

# BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial by Herbert Jensen

**SYNOPSIS:** Frank Grames, explorer, bound into the wilds of Yucatan to look for traces of his missing aviator friend, Bill Langton, narrowly escapes death at the hands of a man named Ortega. Frank suspects he is the man who tried to abduct the movie star, Janice Kent, in Hollywood shortly before Janice had refused Frank's proposal of marriage. Janice and a company from Hollywood are in Yucatan, unknown to Frank, to make a picture. Ortega, Janice's publicity man, has been shot on the way to Merida.

## Chapter 21 AT MERIDA

GREENE rubbed at a lump over his temple. Thoughtfully he adjusted his coat upon his shoulders and studied a ragged rent in its side through which some papers in the pocket had been blown by the bullet. "H-m-m-m," he grunted. "So this is Mexico. What happened? A safe and sane Fourth?"

They explained as much as they knew. While they talked the train began to move, haltingly at first then with gathering speed. Lights began to slip past the car windows; then the trucks of the cars screeched around a turn. They were passing through a lane lined with shadowy buildings.

"Merida, I guess," offered Hogarth. They jerked into a dimly lighted station. The men began to arrange the boxes so as to be ready for their departure. The train stopped.

The other passengers crowded through the door. Armed soldiers could see dozens of armed soldiers patrolling the platforms. There was a commotion at the doorway. A huge man shouldered himself through the press and approached down the aisle.

His face was blue-jawed and dark, smoke from his black cigaret dribbled through thick nostrils. He wore the bleached linen suit of the hacendado, with the tunic buttoning up to the neck. His arm was carried in a black silken sling.

He loomed above the seated Americans. For an instant Janice did not recognize him, then she caught her breath. It was Ortega, the man whom Frank Grames had suspected as being involved in her abduction in Hollywood a month ago.

While she had told them all in Myberg's office that she did not believe that Ortega was implicated; nevertheless to herself she admitted that she was unsure. Janice looking at him now, was conscious of a sense of uneasiness as his glance met hers—a tiny ringing of some subconscious bell of unrest as those fabled eyes were turned down to her.

He bowed deeply. "Miss Kent," he began. "How are you Mr. Greene, and Mr. Hogarth. It is a pleasure to see you all again. I am delighted. His somber stare made his statement sound contradictory. "I have a message for you from Mr. McGrath, your advance man."

Greene stirred irritably. "Where is he?" The big man's glance flickered over Mr. Greene and passed at the torn and stained shirt front. He allowed the question to remain unanswered and addressed himself to Janice.

"So Mr. Myberg decided to go on with the picture? It is good. I shall be delighted to help you. It has been a great regret of mine that I was forced to leave Hollywood so suddenly. I was planning to return when I met Mr. McGrath. I decided, then, to await your arrival."

JANICE wished the man did not make her feel so uneasy. Was this the suave, well-mannered Ortega that had sent her dainty flowers in Hollywood? He seemed the same but with a subtle difference.

Once, two years before she had met an industrial executive and had been taken through one of his factories. She had admired him for his power, decisiveness, and shrewd command of his organization; later she met him at a masquerade costumed as an eighteenth century beau and he had been clumsy and ridiculous.

She thought of him now, looking at Ortega. In a sort of reverse way this had happened to him. The polished latin aristocrat in Hollywood had become somewhat gross—he was more effective this way Janice admitted—but there was a shade of incongruity in it—like a top turned rosy.

"So you wanted," said Mr. Greene. "Yeah. That's fine. But where in hell's McGrath? He should have met us at Progresso. He didn't show up. Instead we come here and get shot at. What is it? A revolution? What's the matter with you guys down here? Don't you know this is lousy publicity? Now if I was running this country—"

"Please!" interrupted Janice. "You were about to say..." There was a shadow of annoyance in the smile Ortega gave Greene. "I was about to say that Mr. McGrath asked me to meet you. I would have been at the dock when your steamer arrived but we have had a little trouble here."

His glance roved about the damaged car. "I am sorry you were attacked on the way in from the coast, but the revolutionists were marching on Merida and the troops on your train were federal soldiers. The revolutionary party have captured Merida. The federales have retreated and are encamped, we think, a few kilometers from the city. They await reinforcements from Campeche."

"What effect will that have on us?" asked Janice. "Mr. Myberg planned for us to take the location shots at Chichen Itza, instead of at the place you spoke of."

"Impossible," Ortega shrugged his shoulders. "That is why I am here. A week ago McGrath was ordered to Chichen Itza to make arrangements for a camp there where you could stay while you took your pictures. However, he was unable to get permission from the authorities. They had word that the revolution was about to begin and the ruins at Chichen would probably be within the zone of war."

"Then what did he do?" asked Mr. Greene disconsolately. "He met me," replied Ortega with the slightest of bows. "All the ruins in Yucatan are not at Chichen Itza, nor yet at Uxmal. Back along the trail of the Caribbean coast are others, bigger ones, and in better condition, too, for your work. McGrath has gone ahead. I will guide you there."

