

# BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial by Herbert Jensen

**SYNOPSIS:** Frank Grahame, explorer and aviator, finds himself trapped to solve the mystery of the disappearance of Janice Kent, movie star. He and his partner, Spin Winslow, another aviator, set out on a Central American named Ortega is responsible. Ortega has been spotted with Myberg, film executive, for a picture with Mexican backgrounds and Janice is to play the lead. Frank and Spin learn from Janice's maid that Ortega telephoned to see whether Janice was at home and that he had checked out of his hotel and taken a cab to Central Airport. They are about to race out to the airport in Spin's roadster.

## Chapter Nine THE CHASE BEGINS

"Come on, Frank, let's go!" On the way down the stairs, Grahame said. "I feel like a fifth wheel, Spin. You're done everything. Thanks a lot. You know how I feel about Janice."

Winslow paused and turned toward him. The expression in his eyes was wild. He parried his lips to speak, paused, and said, "You're as complete a romanticist as Paula. Forget it, Kent's my bread and butter for the next six months—until the picture is done. I'm no altruist. I'm just—"

The dapper Mr. Greene bounded down the stairs behind them. A paper fluttered in his hand. He looked at Grahame with an expression of bewildered respect.

"Mr. Grahame," he said breathlessly, "you forgot your contract."

"My contract?" asked Grahame, puzzled. He saw that the crumpled bit of paper was the one that Myberg had given him. Mechanically he took it in his hands.

Greene said, drawing himself erect importantly, "You'll be needing some publicity work done. If I may recommend my services to you—"

Winslow's long arm reached out. The palm of his hand pressed gently, inexorably against Greene's pearl-gray chest. Mr. Green, perforce was pushed backward.

"Greene," said Winslow gently, "you get upstairs with Paula... and stay there!" He gave an abrupt shove. Greene stumbled backward up three or four stairs.

They passed out of the house and stepped into Winslow's blue roadster at the curb. The wheels spun; they lurched forward. They roared down to Santa Monica Boulevard, thence into Wilshire. Swinging right into San Vicente, they flashed by the lights of the Pico crossing. As they zig-zagged into Crenshaw and headed south, Grahame noticed that he still held Myberg's scrap of paper. He tore it across and held the pieces to the half-opened window. The wind snatched them.

He muttered, "What a hell of a time to think of business."

Winslow, intent over the wheel, chuckled dryly.

"That's a crack at me, I guess. Wait'll you've lived in this town as long as I have. That's a lot of money you're throwing away."

Grahame made an inarticulate noise. "You're hard-boiled, Spin."

"Am I? Yes, I guess so." For a minute he drove in silence, whereupon he said, in a curious tone, "You're no fifth-wheel, Frank. I'm glad you're along. Myberg sensed it. You get things done. I—"

Grahame said a little bitterly, "So do you, Spin—when your job's at stake."

"When my job's—Yes, I guess you're right."

THE blue roadster slid to a stop before a small building. Behind it a hangar bulked whitely against the dark sky.

Winslow called to an attendant, "Jeff here!"

"Went home at five. Anything I can—" The roar of a motor from some hidden test block drowned the last of his words.

"Yeah," said Winslow. He heaved himself out from behind the wheel. "Anybody shove out of here in the last hour or two?"

"Uhuh. Closed job. Micky took 'em just about an hour ago."

"Micky who?"

"McQuire, Army."

"Don't know him. Who'd he take?"

"Whoopee party to Caliente. Two men and a woman. The girl was almost out."

They had the motor chugging on its warm-up when the mac came back. He said, "Jeff says it's all right. But he says don't wreck the ship unless you can kill each other doing it."

Winslow chuckled. The attendant said, "That prop don't balance right. We only been using her for short pay hops."

"Thanks for the tip, grandma. Climb up, Frank. You want to peep?"

Grahame shook his head. He adjusted his chute-pack and got in the forward cockpit. He noticed that the plane was equipped with dual controls. Snapping on the safety belt, he folded his arms.

