BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial — **by Herbert Jensen**

NOPSIS: After a motor accident, Frank Grahame has come to the rescue of Janice Kent, movie star. She refuses to countenance Frank's belief that the accident may have been planned by a man named Ortega, and Spin Winslow, fellow aviator and friend of Frank's, believes it is because Janice wishes to play the lead in a Mexican film for which Ortega is negotiating with Myberg, the famous movie executive. Frank's explorer's instinct tells him that his hunch is right, also that a vulturine profile he saw peering through the window of Myberg's office has a connection with the mystery. He finds that Janice has disappeared suddenly; as he and Spin, with Greene, Janice's publicity man, question the maid Myberg enters.

Chapter Eight

A CLUE

MYBERG'S obsidian eyes flickered. Their glance interrupted Greene as a blow would have.

"Greene," said the chief executive of the Consolidated, "this iss not one of your monkeyshines?"

Greene opened his mouth to protest. Winslow waved him to silence. "I think it's on the level, Mr. Myberg." Grahame noted that Winslow's—the scoffer's—voice held a tinge of respect. Whether it was for consideration of the seriousness of the situation or for Myberg, he could not tell.

The newcome. asked to be told what had happened and what they knew.

He listened, frowning at the carpet. There was something Napoleonic about his posture; yet, too, something that derided the comparison. Finally, without looking up, he asked, "Who iss this man?" His arm gestured vaguely.

"Frank Grahame."

"Oh, the jungle man, eh?" Grahame was favored with a swift glance. "You get people out of troubles, eh? All right. You get Janice out of this jam she iss now in, and I hire you. I hire you for the new picture. I pay you—" He pursed his lips and stared at the ceiling. He took out a small black notebook and tore a sheet from it. Carefully he uncapped his fountain pen and scribbled something on the paper. He handed it to Grahame.

Grahame with some astonishment took the paper. He glanced at it.

"The salary seems sufficient," he said somewhat stiffly. "But does this seem the time to—"

"Any time iss all right to talk business," said the man in black. He straightened his shoulders. "You call up that feller Ortega, and ask him what he knows. He hass ants. I know when a man hass ants." He looked cryptically upon the three men and the woman, and turned through the door. He called over his shoulder:

"Grahame. . . . That figure on the paper is for the week, not the month." He disappeared through the doorway.

Grahame glanced again at the paper he held in his hand. He hissed a soft whistle through his lips.

"And I thought it was for the year," he said. He laughed with a trace of uncertainty. "I can't figure him. The man's a nut . . . or a fool."

WINSLOW smiled faintly. "You don't know him, Frank. He may be a nut . . . perhaps . . . but nobody ever proved him a fool. You're lucky. He likes you. And—"

Grahame gestured impatiently. He crumpled the paper he held in his hand and tossed it toward the waste-paper basket. "He said call up Ortega. Good idea. Know his number?"

"I don't," said Winslow. He stared blankly toward the girl, Paula. "But she does."

"No. . . ." began the maid.

"Call him up," snapped Winslow.

Paula went sullenly to the phone on the night-stand next to the bed. Ostentatiously she thumbed through the telephone book; she glanced once with a shade of defiance toward Winslow, who met her look with a faintly mocking smile. She bent her head over the phone and dialed the number.

There was a slight delay and she held the receiver toward Winslow. "It's his hotel," she said.

Grahame said, "Give me that." He took the receiver.

"I want to speak with Mr. Ortega. What? . . . He's left? You mean left the hotel—checked out? What time?" For the space of a minute or two he listened attentively. . . . "Oh, all right . . ." He put the receiver back upon its stand. He said:

"I feel so damned helpless in all this. There's something wrong. I know. I felt that the other night. That accident was framed. You laughed at me, Spin, but I'm right, just the same." He strode toward the door, turned, and paced back. "Ortega checked out hours ago. Left no forwarding address. The bellhop put his bags in a cab while Ortega made a call on the lobby phone. That's all the clerk knows."

"Easy to trace," commented Winslow. "We can know where Ortega went in five minutes,—if the cab is back."

He took up the phone and got the hotel on the wire again. Asking his question, he seated himself on the bed; he crossed his legs and snapped a light to a cigarette.

"Felix's gone to get the driver. While I'm waiting take a look outside, Grahame, and see what you can see."

French windows opened upon a small balcony facing west. Grahame stepped out upon it. It was one story above the garden beneath. He returned and crossed the room. Opening another pair of windows, he found that only three marble steps separated the room from the lawn behind. As he ascended onto the grass, he heard Winslow talking on the phone.

The lawn led eastward up across two small terraces to the hedge-screened street. An iron gate was set in the hedge; it hung open. Grahame looked at the flat stones set in the lawn; they made a path from the house to the street that showed no evidences of recent use.

They wouldn't, thought Grahame, show anything short of hob-nailed boots. He stood on the sidewalk near the gate and looked up and down the deserted street.

He shrugged his shoulders, and his teeth caught at his lower lip in a little expression of impotence. He turned and walked back toward the house.

