

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 Sears, 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 Incubates, 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. Wismer, a rival inventor, conspires to kill Carson. **XI, XII, XIII and XIV**—Wismer with a submarine in a sensational manner almost accomplishes the death of Carson and Virginia and the destruction of the airship, a case of "devilish versus bird." Virginia flees from Carson in the Roc. **XV, XVI and XVII**—Carson and Craighead pursue the Roc northward in the Carson airship, the Virginia. They land at the Shayne home, Shayne's Hold, in the Catskill mountains, at night. Carson talks with Virginia and is forced to flee. A big lawsuit is brought by Craighead to gain exclusive dominion in the air based on the rights to their air he has acquired from hundreds of land-owners. Craighead argues in court.

And yet, even after her turn, all seemed well with the Roc. The sea lay south and east. Nothing was impossible; but, edging into the gale with all the power of her screws, she worked stanchly off into the west. Yet Carson knew it was a losing fight, and Shayne walked the deck in agony as she gave ground at last before the wind, which howled in across the Pennsylvania mountains and beat the great hunted creature to the Delaware at Philadelphia. Virginia came on deck. "Where are we, uncle?" said she. "Oh, we're all right!" Time enough for the trouble when the crisis came, for shipwreck in aerial voyaging has no tossing before the cyclone of the final plunge, no wrestling with the waves, no tiring at the pumps, no roaring of white surf scabbing the teeth of the reef. All is steady and comfortable until underneath yawns destruction. Though every moment inevitably marked a loss of gas in the balloon once out at sea, they must keep up to win the far African coast or to bear around the whirl to Nova Scotia or Labrador, and in that quadrant was rain. Before that could be done the huge gas holder would grow wrinkled, flabby, weak; the car would drag her down, the stronger ones would cut everything away to lighten the ship, the weaker would drop into the brine with no hope save in the prayer time accorded by the life preservers, and finally the last man clinging to the fragments of the nacelle would see the huge mass of flapping silk and gum and tin foil drop into the waves, himself utterly lost in the utter desolation of hopeless solitude—food for the fishes. Dinner was served, Shayne trying to smile and discussing with these dear women the time of reaching Temagami. Virginia, again on deck, stood gazing ahead, not knowing that their actual flight was astern. She thought she was looking toward her destination. She had lost sight of the Virginia, and she was not sorry or displeased to have Carson give chase unsuccessfully. She was very angry with him. Suddenly she looked astern and was amazed that such a body of water had been passed without her knowing it, an one journeying over a prairie might feel to look behind and see an ocean. The subtle expression of the tossing waves told her that this was the open sea. For miles and miles she saw great waves bursting in immense explosions of spindrift and spray, swept clean of shipping, the glassy rear of the racing billows throwing back to her eyes sinister glints from the rare gleams of the western sun, and out into this fierce fight of the elements the Roc was drifting stern on in spite of the frenzied thrust of her great screws into the suck of the gale. "Uncle," said she, pointing, "I see! We're on the ocean!" Haskins for health.

"Yes," said he. "God forgive me Virginia, for murdering you and your aunt! Go to her!" Suddenly Virginia pressed his arm. "Uncle!" she said. "On board the ship!" The call sounded in their very ears. Within thirty yards hung the Virginia, headed into the wind and drifting easily with the Roc. "What do you propose to do?" It was Carson's voice through the trumpet, but it sounded sweet to Shayne. He had no idea of any manner in which the Virginia would aid him, but the sickening speed with which he was driving out to sea made anything welcome as a modification of his despair. "Do you understand?" shouted Carson. "You are lost if you drift on. Drop your painter, and I'll give you a tow!"

Swallowing his pride, Shayne ordered the painter dropped. The Virginia, running easily into the wind, dropped back, took the line and, with a word of cheer, walked up into the blast, pulled the painter taut and, like a tug with a freighter, threw herself against the pressure of the immense gas bag, and for the first time the people on the aeronaut's deck clung fast and turned their faces from the wind as they felt its stroke. "Hurray!" came the cry from the engine room. "She's holding us!" For a moment she did, and then she dropped the painter, and the abandoned Roc fell off before the storm again. The aeronaut, having shown her power, had quit his exercise. But the Virginia again drew close. "Put on your life preservers!" cried Carson. "I'm going to put you in the water."

"No, you'll not!" said Shayne. "Will-let, keep her up and run before it. We'll circle the whirl and make shore!" "Mr. Willett," said Carson, "do as I say or as there is a God in heaven I'll go above, rip your envelope and let you drop from wherever you happen to be! If Mr. Shayne interferes confine him, and take orders from me—or drop from here!"

The second engineer went forward to Mr. Shayne. The answer of the others was to set the depressor screws going, and the doomed Roc, now quite over the sea, dropped nearer and nearer to the waves. "Now," said Carson, "I'll tell you why I turned you adrift. Your envelope won't stand the strain. It had started to cave in at the bow, and in another moment it would have ripped open and dropped you. But I'm going to give it the test. If the Roc can stand the strain I believe I can tow her and land you. If she doesn't I shall drop you into the Atlantic, you'll collapse, and I can tow you in the water easily. Put on your life preservers! Hurry!"