The motor roared. Behind him Winslow yelled, "The airman's day off... he goes flying—"

Frank did not smile. He experienced a flash of envy for Winslow who could joke in any situation. Once—long ago—he was that way too. Humor was simple to understand in those days; you laughed because you felt like it, or to keep up your courage.

The motor thundered, the plane lurched, Grahame strained against his belt as the wheels left the ground and Winslow arched in a steep bank out of the field.

San Pedro below and to the right; Long Beach to the left and ahead. They were over the water; the air was less bumpy. Curious how at night the long line of surf stood out like broken white ribbons floating in an abyss of darkness.

Frank glanced at the illuminated instrument board. Although the plane vibrated excessively—the unbalanced prop—he estimated that they were doing considerably better than a hundred; they should be at Caliente field within the hour.

Reflectively he stared at the town lights that swung behind them on the left. He reconstructed the events that had culminated with Winslow and him in a plane headed for the Mexican border. He calculated the chances for and against their finding Janice Kent at the end of their journey. He discovered that his mind could not definitely arrange and clarify the facts that he knew they did not make exact sense.

An automobile accident had been arranged, he was convinced, by the man, Ortega. The fact that he had arrived at the scene of this accident almost simultaneously with its occurrence doubtlessly had prevented Ortega from bringing his plan to completion.

BUT what was that plan? Janice Kent's subsequent disappearance from her home threw no light on the matter. Her maid, Paula, had told them that it was because Ortega loved her mistress, conniving the present situation with a romantic objective. Miss Kent, she had said, had promised to marry Ortega, her contract would be broken if she married, therefore Ortega had accomplished an abduction.

Frank was assured that the maid believed this, but he was equally sure that Ortega—although he did not know the man—would have taken no such bold steps to accomplish his end. It was possible, of course, but rather incredible.

In the first place, Ortega was reputedly wealthy. Would he, then, take such elaborate and melodramatic measures to engineer an elopement which when consummated would relieve Janice Kent permanently of the necessity of making her own living? Why, then, should there be any pretense of making it appear that Janice broke her contract with the Consolidated not of her own free will? Considering his own regard for her, this method of reasoning gave Frank a glow of satisfaction.

It brought him moreover, with equal logic, to the conclusion that she had been taken against her will. But for what purpose? There could be but three reasons why a girl would be abducted who was beautiful, rich, and a public personage. A man might love her insanely; he might hate her savagely. The last motive seemed remote, and the second illogical; the first as he had proved to himself was impractical. These were not medieval days, when abductions were fashionable.

Frank muttered impatiently. It was a merry-go-round of reasoning that brought him nowhere. There was but one fact glaringly important. Janice must be found.

They roared over a crescent of light that was San Diego. Tia Juana appeared below whereupon the engine's crescendo broke into a staccato of backfires and tempered explosions that told Frank that they were gliding to a landing.

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Tomorrow, there is a crash, and danger.

## 3 POSTMASTERS ARE NOMINATED

PORTLAND, Jan. 24.—(AP)—A dispatch to the Journal today from

Washington, D. C., said E. J. Griffith of Portland, prominently mentioned for the vacancy on the reconstruction finance corporation, will not get the post.

The dispatch said President Roosevelt has nominated Charles B. Henderson of California, former United States senator from Nevada, and a Democrat.

## PENNSYLVANIA VETS WILL RECEIVE BONUS

Adjutant Ray Wright of Medford Post of the American Legion, is in

receipt of a bulletin from Oregon department headquarters reading as follows: "We are pleased to announce that the state of Pennsylvania is to pay a bonus to veterans from that state."

information may be obtained by writing the adjutant general's office, Harrisburg, Pa. Phone 542. We will haul away four refuse. City Sanitary Service. Dance at Rogue Elk Saturday night, February 3. Dance at Central Point Grange hall, Saturday night.

