

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 Craighead, 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-Craighead project.

IX—Carson goes to Florida to complete a sample airship to exhibit to Mr. Waddy, and he finds Virginia there.

X—He is in love with Virginia. Wigner, a rival inventor, conspires to kill Carson.

And with this, as if pulled down from below, the man vanished into the dark interior, the manhole closed, and the chain, like a line taken by some titanic fish, started out to sea. The airship had been captured by the submarine! The mechanical devilfish was not running very deep; her round deck rose awash sometimes, but with the manholes closed, and with no sign save the erection of her periscope that she was more than an inert mass of steel she swam on.

Still seated where Theodore had placed her, Virginia looked at him in questioning terror. He was white and horrified. At this moment he was depressing her in her fight so as to get all possible slack in the chain, so that by a sudden upward rush he might break the tether. Once, twice, thrice he did this, but the chain held.

"What is it, Theodore? What is it?" said she.

"I don't know," said he, "but I think it's the end!"

Carson was not looking at her. He was looking upward, like a man seeking for some sort of inspiration. She stood looking out over the great desolate sea and back to the receding shore, on which she saw a group of formations of their friends. Nothing could seem more helpless. They were chained to their fate—a dark fiend of a machine that was taking them out to sea, to depths profound enough to drown them—it might be an hour; it might be the next moment.

Carson stood over her with a pistol in his hand.

"Virginia, can you shoot?" he asked.

She took the pistol and nodded affirmatively.

"I shall have to ask you to protect me," said he, "while I try to cut that chain. They can see with their periscope what I'm doing, and when it is necessary they will come up into the open and fire. By pulling out to sea I can get her at an angle that will force them into the open to shoot. When the manhole opens shoot into it. If you should hit one of them don't let it trouble you."

"I shall kill one of them if I can," said she. "Never mind that! Tell me the things to do!"

"I shall take the pliers and a file," said he. "I don't think the pliers will cut it. I may be too weak to climb back. I don't know that I can do it anyhow. You must take us back to land if I cut her free."

"Never fear. I know every lever," said she.

"There's another thing," said he. "We came out with only a little gas. If we go much farther we haven't enough to get ashore with. I think I could soar her in with the aeroplane set of the blades. I think we had better fly low going back and not waste fuel. Keep her gliding about a hundred feet from the water, but if you want the aeroplane set this is the way to fix it."

With a swift movement he showed her the way to manage the mechanism. He lashed a pair of pliers about his neck with a lanyard, thrust a couple of files into his pockets, took off his boots, his coat and waistcoat and stepped to the side.

"You may get ashore," said he, "while I may not. If so goodby, and God bless you, dearest!"

She threw her arms about his neck and kissed him over and over again. He felt her warm tears on his lips.

"Don't cry!" said he. "Clear your eyes and shoot straight. Goodby!"

She stepped to the rail and looked fixedly at the black shadow like a gigantic fish that represented the sub-

marine. Carson had disappeared over the side in a terrifying hand under hand descent until he reached the trusswork of the nacelle. The black shadow grew more distinct, the round deck broke water, and as the manhole opened Wigner appeared and aimed at Carson coolly as at a target. Too hastily Virginia fired. The bullet struck the edge of the deck with a vicious spat. Wigner's pistol spoke; his bullet, striking metal, flew singing away, and the girl replied with the third shot of this strange duel. She braced herself against the rail, aimed conscientiously at the middle of the mark presented by the villain below and fired—fired with the curious certitude the marksman feels when he is making a good shot. Wigner had just lifted his arm to fire again, but his hand fell as if struck down by a giant's blow. He dropped back into the darkness like a shot woodchuck, the manhole closed, and the submarine went on toward deep water as grimly as before.

"Good!" said Theodore. "But watch the manhole just the same. I shall have to file the chain. The pliers won't do."

Suddenly she heard Carson calling. "They've hove to," said he. "I think they're going to try drowning us here. Don't lose control of yourself. Remember this is a fight, and we aren't whipped yet. Do you hear?"

"Yes," said she. "But it's so awful—so awful! If you were only up here where you could— Tell me what to do! Tell me what to do!"

"Do you see how the chain shortens?" asked Carson. "She's going down. If the water's deep enough she can drown us unless we can overcome her gravity. Turn the index so as to show a dead down thrust of the blades and then full power on the last speed. It will take fuel, but it's the only way. Hurry!"

The airship sank, sank, nearer and nearer to the water. But without waiting to learn how the girl was carrying out his orders Carson again attacked the chain, and the shrill "screek" of the file greeted Virginia's ears as she turned the indicator and threw on the power. As they had never done before the great engines purred, the wing blades trod the air with a terrific roar, but with remorseless suction-like force the submarine drew her down closer, closer to the water, and she seemed lost. The sinking was slower now, but nevertheless more and more of the chain disappeared in the sea every moment. Virginia looked and despaired. The waves were so terrifyingly near, death in their cold depths seemed so unthinkably horrible, she bowed her face in her hands. The "screek, screek, screek" of the file kept on with the regularity of a machine. Carson was at work. He might be drowned. But when he went under he would go fighting. He was a man!

