTER II—Through Garth's guidance the plane soon reaches the claim site. Huxby and Ramill, after making several tests, assure Garth his claim is nearly worthless, but to "encourage" young prospectors they are willing to take a chance in investing a small amount. Sensing the treachery that lies ahead, Garth secretly visits the plane and removes a part from the motor.

(Continued from last week)

The girl's expression was one of disgust and anger. She stopped several feet short of the plane.

"Oh, d—! Why the ruff? We're out of sight now. I'm going to take a rest."

Her father was beyond words. As she let go of his arm he slumped down with a suddenness that almost pulled Huxby over on top of him. The mining engineer peered back through the spruces, and around at the thicket where Garth lay in wait.

"Just one more go, darling," he appealed. "The fellow must know how to handle a rifle. If he comes in sight of the plane before we get out of range—Please, sweetheart! Remember it means millions to us—millions! I'll give you that emerald necklace we saw at Tiffany's."

"You certainly will! And Dad will do more. I'm to have a third in this mine that you say is worth so much. Is that clear?"

"Yes, darling, take hold," Huxby urged. "We both agree."

She waved him towards the plane. "Fetch a flask. We'll never get him aboard without a bracer." Huxby ran to vault up on the wing. The girl had pointed out the obvious fact. Her father was in a state of collapse from over-exertion. He could not move until revived, and he was too heavy for them to lift bodily.

The engineer swung into the cabin and hastened back ashore with a flask of whiskey. During the short absence Mr. Ramill had ceased to gasp. He could draw deeper breaths. Two or three swallows of whiskey tautened his flabby muscles. Helped by his daughter and Huxby, he struggled to his feet and staggered out along the rock shelf to the plane.

The wing end stood neck-high above the ledge. While Mr. Ramill took another bracer of whiskey, Huxby boosted the girl up on the front edge. She grasped the end of her father's collar. Huxby gripped his thick legs below the knees and heaved. Mr. Ramill's hands were on the wing edge. He pulled with all his whiskey-borrowed strength. His corpulent midbody rose above the edge of the wing.

Huxby gave a last upward heave. It enabled the girl to drag her father over on the convex surface. Huxby vaulted after to help her lift the prone millionaire to his feet. They started to lead him along the wing top to the fuselage of the plane.

Behind the backs of the three, Garth stepped clear from the alders and came forward, silent as a stalking lynx. Midway between the head of the plane and the spruce to which it was tied, he stopped and lowered his rifle, butt down, to lean on the muzzle.

"Hullo," he sang out. "What's happened? Mr. Ramill ill?" At the first word, Huxby tensed and glanced over his shoulder. He let go of Ramill. After a moment, he jerked around and thrust out his automatic pistol towards Garth.

"Swing up that rifle, butt end forward," he ordered.

"Why, what d'you mean?" Garth questioned, his mouth half agape.

"I mean business," Huxby answered. "Hold up the butt—up above your head; then come forward

and lay the rifle on the wing." Garth rounded his mouth still more. "My word, man, you must be stark mad. I've no thought of shooting you."

"I'm taking no chances. Put that rifle on the wing, or I'll fill you full of lead."

"Mad—mad as a March hare," muttered Garth. "Don't shoot."

He lifted the rifle overhead, butt forward, as ordered, and advanced, still gapping. He came within a step of the wing edge and paused. The girl was gazing at him with open contempt. He had been such an easy dupe. Her father looked gave, yet made no move to interpose when Huxby leveled the pistol and took deliberate aim.

CHAPTER III

Outbluffed

A man of iron nerve might have risked death from the leveled automatic of the mining engineer by taking a sudden dive under the wing of the monoplane. Once in cover, anyone quick with a rifle would have had an even chance against the holder of the pistol.

Garth made no such daring break. He obeyed the order to lay his rifle on the wing top.

"There you are," he said. "That should clear your head of your crazy notion I'm dangerous."

Huxby met this with a cold smile. "You're right in part, you poor fish. It would be crazy to fancy you're at all dangerous. I'm the one who has the gun, and I'm ready to use it. Fortunately for you, there's no need to shoot you if you keep on doing as you're told. Back up now and cast off that line."

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

hand. "One moment, Vivian—Now, Garth, what have you done?"

Garth smiled. "Merely removed one of the breaker points. Mr. Ramill, it's platinum, you know, and that's what we're bargaining over. The point is quite safe here, inside my shirt."

"Shoot him," said Huxby. "We're not going to be done by a fool trick like this. Shoot the idiot. Go on, chief. He's only a lousy woods bum. It's a matter of a million at the least."

The elder man leveled the pistol. "Garth, you heard him. You've played a silly trick. We have the drop on you. If you value your life, bring that stolen breaker point here, and be quick about it."

"How about the line, sir?" Garth inquired. "If I let go, the plane will be swept out into the lake."

"What if I'd rather not?"

"For the second time Miss Ramill chimed in on the talk: "It would be just too bad for you, woody boy. Dad is a better shot even than Vivian."

"A better shot and a no less cool thinker," Garth replied. "How can I hold this rope if I'm shot? Those falls and the rapids below—Hold on there, Huxby! Not so fast. You can come ashore; but Miss Ramill and her father will come with you. There'll be no rush to catch the line until all three of you are off the wing."

Mr. Ramill started with Huxby out along the wing. His daughter did not move.

"If you fancy I'll leave the plane, you can guess again."

Her father spoke in her ear. None too graciously, she took the offered arm of her fiancée. Side by side, the three came out to the end of the wing. Mr. Ramill handed the pistol to Huxby, and knelt, ready to slide over the front edge.