"THANK you, no," snapped Mr. Greene. Something in the tropic air had made the little man as aggressive as a fighting cock. "Not any at all, thank you. Yours very truly, accompanied by Miss Kent and these three sons, will take the next train back to the coast, and thence to these or those—take your choice—United States."

Ortega shook his head and smiled. He appealed to Janice with a gesture of his unburied arm. "I am afraid he does not understand. There will be no steamers away from Progresso. None will come to go away. The revolutionists control Progresso. When steamers come their supplies will be seized, so none will come. It is always so."

"Well, I don't like this ruin business of yours," persisted Mr. Greene. "What's more, I don't like you, Ortega. I think you're up to some monkey business. You're bad copy, if you want the truth."

"Mr. Greene!" exclaimed Janice with some sharpness. For Greene to call a person bad copy was, for him, highly insulting—almost a curse.

"Well, anyway," continued Greene in a quieter tone, "we'll stay right here in Merida until you settle who's who and what of it. You can tell McGrath to come back and make an occasional fourth at bridge until we can get to the only legitimate ruins I know of in this country."

"He means," chuckled Hogarth who had been listening intently, "that he's plagiarized a lot of copy out of the Encyclopedia on Chichen Itza. Any other ruins would cramp his style."

"Who says so, you... Svengali!" Hogarth flushed; Greene knew the director's weakness.

Ortega looked at Greene speculatively. "Merida," he said, "will be under fire continually. It will be safer where I will take you."

"Oh," said Mr. Greene after a reflective pause. "Again," continued Ortega. "Mr. McGrath told me to say that he was in complete charge of arrangements, and that if Mr. Greene wanted to stay and be killed, by all means I was not to discourage him."

Greene bristled. Hogarth chuckled. Wallace, the older of the camera men said, "Go ahead and stay, Greene."

But Mr. Greene looked pensive. His glance shifted from the face of Ortega to that of Janice, and back to Ortega's again.

# BOY SCOUTS PLAN PARTICIPATION IN 24TH ANNIVERSARY

Boy Scouts of the Crater Lake council will participate in celebrating the 24th anniversary of the establishment of the Boy Scout movement in America. On Thursday evening at 8:15 all local Scouts will dedicate themselves to the Scout cause by repeating the Scout oath and pledging that they will do their best to live up to the Scout oath and law.

Scouting in America has enjoyed an increase in membership every year in the past. During the year of 1933 there was an increase of 28,000 Scouts, on January first 904,340 boys were actively participating in the work.

During the year ahead the entire Scout organization will prepare for the silver jubilee, opening February 8, 1935. Every Scout and Scout in the country is looking forward to this event. It is expected that the active membership will exceed more than a million during the year.

All Scout troops in the council are preparing for participation in the Scout mobilization Saturday, February 10 at 9:50 a. m. President Roosevelt, who has been connected with the Scout movement for the past 10 years and at the present time is honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America, will speak to the Scouts of the nation. President Roosevelt will request the Boy Scouts of America to undertake a special good turn. The nature of this service is

# 4000 CHINESE TROOPS MASSACRED BY REDS

PIEPIING, Feb. 7.—(AP)—Four thousand Ninghsia provincial troops were massacred when forces under the rebel general Sun Tien Ying occupied Pinglo, said Chinese news dispatches today.

The advices also reported that 700 workers had been killed in a coal mine explosion in the region.

Scientists have 40 methods of estimating the age of the earth, which is believed to be at least two billion years.

Phone 542. We will haul away your refuse. City Sanitary Service. Brooder Briquesta, Medford Fuel Co. 1122 No. Central.

# GIVE IT A WHIRL

YOU SAY YOU ACTUALLY NAMED HER TETRAETHYL? HOW COME?

JUST LOOK AT HER AND SHE STARTS— LIKE THAT STANDARD GASOLINE UNSURPASSED!



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# THE SNEEZE

FEELS A SNEEZE COMING ON

IS QUITE DELIGHTED AT THE FUSS HIS SNEEZE HAS CAUSED

AND GRANDMA HOLDING HIM IN HER LAP WHILE MOTHER SEES TO IT THAT THERE ARE NO ANY DRAUGHTS

SNEEZES

EVERYBODY ANXIOUS THAT HE HAS CAUGHT COLD OR SOMETHING

AND THE WHOLE FAMILY PRYING HIM A LOT OF ATTENTION UNTIL THEY ARE QUITE SURE HE IS ALL RIGHT

AND SO, ON BEING LEFT ALONE AGAIN, IMMEDIATELY PRACTICES SNEEZING, FEELING IT MAY PROVE A USEFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT

HEARS MOTHER AND GRANDMA COME RUNNING

AND MOTHER HOLDING HIM IN HER LAP TO MAKE SURE HE'S WARM ENOUGH

AND SO, ON BEING LEFT ALONE AGAIN, IMMEDIATELY PRACTICES SNEEZING, FEELING IT MAY PROVE A USEFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT

AND SO, ON BEING LEFT ALONE AGAIN, IMMEDIATELY PRACTICES SNEEZING, FEELING IT MAY PROVE A USEFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT

# SMATTER POP

OF COURSE THERE MAY BE OCCASIONS WHEN YOU FEEL IT IS NECESSARY TO FIGHT!

