

## Virginia of the Air Lanes

### A ROMANCE OF FLYING

By Herbert Quick

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#### SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I**—Theodore Carson, inventor of an airship, rescues from a fugitive flying machine called a helicopter, a beautiful young girl.

**II and III**—Carson is infatuated by her and takes her where she can communicate with her friends.

**IV**—Carson visits the Roc, a giant airship owned by Shayne, uncle of Virginia Suarez, the girl he rescued, and, being coldly received, leaps from the Roc, at a great height, in a parachute.

**V, VI and VII**—He lands in the grounds of the Slatery Institute for Inebriates, where he makes a friend of one Craighed, who plans to raise capital to manufacture the new style airship Carson has invented. Thus they hope to rival Shayne, who controls the airship industry.

**VIII**—Mr. Waddy decides conditionally to capitalize the Carson-Craighed project.

"Psyche," said he, "when you say you are glad—"

"Oh, I'm so glad you aren't dashed to pieces!" she cried. "I've seen you falling, falling, falling, in my dreams and never alighting! But evidently you did!"

"Yes," said he, "quite safe. But how came you here?"

"Oh, I live here," said she. "But how did you know? Or did you just happen? Shall I hide you? I'll never betray you, never, no matter what they say you've done!"

"You—belong—here?" repeated Theodore wondering. "Here? You—you live here?"

"Yes," said she hurriedly—"with my uncle. I couldn't endure the Shaynes and Silberbergs any longer. Why, the way they did just drives people to crime! And if you did anything it was in open war with the officers and not by stealth as the Shaynes and Silberbergs do. I told them so to their teeth—only you ought to reform and all that you know."

"And I couldn't bear Aunt Marie any more," here the voice trembled, "though everybody will say I'm ungrateful and all that. And General Carson's family are all my relatives in the world, except the Shaynes. And this is their plantation—my uncle that I never saw lives here—and I came to him. I hope he won't hate me. I'd rather not have to ask him to shelter a robber the very first thing, and so I hope you aren't pursued. But if you are I'll hide you before I'll see you caught. There!"

Mr. Carson reeled back against the wall, drew his hands across his eyes and looked again. She seemed to be there still, rather nearer than before, hands clasped in adorable anxiety, divining pity in her eyes.

"Of course it's a shock," said Miss Suarez, "to find you—"

"I am sorry," said Theodore, "to have shocked you by being visible. I—"

"Oh, now," said Miss Suarez, "try to supply ellipses—and—and those things. I meant to find you so—"

"So incapable of—so lacking in the qualities of—of—"

"You're gradually getting closer to it," commented Virginia. "Our danger, where there is nobody hanging about to sort of mitigate—no, not that—to—"

"To absorb and diffuse the 'shock,'" suggested the engineer.

"The very word," said she. "Why, uncle, you're clever—once in awhile!"

"Thank you, Miss Virginia. I—"

"Don't interrupt, please. Our danger here in the wilderness is that of not catching the shades of expression. The nuances one has to have ground into one's system with regard to one's friends—if nuances can be ground into anything—and that we'll misunderstand and fight and pull hair needlessly—doesn't that cover the case?"

"I don't think it does quite. But you were saying I lack some quality. Please go on."

"The quality of unclehood," said she. "You don't create the role. I suppose my image of a charming young robber, for you're not bad looking, uncle, you know."

Theodore blushed.

"Piracy and yeggism and those things are so incompatible with one's only surviving live live-withable uncle," said Virginia.

"In 'The Babes in the Wood,'" said Theodore, "the uncle was quite that sort."

"The odd thing with us—I like living with you immensely—is that you seem a babe in the woods more than an uncle, and I the other."

"What I wish you to understand is how honored I am to be your guardian, even though I don't deserve it."

"Oh, but you do!" said she. "And there's the Carson blood, isn't there?"

"There's the Carson blood," assented Theodore unhesitatingly, "and the trust that blood alone couldn't confer."

"And the relationship must stand in the place of years," said Virginia, "for"



"MY ROBBER," SAID SHE IN A HALF WHISPER.

"I can't go back to the Shaynes. I'm afraid they'll find me and make me!"

"You shall not go back!" said Theodore. "Never!"

"My, my!" said Virginia. "How fierce, uncle! And now let's go fishing."

Yes, Theodore had fallen. Fleeing the best bedroom, in which Aunt Chloe had established Miss Suarez, he had unmoored his launch for flight, but, reconsidering, had demanded of Chloe an explanation of the incomprehensible mystery of the presence, under a statement that she lived there, of Shayne's niece.

"She's come to live with me all," said Aunt Chloe. "She's kin o' ou'n."

Theodore gasped.

"There must be some mistake," said he. "How can she be related to me, Chloe?"