Again the Virginia took the painter aboard and surged against the gale, but this time drifting with the wind while the life preservers were adjusted. Carson was confronted with a fearful alternative. If he let the Roc get out to sea she had a bare chance, though no such escape was recorded. On the other hand, dropping her in the water was an expedient full of danger. The collapsed envelope might blanket the passengers and drown them; some might be hit by breaking beams or stunned by concussion with the water from a badly judged height. And Virginia! Yet, weighing the chances, he did not hesitate. "All ready?" he shouted. "No!" cried Shayne. "Come back here!" "All ready, Willett?" asked Carson. "Yes!" cried Willett. "Go ahead!" Slowly crowding on power, the Virginia fought forward into the storm. The painter strained taut as a steel bar, and Carson wondered if it would hold. Suddenly a rainy gust bore down on them in fury, the envelope of the Roc crushed in at the bow with an awful ripping sound, and the huge steely bubble—bigger than a city block, higher than a four story building—became a ragged cloud of tattered fragments and, with all on board, fell into the Atlantic and floated in a shapeless mass of wreckage.

Carson looked down to see whether the form he loved was smothered under the torn fabric or floating free, but never halted for the drowning or the living. He let out fifty yards of line he had made fast to the painter to give slack for the Roc's fall, and then with frenzied eagerness he dragged the whole huge mass ashore, and as the Virginia alighted on the beach her skipper, leaping out, began a fierce onslaught on the wreckage, seeking in its chaotic mass for her whose drenched form he dreaded to see.

CHAPTER XIX.

THEODORE carried Virginia to a seaside cottage just in process of being put in order for its owners. "Tell me, dearest," he kept whispering, "that you are safe—safe!" Virginia, wet, draggled, her strong little form resembling a rough cast statue of some one quite irresistibly shapely, silently hung about his neck. "You love me?" said he. "I'm not going to let you leave me again, darling!" She squeezed his hand in gratitude. Carson went out radiant, meeting Craighead with the red mantilla on his arm. "You all do know this mantle," said he, "but not the soul of paltry in things great. Ethically, this is a lost damsel snatched from a watery grave as she went down in the penultimate descent. I put my confounded life in pawn—for what? For a mere trumpety kikkshaw of silk with no more woman in it than a rabbit. Rotten! Rotten! This 'ere rescue ain't up to sample!" (To Be Continued.)

RUSH PAVING GRANTS PASS

Work Progressing Rapidly and Property Owners Are Well Pleased—Will Be Completed Before District Fair Is Held.

GRANTS PASS, Or., Aug. 31.—The paving company now is laying from 700 to 1000 square yards of finished pavement a day, which amounts to about two blocks along Sixth street in one week. At this rate the contract cannot be completed before the latter end of September. There is little danger, however, of any bad weather before that time and the streets may be in readiness for the fair in the early part of October. No doubt the contract would have been completed by the last day of August, as specified, had not a series of accidents occurred at the rock plant, which delayed starting the pavement at least a month, but every part of the enterprise is working perfectly now, and no further delays are anticipated. The pavement as it really appears when finished upon our own streets is so nearly perfect that the "show me" Thomases have been made to see, and the number of our citizens who have worked and worried with so many hindrances are already beginning to see that they have started something which will do much toward the municipal betterment of the city. Property owners along the side lines are showing their appreciation of the work, and petitions are being circulated and filed with the city officials asking for immediate action toward paving alleys and streets galore. This movement is by no means premature, or the result of any sudden flash of enthusiasm. It is just what is needed and just what will make this town what it must be to keep in time with irrigation, railroad and other similar developments which are upon us.

LONE HIGHWAYMAN HOLDS UP STAGE

ASH, Wash., Aug. 31.—Sheriff Knox, with several deputies, is hunting through this district today for a lone highwayman who held up the Mineral Creek stage near Ash last night, relieved four passengers of their watches, jewelry and \$180 in cash and escaped to the woods. The holdup occurred in the heavy timber half a mile from here. There was only one white passenger on the coach, two of the victims being Chinese, who were going to the sanitarium as cooks, the fourth man being the driver. The white man refused to give his name. The highwayman jumped from behind a tree, at the same time covering the driver with his gun. The robber ordered the other three men to line up with their arms above their heads and backs turned toward him. He then rifled their clothing of all valuables and then ordered the quartet "not to move." Then the robber "made tracks" back into the woods and escaped.

SARATOGA GAY ON LAST RACING DAY

SARATOGA, N. Y., Aug. 31.—With the running of the great Futurity today, which probably will ring down the final curtain on racing in New York, Saratoga has, for a day, assumed its old-time racing gaiety. Crowds of people attracted by the turf classics have thronged to the city in anticipation of the great event. Everywhere people are discussing the race and the chances of the various entries. For the first time since the first Futurity was won in 1888, two horses will go to the barrier equal.

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favorites. Hildreth's Novelty and Whitney's Bashit are dividing the honors. Thirteen other horses will face the starter for the race, which carries a purse of more than \$25,000 for the winner and nearly \$10,000 more for the other contestants. The new anti-betting laws passed at the last regular session of the New York legislature go into effect September 1. It is expected that this law will put an end to racing, and it is believed the big tracks here and in New York will be permanently closed. If you have business ability, show its quality in the way you advertise for a position.

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