AS TO WHETHER IT IS THE RIGHT TIME, USE YOUR INTELLIGENCE!

NOW WHAT DO I MEAN WHEN I SAY, USE YOUR INTELLIGENCE?

DICK OUT A FELLOW MORE SMALLER THAN ME, HUH, POP?

# TAILSPIN TOMMY

WELL—NOW THAT WE'VE CHECKED OVER THE BILLS—LET'S SEE WHAT BETTY'S LETTER IS ALL ABOUT.

SURE! READ IT, PAUL—IT MIGHT BREAK THE MONOTONY.

DEAR CHIEF—AND ALL THE GANG—UM—WHY—GREAT SCOTT!

SOMETHING HAYWIRE IN HOLLYWOOD?

BY GEORGE! THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS! JUST LISTEN TO THIS...

HURRY UP—DON'T KEEP ME IN SUSPENSE!

HERB—BETTY'S BROUGHT US OUT OF THE "RED"—LANDED US THE BIGGEST CONTRACT WE EVER HAD—

INSTEAD OF FIRING PILOTS WE'LL HAVE TO START HIRING 'EM—RIGHT NOW!

OH, PLEASE SAY YOU'LL DO IT, LUKE—I'M ALMOST SURE I CAN STRAIGHTEN OUT THIS WHOLE SITUATION FOR UNCLE NAT IF YOU DO—

WELL, WELL, BUT WHAT ABOUT DOWN AT THE WAREHOUSE? WON'T THEY GET HIP TO THE FACT THAT THERE'S MORE IN YOUR QUININ THAN MEETS THE EYE?

I COULD TELL EZRA PARTON YOU'RE TAKIN' A FEW DAYS OFF— BUT I HAVE ME OWN DUTY, TOO, LAD—IF I LEAVE HERE I'VE GOT TO REGAIN ME JOB HONESTLY— THAT'S PART O' ME CONTRACT WITH THE LAWYERS FOR OLD DAN JEFFARD'S ESTATE!

I KNOW IT IS, LUKE, BUT IF I MAKE GOOD FOR UNCLE NAT I'LL PROMISE YOU THE SWELLEST KIND OF A JOB! HE'LL HIRE YOU TO WORK FOR THE TROPICAL LINE AND YOU CAN STAY RIGHT HERE ON HURRICANE ISLAND—YOU KNOW HOW THE CLIMATE'S CURED YOUR RHEUMATISM!

ALL RIGHT, BEN, I'LL DO IT FOR YOU! BUT NOT FOR ME ROOMIER OR THE LIKE O' THAT, LAD! I'LL DO IT BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THAT RARE KIND O' DRIVIN' COURAGE THAT'S MOST APPEALIN' TO AN OLD SOLDIER!

GOSH, THANKS, LUKE!

# THE NEBBS

NOW, LEMMY'S GOT AN IDEA TO INCORPORATE THIS BUSINESS AND GET US MORE MONEY THAN WE CAN EVER MAKE SITTING AROUND PULLING LEAVES OFF OF CALENDARS.

I DON'T WANT YOUR BOY, LEM, TO BOTHER ABOUT THIS PLACE—IT'S MAKING US A GOOD LIVING AND WHAT CAN YOU USE MORE THAN A GOOD LIVING?

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN THE SAME! JUST A HITCHING POST! STAND IN ONE PLACE UNTIL TIME KNOCKS YOU OVER!

WELL, IF YOU AND THAT UPSTART SON WILL HAND YOUR OWN BUSINESS AND LET ME ALONE, I'LL PROMISE I'LL GIVE YOU THE SAME GREETING YOU'D GET FROM A HITCHING POST WHEN YOU PASS ME!!

SAY, HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA BE ON THIS DIET?

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, I'M STARTING RIGHT NOW.

WELL, SUIT YOURSELF, IT PLEASES ME.

IT REQUIRES A WILL POWER TO GOON A DIET.

SHALL I TELL MR. AND MRS. ATCHISON THAT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO JOIN 'EM AT DINNER TOMORROW NIGHT?

OH!

I'LL START ON MY DIET AFTER TOMORROW NIGHT.

HUH?

**GLASS WORKERS GET INCREASE IN WAGES**  
TOLEDO, Feb. 7.—(AP)—A age increase of from 10 to 17 1/2 per cent for members of the American Flint Glass Workers' union, effective at once, was announced at the union's headquarters here today. The increase restores the 1929 and 1930 wage levels which were the peak for that industry.

In keeping with the times—Drugs and Toilettries at Cut Prices at JARMIN'S DRUG STORE.

**WRIGLEY'S SPEARMINT GUM**  
A FAMOUS FLAVOR  
5c EVERYWHERE

# BRINGING UP FATHER

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