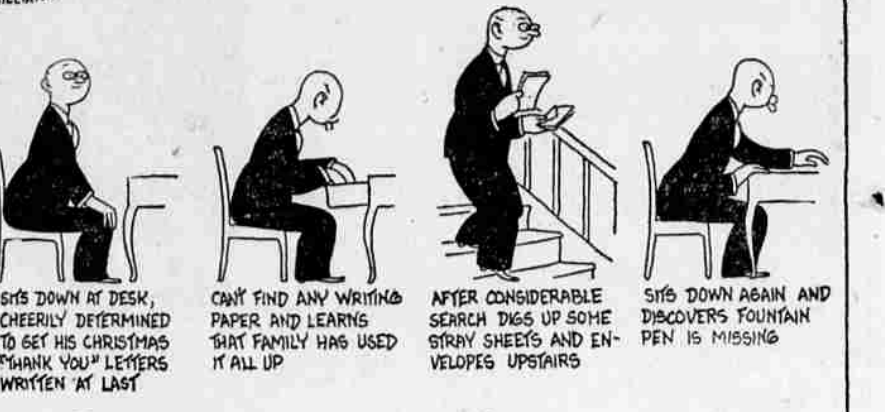
## S'MATTER POP—

By C. M. PAYNE



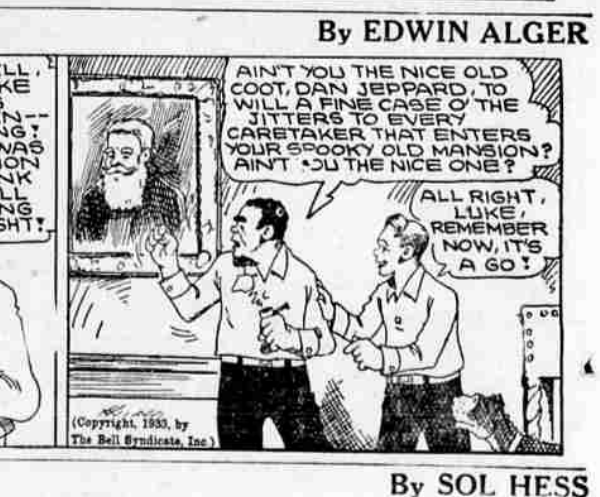
## THE FAMILY ALBUM—"THANK YOU" LETTERS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



## TAILSPIN TOMMY—"So Near and Yet - -"

BY GLENN CHAFFIN and HAL FORREST



## BOUND TO WIN—Ben Wins Out

By EDWIN ALGER



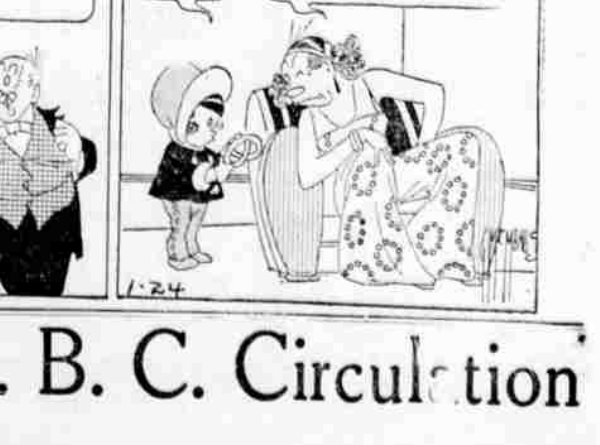
## THE NEBBS—Long Live The King

By SOL HESS



## BRINGING UP FATHER

By George McManus



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

**INCOME TAX PREPARER IS HELD RESPONSIBLE**

PORTLAND, Ore., Jan. 24.—(AP)—Responsibility for federal income tax returns, as filed will hereafter be fixed on the person who prepared the return, it was announced here today by James W. Maloney, collector of internal revenue for Oregon.

Each return filed for 1933 must state whether any person or company was employed either to prepare the return or to advise in its preparation.

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