

# BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial by Herbert Jensen

**SYNOPSIS:** The treacherous Ortega is leading Janice Kent, movie star, and her party deep into the Mexican jungle where a picture is to be made. Meanwhile Frank Grahame and a native boy plunging into the jungle on a search for Grahame's missing friend, Bill Lawson, stumble across Ortega, one of the movie technicians who had preceded Janice. Ortega had been with Ortega, but had been ambushed and badly wounded. Grahame calls to Ortega and sets no snare.

## Chapter 24 THE SUBLEVADOS

JUAN glanced at the figure at his feet. He crossed himself. Grahame took off his khaki sun-helmet and set it beside the overturned water pan. McGrath's eyes stared glassily at nothing.

"Poor devil," said Grahame. "I wish he had let me give him the hypo."

They buried McGrath in the swamp. Returning, they plighted their fire. Although there was plenty of game about, they dared not risk a shot, so ate a meal of cold beans and meat.

They slept for several hours. Grahame decided that for comfort's sake the troupe ahead of them would travel all night. Juan agreed that this was probably true, and if they began to follow about midnight, they could comfortably and safely follow the trail for at least six hours.

They awoke at seven Juan slipped off into the darkness and in a little while returned with a large bushy turkey dangling by his side. He grinned when Grahame questioned him.

"You heard this one this afternoon. He sleeps in a tree not far from here. Tonight—" he chuckled. "—he sleeps with us."

The boy dressed and cooked the bird—tropic refrigeration. The cooked meat would last them through the next day.

They ate, and began their march southward along the trail. Grahame pondered upon what McGrath had told him. The taking of moving pictures in this cruel country seemed a little incredible.

If it were authentic ruins they wanted, there were several within a day's train ride of Merida, the capital of Yucatan, and a civilized place. There was no reason for striking south of Merida into this unknown country.

The wounded man had mentioned the name Ortega. While the name was a common enough one, nevertheless Frank began to have a presentiment that the name was recurring too often to be entirely coincidental. It was an Ortega whom he had never seen that had been involved—he still thought—in Janice's abduction in Hollywood.

It was Ortega who had landed the arms at the hacienda on the east coast. While that had happened two weeks before, still, Ortega in the launch, could have been back at Merida in three days.

And it had been from Merida that still another Ortega had guided the man McGrath in a southeasterly direction to this spot. That is, if it had been another of the same name. Frank shook his head in puzzlement.

The dying man had said others were to follow. Probably a whole group of actors and technical men. Women, too, most probably. He was struck with a sudden chill. Janice Kent might be among them!

Supposing this was Myberg's company of people come to Yucatan for location. He remembered now that Spin Winslow had said that Myberg liked authentic backgrounds and that this man, Ortega, was to have guided them to where bigger and better ones were.

This would be a beastly place for women if the plan was to come here. He uttered an exclamation that was half irritation, half fear. Juan paused but at Grahame's grunt continued on.

McGrath had said that his Ortega had been captured by the Indians who had assaulted them. Supposing, then, that he was one and the same with the man who had landed the guns. Because of that he would have some sinister understanding with these jungle people and would not be harmed. He might even be allowed to return to Merida where he could make plans to bring the remainder of the motion picture people into this place—and to their destruction!

He speculated upon the motive, then dismissed the train of thought as being unimportant. Plenty of motive for a criminal robbery for one, ransom perhaps, although the latter seemed improbable since McGrath had been murdered without a chance to buy himself out of his difficulty. Were there women along, there would be another possibility. Although the night was cool, the

swamp started trickling from his forehead, and the palms of his hands were slippery.

He called ahead to Juan, who slowed his pace until his back was but a yard or two ahead of Grahame.

"Tell me, son," he said. "Have you ever seen these people who live in the jungle?"

"Often. We call them sublevados—unconquered ones. The men come to the coast at the right season and bring blocks of chiclé which they sell to the agents."

"What do they look like?"

"A poor lot," Juan spoke contentiously. "Barbarians. None have ever heard of the Virgin of Guadalupe, or of the Church, for that matter. They will burn in Hell, all of them, which is a pity perhaps, since some of them are white. I have even seen blond ones."

