

BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial

By Herbert Jensen

SYNOPSIS: Frank Grahame, explorer and Juan a Mexican boy, are heading their way into the Mexican jungle on a search for Bill Langton, lost aviator. They find McNeill, advance technician for a movie concern anxious to make a picture of some old Mayan ruins, and before he dies of a wound inflicted by a native he says a large party is following. Frank fears Juan's fate, whom he loves, may be the star of the picture and in the party. He and Juan crawl up a hill behind which they hear suspicious noises.

Chapter 25

WHAT GRAHAME SAW

AS good a place as any to look upon what was happening on the other side, Frank thought, barring possible snakes under the loose rocks,—for vaguely he remembered having heard that the natives avoided these places usually. He reated against some piled slabs at the top. Their careful descent and ascent had taken the better part of an hour. Cautiously he adjusted his body so that he might peer over the top.

He stared with growing amazement. He lifted his head over the natural parapet, but, at a whispered word of caution from Juan, sank back.

The morning's mists were dissipating, but still they made a hazy background for a number of rect-

angular stone buildings some distance ahead of them. For an instant Grahame thought that the jungle vapor was playing pranks with his sight.

People were moving about, clad in the traditional costume of the ancient Mayas. The men were naked except for short, tightly wound cloths about their middles. The women were covered by long loose gowns, of white material, cut square at the neck, and bordered with bright embroidery.

Both sexes wore sandals. The men's hair was worn long, cut square at the neck, and bound by a cloth around their foreheads; the women's hair fell down their backs in one long braid.

The amazing fact was that the skin of some of the inhabitants of this strange city was light,—brunze to be sure, but yet undoubtedly Caucasian.

The mists parted. The buildings, irregularly spaced, stretched ahead of Grahame for more than a mile,—they made an impressive approach to a huge pyramid that centered all the edifices like a gigantic triangular hub.

Its top was truncated and surmounted by a low squat building from which a thin column of smoke spiraled upward. Figures made tiny by distance crawled upon the side of the monument.

FOCUSING his gaze at the base of the pyramid, Grahame made out a large concourse of people. They had divided, and through the path they made, a smaller group of people were passing. From this party he glimpsed the glitter of cartridge belts and rifles.

Grahame felt at his side for his binoculars. He dragged them from their case, and elbows propped above the top stone, adjusted the powerful lenses. The base of the pyramid leaped at him with startling distinctness.

Through a lane made by the massed throng, a score of natives passed. Their backs were crisscrossed with cartridge belts. Each carried a rifle.

Within this moving group there were the figures of two men, clad in

the conventional breeches and puttees of civilization, their heads covered with sun-helmets. While their limbs were unhampered in any manner, the American noticed that the armed men that followed pressed them closely, with guns held at the alert.

The small column began the ascent of the pyramid. About a third of the way up one of the putteed figures seemed to lag. A guard, reversing his rifle, put the butt of the weapon against the prisoner's back and pushed with rough insistence.

The man turned, and Grahame saw him lash out with his flat with Anglo-Saxon abruptness. The guard fell, and rolled toward the bottom steps. A confusion followed. A rifle barrel glinted in the sun, and thwacked against the helmet of the aggressor. The head-covering spun like a white ball in the air as the man who was struck collapsed to the steps.

The other figure turned and struggled through the confusion to reach the comrade who had fallen. The guards closed about.

ABRUPTLY they separated. Raising his binoculars Grahame saw, descending from the house atop the pyramid, a tall figure, clad in sandals and breech-clout. The head

was covered with an elaborate head-dress of feathers and plumes. The guard had fallen back until it ringed the two foreign figures, one standing, the other prone. The tableau seemed to await a command from the descending native.

Like streamers of light reflected from a golden mirror the hair fell from the head down past the shoulders. A woman! Grahame's eyes blurred with the intensity of his gaze, and with fingers that were moist with excitement, he adjusted the focus of his glasses.

"Juan!" he whispered hoarsely. "Juan! It's a white woman!"

She half turned away from the semi-circle of guards. She seemed, almost, to be looking directly at Grahame. The American gasped. He felt a curious chill speed across his shoulders. He held his breath, and felt his skin tighten.

To some remote cave-living ancestor of his, the same sensation would have brought erect the coarse hair upon his body. To Grahame, the civilized, that feeble sense of fear gave way immediately to hot anger,—and a great anxiety.

"Janice," he whispered. "Janice Kent!"

It was odd that he felt no curiosity about how she had come here. The distance between Hollywood and this remote spot in Yucatan, had been brushed away the instant he realized that it was she.

Indeed his concern for her had wiped away every thought except that she was in dire need! and that he, by the happiest stroke of luck in his lifetime, was there to supply that aid if it were humanly possible to do so.

He watched Janice bend and pick up her headgear, although she did not replace it. He saw them pick up the body of her fallen companion, and watched the group pass up the steps of the pyramid, and disappear into a doorway.

He waited an hour or two for their reappearance, but without result.

Tomorrow, Grahame and Juan run into an ambush.



Grahame adjusted the powerful lenses.

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CENTRAL PT. GRANGERS PLANNING CARNIVAL AT FALL WEDNESDAY NIGHT

The Central Point Grange will celebrate St. Valentine's day with an extra festive round of gaiety this year, having announced a carnival for Wednesday night at the Grange hall, to which the southern Oregon public is invited, with promise of a jolly time.

There will be dancing and games, those usually associated with circus and carnival, with splendid prizes for the winners in all contests. Turkeys, chickens, cakes, pies and pickles will be among the offerings.

A fortune-telling booth, archery and "beauty parlor" will be among the offerings.

The doors will open at 8 o'clock, and from then on there will be something going to keep persons of varied tastes interested, there being a game for each and everyone. Music for dancing will be played by Hugo Lange's orchestra.

Home-made candy will be on sale throughout the evening and refreshments will include hamburgers, pie, cake and coffee.

Arrangements for the carnival are under direction of the executive and home economics committees and the lecturer.

A large attendance from Medford is expected in keeping with the precedent established during the past season.

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Lincoln's Use Of Almanac In Trial Saved Man's Neck

A W. Lynch of this city is in receipt of a copy of the Rushville, Ill. Times of recent date, containing an account of the death of Mrs. Elias Smith, at the age of 88 years, a sister of Duff Armstrong, whom Abraham Lincoln cleared in the famous almanac trial at Beardstown, Ill.

Mrs. Smith knew the Emanuel

well, as he was a frequent visitor at their home when she was a child. She remembered the trial of her brother, accused of murder, in which Lincoln shattered the testimony of witnesses who said they saw the murder in the light of the moon, by producing an almanac and showing that there was no moon on that night.

It is claimed that sometime after the trial it was discovered the almanac was a year old.

Be correctly copied in an Artist Model by Eitelwyn B. Hoffmann.

GIVE IT A WHIRL



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S'MATTER POP—



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