She stepped to the side and called to him.

"I think," said she, "that we are doomed. Is there anything I can do?"

"You might advance the spark," said he. "Not much, just the least trifle. Yes, I reckon they've got us."

She sprang to the machinery and did this last thing ordered by her commander—did it with unshaking hands, as a soldier might take up the weapon of his comrade killed at his post. By the faintest trifle she advanced the spark and went to the side to see the effect. They were lower now, and the trusswork in which Carson hung must be in or near the crest of the swells, but the "screek" of the file went on, not so strong perhaps, but steadily still, the paean of the unconquerable spirit of the man clinging to the trusswork beneath her. It was grand. It was immense. Her spirit rose to the occasion, rose to the prosaic "screek, screek" of a file in a hand that was dabbled in the waves at every lifting swell of the stolid ocean that rolled on just the same where its prey dangled within the lapping of its tongue, and out yonder where perhaps no man had been since creation's morn.

"Theodore!"

The file stopped for a minute.

"Keep her as she is," said he. "We've got the submarine stopped. I've got the chain about filed through, but I'm a little tired. Keep her as she is for just a little while!"

CHAPTER XIV. LIFE OR DEATH?

A GAIN the file began its work. The immediate danger was over, but both the man below and the girl in the car knew that the terrific consumption of gas in the engines made the seconds too precious for use in conversation. A minute's supply of gas, ten seconds' supply, one second's supply, might save their lives in the home stretch, when the chain should be filed through and they should take their flight toward land, to make triumphant landing after this deadly peril or to sink in the waves from which they were now fighting to save themselves. The roar of the machinery filled the air with tempest; the wind from the wing blades driven down on the water set it boiling like a whirlpool; one moment the straining submarine drew them down by a link or two of the chain; the next the struggling airship lifted the submarine up an inch or so from her dark lair in the depths. At last, at the very height of the fierce struggle, the airship shot upward with the jingle of dropping chains, a worn file fell into the foam of a white capped wave, and the girl leaped to the levers in obedience to the voice of Carson telling her to make haste, for God's sake, and set the wings for a forward flight, to cut the speed down one-third and to steer straight for shore.

(To Be Continued.)

If the furnished room ad "looks good", run around to the address given and take a look at it.

STEVENS MAY MOVE TO ST. PAUL

Head of Hill Lines in Oregon Said to be Planning to Change His Headquarters—Stevens out of City and Rumor not Confirmed.

PORTLAND, Or., Aug. 16.—According to a rumor which reached here from St. Paul today, President John F. Stevens of the Oregon Trunk and the Hill electric, and who is to succeed President Georg B. Fruch as executive head of the North Bank, will soon move to St. Paul and direct the northwestern Hill properties from the general headquarters of the Hill "Family Group."

It has not been possible to verify this rumor, Mr. Stevens being out of the city. Other high officials of the Oregon Trunk deny all knowledge of such a contemplated change.

It is intimated however, that the report may have arisen from the recent trips that Mr. Stevens has made to St. Paul and from the further fact that under the reorganization of the North Bank, a local vice-president and general manager will in all probability be made the local executive and operating head of the system. Under similar arrangements which are now in effect on the United Railways and Oregon Electric, with but slight variation, these roads could be managed without the personal presence of Mr. Stevens.

Under his genius for organization, Mr. Stevens has surrounded himself with a coterie of brilliant construction men, who would be well able to handle the affairs of the Oregon Trunk until it is turned over to the operating department, and should President Stevens choose to make St. Paul his future official residence, so that he could be in close contact with the Hill forces at all times, an organization similar to that contemplated for the North Bank would solve the question of operation.

AEROPLANES AS A DEFENDER

Is Only Antidote for Submarine, According to Admiral of French Navy—France Takes the Lead in the Building of Airships.

PARIS, Aug. 16.—The aeroplane is the only antidote for the submarine, according to Vice Admiral Besson of the French navy, and accordingly France is protecting herself along these lines.

Within a short time this country will considerably outnumber England in point of submarines. Great Britain has 63 submarines in actual service. She is building 11 more. France already has 69 in use and 29 are in the ship building yards at Brest, Toulon and elsewhere. As against England's 75 undersea fighting machines, France will have 80, and this does not take into consideration this country's program of coast defense apparatus, which includes many more submarines.