The girl jumped down lightly, without waiting for assistance. Huxby handed her the rifle, laid the pistol on the wing edge, and grasped Mr. Ramill's hands.

As the portly millionaire slid over, off the wing, Garth let go of the rope end and sprang forward. The loop whipped from around the spruce trunk. He grasped the slackened line and flipped it out into the swift rush of the milky stream.

The head of the released plane at once started to swing offshore. Huxby grabbed his pistol and leaped down to grasp the wing edge. He shouted for the others to catch hold. But the unexpected bump of the edge against their heads had made both father and daughter crouch down. The Schidhauer's have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

Garth turned about and walked along the ledge to the tie tree. He passed the rope end through the tree loop, and pulled loose the bite of the stay hitch. Had he then let go of the rope end, the taut line would have whipped the loop around the spruce trunk, and set the monoplane adrift. Instead, he held fast. Huxby frowned and raised the pistol. "What are you waiting for? I told you to cast off. It's no use your whining. You don't suppose we'll pass up the chance to record that placer, do you?"

"No," Garth replied. "You've shown your colors—hoisted the black flag. Only thing a woman is a woman. Let me suggest that you try your self-starter before I let go this line. I've heard that airplanes sometimes balk. If you can't get yours into the air in time, the wind and current will drift you down-lake to those falls."

"How said? You dumb dupe, if you think I—"

"Wait," cut in Mr. Ramill. "Hand me your pistol, Vivian, and try the motor. The fellow gave up his rifle a bit too readily."

Huxby swung into the cockpit and thrust on the self-starter. It buzzed—but the propeller did not turn over. The motor failed to go. Another try brought the same barren result. The engineer pilot made a hasty examination of the magnet. He sprang out on the wing, in a cold fury.

"The d—d sneak has crippled the motor. Give me the pistol."

Mr. Ramill held up a restraining

Interesting Bits of News Gleaned in County Trips

(Francis S. Barr)

Charles Wicklund of Cornelius route 2 is an old Argus reader and a constant user of classified advertising. Mr. Wicklund has 20 acres and is in dire need of more rain for his fall plowing. Mrs. Wicklund is in Portland visiting with their daughter.

F. H. Simpson and sons John and Bob have just returned from a hunting trip in the John Day country. Mr. Simpson bagged a large buck, but the boys returned empty handed.

At the William Hering farm, Mr. Hering was busy sowing 10 acres to fall wheat.

An Argus reader, well satisfied with the results of classified advertising, is N. G. Johnston, Cornelius route 2. A short time ago Mr. Johnston had a large buck sheep he wanted to sell and advertised through the Argus columns. The morning the paper was out the advertiser was sold to another alert advertising-minded reader from a different section of the county, and who was in the market for the advertised. So a sale was made from what one man didn't want and another did at a very low cost and little trouble. Mr. Johnston has just finished sowing 14 acres of barley and has 15 acres of oats he has just started.

Just west here from California and working on the Henry Behrman farm is E. F. McGraw. McGraw is assisting with the dairying and they are milking about 27 cows at the present. The McGraw family seems to like Oregon very much.

R. B. Scott hasn't had the official county paper for some time and expressed the feeling of being lost without it, so added his name to the subscription list once more. Mr. Scott has 22 acres in a 4-year-old English walnuts and waiting for rain before he sows it to hairy vetch for a cover crop. In the opinion of the walnut inspector his trees are advanced one year for their age.

Mr. B. Scott has 22 acres in a 4-year-old English walnuts and waiting for rain before he sows it to hairy vetch for a cover crop. In the opinion of the walnut inspector his trees are advanced one year for their age.

New here from South Dakota, and who have added their name to the list of Argus readers, are Mr. and Mrs. Carl Schildhauer. After several years of crop failures in the stricken area the Schildhauers have come here for a new start and foothold. We, of Washington county extend to them our best wishes for happiness and success in our country.

CHAPTER I—As Alan Garth, prospector, is preparing to leave for his mining claim in the Fox North, a plane banked at the airport emergency landing. In it are Burton Ramill, millionaire mining magnate, his daughter, Lilith, and Vivian Huxby, pilot and mining engineer. Believing him to be only an ignorant prospector, the men offer to make an air trip to Garth's claim, although they refer to the platinum-bearing ore as merely "worthless." Lilith Ramill, product of a joss age, plainly shows her contempt for Garth.

CHAPTER II—Through Garth's guidance the plane soon reaches the claim site. Huxby and Ramill, after making several tests, assure Garth his claim is nearly worthless, but to "encourage" young prospectors they are willing to take a chance in investing a small amount. Sensing the treachery that lies ahead, Garth secretly visits the plane and removes a part from the motor.

(Continued from last week)

The girl's expression was one of disgust and anger. She stopped several feet short of the plane.

"Oh, d—! Why the ruff? We're out of sight now. I'm going to take a rest."

Her father was beyond words. As she let go of his arm he slumped down with a suddenness that almost pulled Huxby over on top of him. The mining engineer peered back through the spruces, and around at the thicket where Garth lay in wait.

"Just one more go, darling," he appealed. "The fellow must know how to handle a rifle. If he comes in sight of the plane before we get out of range—Please, sweetheart! Remember it means millions to us—millions! I'll give you that emerald necklace we saw at Tiffany's."

"You certainly will! And Dad will do more. I'm to have a third in this mine that you say is worth so much. Is that clear?"

"Yes, darling, take hold," Huxby urged. "We both agree."

She waved him towards the plane. "Fetch a flask. We'll never get him aboard without a bracer." Huxby ran to vault up on the wing. The girl had pointed out the obvious fact. Her father was in a state of collapse from over-exertion. He could not move until revived, and he