

BLOND GODDESS

A New Serial by Herbert Jensen

SYNOPSIS: Frank Grange, Bill Langton, Janice Kent and their worst enemy, the high priest of the savage Yucatan jungle tribe that has tried to kill all of them, are trapped in a jungle valley. The high priest is badly injured and helpless. But the rainy season is here, and soon the valley will be filled with water. Frank plans to float in a balsam-wood jacket down an underground river to the sea, and bring aid — if he is not drowned.

Chapter 42 THE START

"WILL LUCK," repeated Langton. "I can be back here and get you out. With a ship I could fly from the coast to here in twenty minutes."

Frank smiled remotely. Turning on his heel he walked back to the shack. His movements thereafter were methodical.

He brought out the balsam-wood jacket, and for the time being, set it aside. He brought out two coconut shells, split and put together again and sealed with pitch.

Within them was a quantity of dried meat, matches, and — he smiled at the apparent incongruity of it — the matted pad of his book of traveler's checks. They could be used at the coast — if ever he got there.

The two coconut shells he slipped into a bit of fern netting he had made for them. This arrangement could be tied to the jacket fast.

He put on the crude device that was to keep him afloat — with luck — for the eight or ten hours he would be swept through the unknown cavern. Although the morning was not warm, beads of perspiration gathered upon his face.

It was with a straining effort of will that he banished thoughts of the accidents that might happen to him in the darkness.

Would the river be like the surface ones? Would there be waterfalls, rapids, or jagged submerged rocks to jar at him as he passed? Might not eddies sweep him into blind pockets where he would thrash his way about until exhaustion claimed him?

He walked down the trail to the stream's edge. Langton, straining at the tying of the last timbers of the raft, looked up startled. Janice, coils of fiber in her hands, approached from upstream. Puzzled, she looked at the crude girth of the balsam-wood jacket.

She said in a curious voice, "Frank, what is that? What do you intend?"

"Nothing doing, Frank — that's my job," said Langton quietly.

Frank's voice as he replied was level and brittle.

"Nothing you can say — or do, for that matter — will alter the plan, Billy. This is just a job I can do better than you can under the circumstances. We'll say no more about it!"

Janice made a gesture of appeal to Langton. Her face was pale beneath its tanned skin. "What is it Billy? What is he going to do?"

"He's going to float down the cavern to the sea and get help. If a pop bottle made it, so can he, he thinks."

The girl put the palm of her hand to her mouth. Her eyes widened. The coils of fiber over her arm slipped to the ground.

"No!" she whispered. "Oh, no... please!"

Frank stepped into the water. His face was set. "Billy," he began, turning to his friend, "before I start, I have a few suggestions —"

JANICE splashed into the water beside him. Her hands caught him by the shoulders and she pulled at him until he faced her.

"You're not going!" she exclaimed breathlessly. "You can't! You shouldn't!" She tugged at him with little desperate jerks.

"Either Billy or I must. Please, Janice. Billy will explain. We haven't much time now, since the rain. I've —"

"You mustn't... either you or Billy. What do you think I am! What do you think I'd be if I let you?"

Her voice broke on a little note of hysteria. "The raft is nearly ready. We'll all go together. Why should one of us take risks for the others? The raft will support us all!"

Gently Frank put up his arms and disengaged the girl's hands from his shoulders. He turned his face toward Langton.

"Bill, it would be a good idea, I think, to make more of these jackets to wear on the raft when the water rises. Provide yourself with a stout rope and a rock for an anchor. And a long rope with a stone to throw to the bank. You might get close enough and high enough to reach the cliff — I'll be back. I'll be all right!"

The girl was sobbing against him. She lifted a tear-wet face. "Frank," she cried with choked voice, "Frank, dear. You said once you love me! As you love me, please don't go! Billy, stop him!"

"You don't know what you're saying," said Frank gently. "Billy will explain why I'm going —"

"I do! I do know what I'm saying. I love you Frank! I love you so much that I'd — Frank, I'd die if anything happened. Take me with you! We'll go together!"

His heart ached. He blinked his eyes to clear away the mistiness. He was pained that her distress had brought her to confess a love he believed she did not — could not — feel.

He pressed her gently from him. He backed into the water. She strove to follow. Step by step she waded deeper, still facing him. Over his shoulder he sent a glance to Langton — a glance both helpless and full of appeal.