AS he entered Winslow slammed the receiver on its stand. His eyes glittered as he arose to face Grahame.

"The cab drove out to Central airport. Just Ortega—nobody else. However . . ." his stare sought out Paula, who sat with expressionless face, upon the chaise longue. "However, they have a record of the number he called from the lobby. He called this house. Paula . . what did he say?"

The girl looked up defiantly. "He asked if Miss Kent was in."

"That all?"

"That was all."

"Didn't ask to speak with her?"

"No." She snapped petulantly. "That was all, I tell you"

Winslow caught her by the arm. He gritted, "By God, you will tell me! Or I'll have you down at the Hollywood station in ten minutes,—whatever notoriety it may mean for Kent." He shook her arm. "Come through! Why did he want to know if she were in? Why—Tell me: Has Ortega been ving you money?"

There was fright in the girl's eyes, although her voice was sullen when she answered, "I don't know what you mean."

"Yes you do!" He reached down his other hand, caught her shoulder and lifted her to her feet.

Grahame remonstrated. "Spin," he began. "Don't—"

"I'll handle this. I have a way with women!" He sneered half contemptuously, "She'd tell us next that she sensed a romance and was helping true love along. But she was getting paid for it . . . weren't you?" He shook her shoulders.

"Yes," she replied. "He is in love with her."

Winslow laughed grimly. "What did I tell you, Frank? She's an incurable romanticist! But she was getting paid for it. You know that Ortega . . . had someone come here to get Janice—whether she wanted to go or whether she didn't."

He looked at the broken powder jar on the floor. "I don't think she wanted to go. Paula . . . do you know that abduction is a crime? That the police can, and will, put you away for a long, long time if they find out that you've taken money to assist in a kidnapping? . . . Start talking!"

Her face was a little white; her lips trembled. She drew in a fluttering breath. "I didn't know!" she said breathlessly. "Don Raoul—he is a countryman of mine—said that Miss Kent had promised to marry him. But that she wouldn't because of her contract with the Consolidated. They'd break her contract if she married. He is rich. He does not care for her contract. So—"

Winslow interrupted with a harsh laugh —"so never mind the rest. Where was he going to take her? D'ye know?"

Paula's face was drawn with misgiving. She answered, "I don't know. Mexico, I guess. Do you think I will be arrested?"

"I hope so," replied Winslow callously. "You better do a little praying that she gets back all right. Greene . . . you stick around here in case a call comes in. . can't quite figure this racket. Frank and I are going out to Central airport."

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Grahame and Spin begin a mad dash to overtake Janice, tomorrow.

MULHOLLAND PET RETURNS INJURED

"If only dogs could talk."—such was the lament yesterday of Dr. and Mrs. R. C. Mulholland, whose well known pet, "Laddie," returned home after being missing for several hours Sunday night with his mouth and one paw bleeding.

Having never strayed from his home on Berkeley Way before, a search for the large black and white bird dog was started as soon as he was missed, upon the Mulhollands return from an early movie about 7 o'clock. All inquiries about the neighborhood proved futile until about 10:30, when Laddie's anxious whine was heard at the door. He appeared over-joyed at being home again, although his mouth and foot were injured.

The guess of the Jackson County Humane society yesterday was that the dog had been taken from home against his will and had gnawed and pried his way to freedom, receiving injuries in so doing.

Keller Pardoned

SALEM, Jan. 23.—(AP)—Rudolph A. Keller was given a pardon from the Washington county jail by Governor Julius L. Meier today. He was committed August 30, 1933 and was fined $200 following conviction on an assault and battery charge.

ROOSEVELT READY RECOGNIZE CUBA

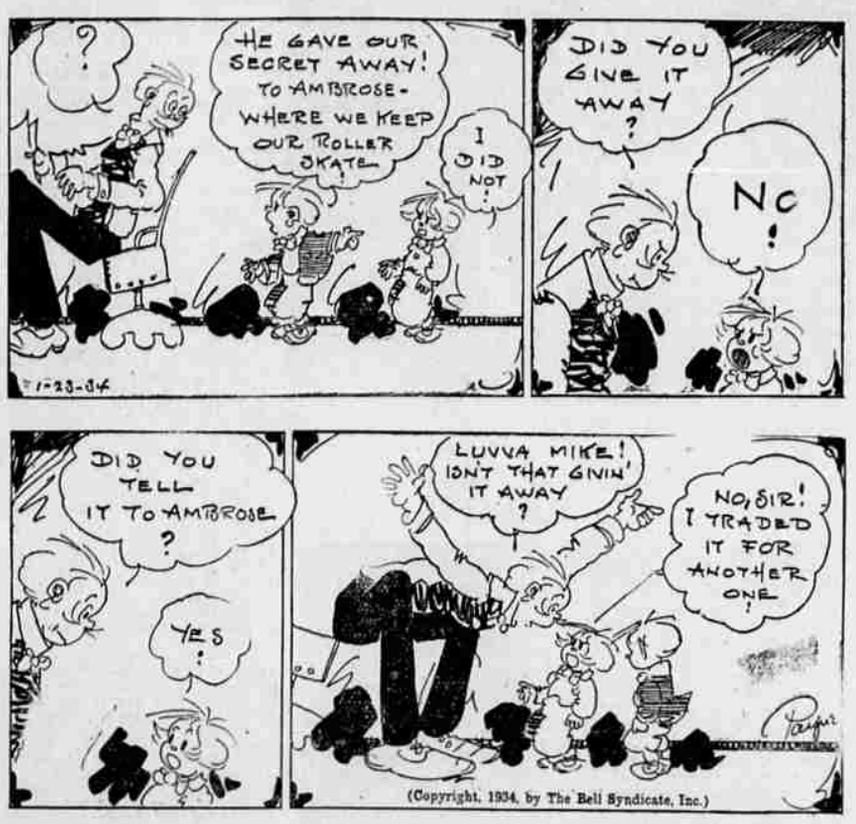
WASHINGTON Jan. 23.—(AP)—President Roosevelt today notified the diplomats of Central and South America that he was ready to recognize the new Cuban government.