"What!" exclaimed Grahame. "Did you say white?"

"Si, señor, white." He chuckled in the darkness. "Ah, those Spaniards were great travelers. They tell me Cortez himself was rubio, blond."

"Have you ever seen their women?"

"No," answered Juan shortly. "Nor has any other Mexican either. That is the reason, I think, why these jungle people hate us. When Diaz was president he sent troops in here who acted badly. That was years ago. They were all killed."

"Hm-m." Grahame strode along in silence. Blood calls to blood. If there were renegade whites living in some jungle sanctuary, perhaps there was more than just robbery behind this Ortega's plan to bring the motion picture troupe—with women—into this inaccessible place.

Grahame's belief was growing that McGrath's Ortega and the one who had taken him in his launch to the east coast were of one and the same identity. Some instinct told him also that the Ortega of Hollywood might be the same man.

He remembered how the man had run from him, his arm dangling. He saw again the white jacket he wore showing plainly against the dark background as he sped toward the back trail.

As he recalled now he had had this target in the sights of his automatic, and then had lowered the arm. He sighed. He wondered if ever he could shoot a man in the back, no matter how rich that man might deserve killing.

If this man were Ortega, and he was in the business of luring men and women into helpless situations for the purpose of murder, robbery and worse, he should be exterminated like a rattlesnake—on sight.

THE night grew cooler. Toward morning, the jungle gave way to a chain of open savannas, through which the trail followed. Deer bounded up from the tall grasses, bird life made a noisy din; once a dark shadow lifted ahead of them, some kind of large cat, thought Grahame as he swung his rifle's muzzle forward.

"No!" called Juan sharply. Jaguar! Dangerous. You may only wound it!"

A half hour later abruptly dawn broke over the tree tops. Juan turned his head questioning.

"Not yet," the American replied to the unspoken interrogation. "It will be cool for another couple of hours."

They strode onward. Already the mists of morning arose with humid promise of approaching heat. A small hill thrust upward out of the brush and palmetto, ahead of them. Grahame wondered at its abrupt topography in a country that for some miles had been quite flat. He stopped to adjust his pack.

Then from somewhere ahead of them a first shot broke loose, followed by a rattle of sustained rifle fire. There was shouting, and a drumming of hoofs. Grahame grasped Juan by the arm and pulled him off the trail. Careening down the trail toward them came a charging burro, its pack lurching and swaying with each convulsive leap. As it galloped by, Grahame saw the broken tether rope dangling from its neck.

With back bent the man and the boy slipped away from the trail toward the small hill that Grahame had noticed a few minutes before.

As they crawled up the steep sides of the hill, the rifle ceased, but from the side of the hill opposite they heard the sounds of many people moving about. The hill was difficult to climb without notes.

Pieces of stone of conventional rectangular shape lay about. This was evidently some forgotten Mayan edifice, Grahame believed, as he carefully tested each upward step. A jungle-hidden fragment built by a lost race. The country had many such.

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Tomorrow, Frank sees a startling sight.

## ASK FOLKS TO EYE FIRES, WHEN WINDY

Two fires were caused in Medford yesterday by the high wind, Fire Chief Roy Elliott reported last night. One at the Walter Cormany home, 319 South Orange, brought small damage to the roof and minor damage also resulted from a roof fire at the P. W. Taylor home, 339 South Central.

Both were caused by sparks on the roof, fanned into flame by the wind. All residents of the city were asked by the fire department last night not to build large fires in their homes during a windstorm. Yesterday's fires were extinguished with chemical.

**Pea Pickers Strike**  
CALIFORNIA, Calif., Feb. 10.—Pea picking in the Calipatria district of the Imperial valley, where approximately 4500 acres of peas are approaching peak of production, was practically at a standstill today.

Growers said this was because a new influx of agitators scared 4000 Mexican pickers from the fields.

**Snow in Florida**  
JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Feb. 10.—Snow, most foreign to the elements in Florida—was recorded today for the first time in years.