"W'y, yo' some kine o' uncle to hub," replied Chloe. "Hub motha was a daughtah to ole Gin'el Cabson. She married Lee Suarez and died. Miss Ginnie knowed about us, an' when hub aunt throwed hub off'n the aiahship foh stan'nin' up foh you she come hyah, ez she had a right to, suh."

"But she didn't know I was here?" Theodore suggested.

"Oh, law, no," replied Aunt Chloe. "She don't know yo' Mistah Carson yit unless yo' tole hub."

"But, Aunt Chloe, we aren't any kin to old General Carson, are we? And I'm no uncle to this young lady, am I?"

Aunt Chloe was indignant.

"Hev Ah been wuckin' foh po' whites all these years?" said she. "Yo' sbo as clus as uncle. Yo' paw knowed he was a Cabson."

"What have you told her about this relationship?" said Theodore.

"She knowed all about it."

"Did she know how father—how nobody thinks we are any kin to the general and—"

"Who you mean by nobody?" queried Chloe. "Ah reckon we some kin o' ou' name wouldn't be Cabson, would it? Ah tuk hub in as a Cabson. If you tuk hub in yo' ahus an' squenched hub teahs I reckon you wouldn't be bringin' up these heavy arguments."

Uncle Theodore was stately, ceremonious and, with due allowance for sundry blushes when Miss Virginia emitted a little giggle, promptly smothered in her napkin, quite grand in his demeanor at luncheon. He formally kissed Virginia's hand, and when she told of her need, of her reliance on the Carson fidelity, he yielded to the temptation without a moment's hesitation. He became her uncle, entered calmly upon the deception, oblivious of the vast consequences involved.

"I have the honah," said he, "to drink your health—the health of the jewel and the hope of the Carson family."

She rose as if at a formal signal for withdrawal, took both his hands and kissed him on the forehead. There were tears in her eyes.

(To Be Continued.)

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**Medford Book Store**

## HAS ROBERTSON TAKEN OWN LIFE?

Such is Rumor From Grants Pass, Where Suicide Theory Is Strong—Buys Revolver and Has Been Missing Since.

(Grants Pass Observer.)  
 J. R. Robertson, erstwhile a real estate operator of Medford, but who endeavored to operate in this city, has left, and his present residence is unknown, and there is a suspicion that he may have committed suicide in the mountains south of this city.

Robertson came here about two weeks ago and operated under the name of the Medford Orchard and Trust company, and was going to have offices in this city and Medford. He got out some advertising matter here that was somewhat elaborate, advertising lots near the depot for sale. He did not sell the lots nor did he pay his printing and advertising bill.

One day last week he went into Lloyd's second hand store and picked out a revolver and ammunition and said that he would go out and try the gun, and if it was all right he would buy it. He then went to Lewis & Hanna's livery stable and hired a horse. Later in the day the horse came back without a rider or saddle. Mr. Lewis had told the help in the barn not to let Robertson have another horse, that is, he told all but one, and that was the one that Robertson happened to see when he came to the stable. In telling of his mishap with the other horse he said that he was at the White Rocks fishing and had taken the saddle off and tied to horse to it, and that the whistle at the rock crusher had blown, scaring the horse, which made for the river and lost the saddle in the river while fording. He secured the same horse and started south on the stage road to Kerby.

When Mr. Lewis heard that he had again secured the horse he telephoned to C. E. Harmon at Love's Station to take the horse away from him if Robertson came along. The horse came into Love's Station following a wagon, which it started to follow in the neighborhood of Wonder. Later Robertson came along on foot and wanted the horse, claiming at first that he had bought it, but Mr. Harmon would not give it up. He stayed all night with Mr. Harmon and the next morning asked for some soap to go to a creek to wash some clothes and that is the last time that he was seen as far as anyone knows here.

Robertson's financial career in southern Oregon has not been as rosy as it might have been. The first of last June he went to Medford and opened elaborate offices, with elaborate fixtures. He has paid no rent, nor did he pay for the furniture. He had associated with him some real estate men who have been prominent in Portland, Seattle and other large cities in floating additions, but they deserted him towards the last of the month. Since then Robertson has been going it alone. He advertised big, claiming that he had \$500,000 to loan on real estate, but he stated that he did that merely in order to have his business sound big. He gave several checks in Medford on banks where he had no money, and at once time came near being arrested for it, and when he left Medford gave a check for his ticket. It is said that he gave some checks in this city, which, of course, have not been honored.

He did not pay his stenographer and his wife was left without funds. She went to work in a store after his disappearance from Medford, but last week came here to meet him, but he was gone as stated above. It is thought or feared that, being unsuccessful in business and being in a poor way financially, that he was not in his right mind and that he may have committed suicide, as he has not been seen or heard of since leaving Love's Station.

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