An early statement was in prospect.

The President met briefly with the Latin-American diplomatic corps, reporting what has occurre din Cuba and outlining his own attitude for recognition of the Mendieta regime.

The diplomats left the White House to communicate with their own governments.

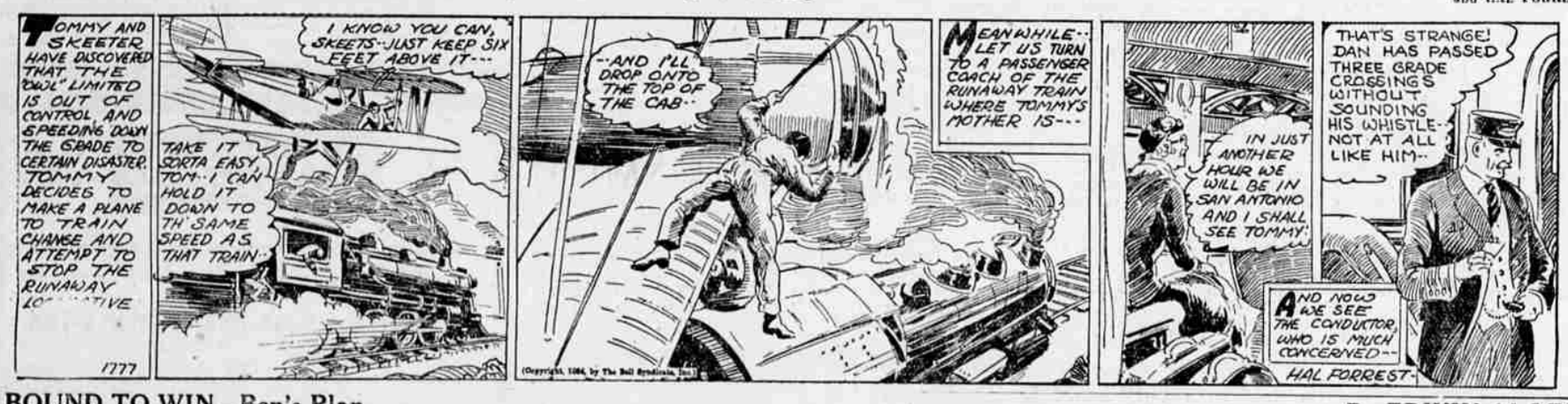
S'MATTER POP— By C. M. PAYNE



DIFFICULT DECISIONS By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Conductor Suspects Something Is Wrong

By GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



BOUND TO WIN—Ben's Plan

By EDWIN ALGER

THE NEBBS—Family Pride

By SOL HESS

BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus

PATH CLEAR FOR STRAIGHTENING OF EAST MAIN CURVE

Ordinance providing for a contract with Scott Davis which will bring to the city of Medford all land needed for the straightening of East Main street, okehed some time ago as a CWA project, was passed by the city council yesterday in special session at the city hall.

The work is now expected to continue unhampered as the Davis property was the only part previously standing in the way of the improvement, contracts having been arranged with John Johnson and O. V. Myers, owners of adjoining property. Condemnation suit was threatened for acquisition of the Davis property and institution of suit was authorized at the regular meeting of the council last Tuesday.

An agreement was then reached and the ordinance passed Monday provides for an exchange of the Davis property, 33.5x57x62.5 feet, to the city for a piece of property, 90x49x81 in lot 1, block 1, Siskiyou Heights addition to be bought by the city from Johson and Myers.

The Davis property is to be traded the city free of all liens and encumbrances, excepting the 1933 taxes.

GERMANY ASKED FOR UNIFORM TREATMENT

WASHINGTON, Jan. 23.—(AP)—President Roosevelt today called in the German ambassador, Dr. Hans Luther, to ask that Germany give the same treatment to American creditors as is given to creditors in other nations.

Broken WINDOWS glazed by Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

There's No Guesswork in Tribune A. B. C. Circulation