## EAKIN BACK FROM PORTLAND CONFAB HUDSON DEALERS

Clyde S. Eakin of the Eakin Motor Co., recently appointed Terraplane dealer for this vicinity, has just returned from the Terraplane and Hudson dealers' convention held by Cohen-Anderson Motor Co. for this area.

"Never in my history as an automobile dealer," said Mr. Eakin, "have I attended a more enthusiastic trade meeting than the Terraplane and Hudson meeting held in Portland, from which I have just returned. The new Terraplane and Hudsons of 1934 are roomier, larger and finer in appearance than their predecessors, and in spite of the fact that they are bigger in every respect will out-perform even the famous cars of this line for 1933."

The cars are ultra-modern in every respect. They incorporate features which are distinctive of this line alone. We believe that we can promise the people of Medford an interesting exhibit with the arrival of these new models which are due here soon.

"Although these cars are bigger and more luxuriously appointed than ever, not one iota of their performance ability has been sacrificed. In fact, the contrary is the case.

"After viewing the 1934 Terraplane and Hudsons and listening to the sales executives who spoke to us, I find it difficult to restrain myself from all release dates on this material and telling the public in this vicinity all

about these new cars. However, I am duty bound not to give more than just a few hints. The features which are included in these new cars represent the most advanced tendencies of the day and incorporate many ideas which I believe will be exclusive to the Terraplane and Hudson line.

## GAINER TO OPEN ON FIR STREET

I. M. Gainer, Rogue river valley real estate dealer, has opened new offices located at 15 North Fir street. The name of the firm is Gainer Realty Exchange.

The new office will do a general real estate business, with exchanges a specialty, also a special service in rentals. Affiliated with the real estate business, Mr. Gainer will handle a complete line of fire and casualty insurance, and all written by the New Amsterdam casualty company, and the Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania.

With the above facilities, Mr. Gainer feels that he can better serve the public.

He has extended an invitation to all his friends and the public to pay his new office a visit.

## PLAYING IN SNOW

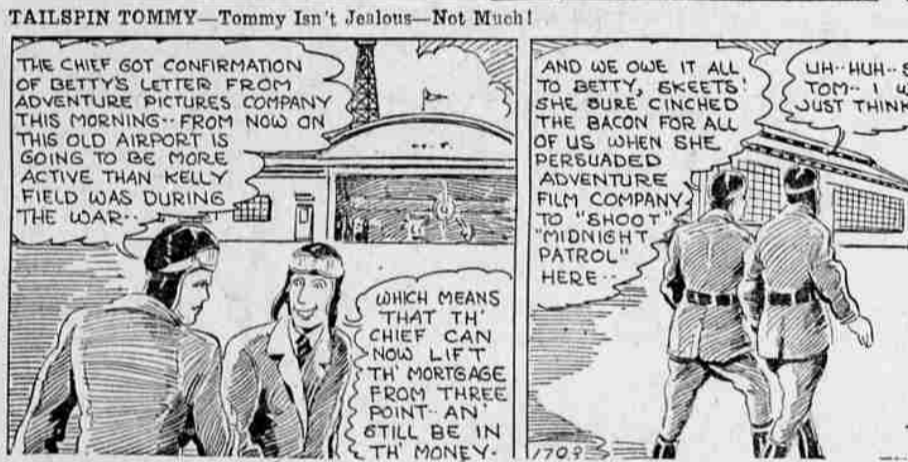


By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

## S'MATTER POP—



## TAILSPIN TOMMY—Tommy Isn't Jealous—Not Much!



## FORD MOTOR CO. FREE MOVIES MON.

"These Thirty Years," a new talking picture produced by the Ford Motor company, is to be shown at the Medford senior high school auditorium, South Oakdale, Monday night at 7:30, under the auspices of the C. E. Gates Auto company. The admission will be free.

Business favors Dave. He wins the race—the team of May Larcombe. They have a son, Bob, who becomes a problem in later life for he favors playing to working, and spends his "dad's" money gambling on the stock market.

## BRINGING UP FATHER