According to Vice Admiral Besson it would be practically impossible to blockade a French port, Aeroplanes and submarines working from shore bases could play havoc with any navy in the world. The aeroplane could not very well be launched from a battleship and it is only at a great height that the limpidity of the sea will allow one to see a submarine far below the surface. The submerged machines of the enemy, says Besson, could therefore be discovered with the submarines of the home government would remain invisible.

HISTORY TEACHING MUCH IN DISPUTE

PARIS, Aug. 16.—An important feature in the French school war is the history question. There are two ways of imparting history to the young mind. You can content yourself with the relation of facts—generally accepted or you may interpret the past in the fashion that suits you. In recent debates in the chamber opposition deputies declared that if the history class were left out the state school would be tolerable. The secularists, however, are not likely to give up their chief weapon of attack, and so caricatures of French history still continue to be used. And if the clergy in their catechism classes refute any historical calumny taught in the local schools they are prosecuted and punished.

JOSEPHINE IS SOLD; TO REFIT

Grants Pass Hotel Changes Hands at Consideration of \$25,000—Will Be Renovated and Made Modern in Every Respect.

What is without a doubt the largest real estate proposition in the city changed hands this week when the Josephine hotel was sold by H. B. Miller, formerly of this city but now employed in the diplomatic corps and located in Ireland, to F. H. Blake, now of Ashland. The transfer includes both the hotel proper and the annex. The property has a 75-foot frontage on Sixth street and 180 feet on E. street. The sale price is given as about \$25,000. The deal was made through the agency of Joseph Moss.

It is the plan of Mr. Blake to remodel the hotel throughout and make of it a first-class house. It is also his plan to enlarge the structure by building an addition on the lot beside the office of the Best-Fuller real estate office at some future time.

Plans for the overhauling of the building as it now stands include the putting in of all the furnishings of a modern hotel of the higher class. The interior will be painted and tinted throughout, and the exterior improved in appearance by the addition of fine plate glass windows. The arrangement of the rooms will be changed somewhat, it being planned to install additional bath rooms, as well as to enlarge the lobby. One of the most indispensable of modern conveniences, an electric bell system, will be put in, and provision made for an up-to-date heating plant as well as for the complete re-wiring of the building for electric lights. When all plans are completed, the hotel will doubtless rank with any to be found in towns of this size in the state.

Just when the building will be taken possession of by Mr. Blake is not known, as it is now leased, but he hopes to begin his improvements about the first of the year. His wife and children are now living on his large farm located in Curry county, but will move to this city in a short time and rent a dwelling till able to obtain possession of the hotel.

The people of Grants Pass will wish Mr. Blake the greatest success in his undertaking. The town has now reached the stage where a high-class hotel is much in demand, and the carving through of Mr. Blake's project will fill a long felt want.

BATHROOM FOR COWS IN MILLIONAIRE'S DAIRY

PITTSBURG, Aug. 16.—Not only is Alexander R. Peacock, multi-millionaire, building himself an enormous and fancy chicken house on a \$60,000 farm which he bought recently for the purpose of raising chickens to get fresh eggs, but he has also planned a model dairy to be located on the same farm.

Blue-blooded cows, 150 of them, are to stock this dairy, and it is to be up to date in every particular. The milk is to be delivered throughout the fashionable east end district in refrigerator auto cars.

The farm which will house the model dairy and fancy line of fowls is on the Saltsburg road in Plum township, being 155 acres in extent. The dairy barn is to be as fine as many country dwellings. There will be perfect ventilation, light, heat and approved sanitation. Rooms containing baths for the cows will be provided for the use of the animals in cold weather. The teeth of the cows are to be scrubbed daily. Fifty thousand dollars is to be spent on the barn and improvements.

WINS MILLION DOLLARS BY JUST KINDLY DEED

McDONALD Pa., Aug. 16.—Word has come from Texas that the will of John Ennis, who recently died at Corpus Christi, leaves all his estate, valued at \$1,000,000, to his wife during her life and at her death it is to be equally divided between Boyse Rankin and his wife.

This uncovers a romantic tale of the McDonald oil fields of 20 years ago. Jack Ennis who just died worth a million, was then a very poor teamster in the oil fields here—a teamster without credit. Rankin who was a clerk in a feed store took pity on Ennis and extended him credit for horse feed at the time when credit was needed. Ennis declared that he would make Rankin his heir for this, and some time later he struck oil on his own account and with a small fortune rushed to the then open Beaumont oil fields in Texas where he quadrupled his money and retired to Corpus Christi, building an immense pleasure re-

sort and bathing pavilion.

In the meantime, Rankin still a poor man, had married Nancy Fernis and two years later Ennis came north and found Rankin at Cambridge City, Indiana, and offering him a double salary and a life-time position if he would take charge of his Corpus Christi business quickly carrying the Rankin family off to Texas where they have since been.

Rankin is to be employed at a large salary during the life of Mrs. Ennis, taking care of Ennis' business interests.

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