Langton hobbled into the water beside them. Gently but with firmness he took her by the arm. Trance-like she stared at Frank who backed away toward midstream. The water swirled above his waist.

Janice's face was dazed; pain showed in her eyes, but with Langton's hand upon her arm she made no move to follow Frank. The water eddied under his crude life-belt. He was floating.

Swiftly the current caught him. He saw the bank and the figures of the man and girl recede. As the darkening shadow of the cavern's mouth fell upon him, he saw Janice turn her head suddenly and bury her face against the shoulder of her companion, as if she could not support the sight of his disappearance. Langton lifted his hand and dropped it. It was like a salute.

BLACKNESS. Impenetrable blackness.

The water, gurgling about him, seemed to Frank like a living in visible substance. He was conscious of a variety of sensations. At one moment he felt that he was suspended immovably in a void, at another it seemed that he was being impelled forward in a vacuum — a swift, silent projectile — and must sooner or later crash into extinction.

He strove to unclench his aching teeth, to allow the nervous rigidity of his muscles to relax. He wondered if he could bear for several hours this vivid expectation of an annihilating impact.

Then suddenly he was curiously aware of a glow about him; it was at the level of his shoulders, below him, surrounding him; but it was not above his head. It came from the water. It was minutes before his reason informed him that these were phosphorescent glimmerings in the water.

By counting he tried to estimate the time he had been within the cavern. Already it seemed hours, but he realized that it was probably much less than that.

He splashed his way to the right or left until his outstretched hand would touch the side wall. He hoped to estimate the speed of his drifting by finger-tip contact with the stone.

But it was slimy and chill, foul with a slippery growth that brought to mind the wormy life that lived within the jungle swamp bogs. Thereafter he tried to keep in mid-stream.

The gurgling grew louder, the phosphorescence brightened. Dimly he could see the tufts and plumes of glowing light as the current splashed and whirled against the dank walls.

Suddenly he struck something that gave. Long, fingerlike tendrils raked his face. He cursed his repugnance and strove to claw away the obstruction.

He was held tightly. The current seethed and swirled about him, tugging at him. Automatically he looked upward. A faint gray slit parallel with the current was above him, so close that it seemed he could reach it.

Instantly he realized his situation. Here was a break in the cavern roof — the beginning of a ceno — and the obstruction that held him was a netting of vines growing over the lip of the opening down to the water.

He thrashed himself loose. The tendrils were gone from about his face, the gray slit above disappeared.

He was beginning to feel chilled. Long weeks in the sun had thinned his blood. The water in this underground stream was touched by the sun only at the intervals that it appeared from the caverns.

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Frank floats through unseen peril, tomorrow.

1934 CHEVROLETS HERE; HANDLED BY NEW ORGANIZATION

The 1934 Chevrolets are here! The announcement of the arrivals of the latest Chevrolet creations, made yesterday by the newly-established Rogue River Chevrolet, Inc., will be welcomed by motorists here, who have been anxiously awaiting these new cars. The line will be handled here by Rogue River Chevrolet, Inc., with headquarters at 32 North Riverside avenue.

E. A. Calkins, formerly of Spokane, Wash., is president of the new company organized in Medford to handle Chevrolet cars and trucks. C. M. Hurd, who comes to this city from LaJolla, Calif., is general manager and secretary, while H. D. Byington, recently a resident in the state of Washington, is treasurer of the Rogue River Chevrolet, Inc. The new firm will feature, in addition to sales and complete Chevrolet service, a full line of genuine Chevrolet parts. New service equipment is being installed and this department will be complete in every detail. The new Chevrolet cars on display now at the Rogue River Chevrolet, Inc., showrooms include standard and sport models and the new truck model.

Smart, streamline bodies feature the 1934 Chevrolet line, while a score of mechanical features make the new cars the finest in the history of Chevrolet. Despite the fact that the 1934 models are heavier and offer more power and speed, more economical performance is assured. Knee action wheels, stronger bodies, and 80 horse-power motor, stabilized front end and "Blue Streak" combustion are a few of Chevrolet features.

The organizing regent, Mrs. S. A. Johnson, was too ill to be present and Mrs. Skillman Van Cott, vice-regent, acted as regent. Other charter members of the Rogue River chapter are Mrs. G. S. Eaton, Mrs. J. P. Cramer, Mrs. Harry Floyd, Mrs. Frank Hart, Mrs. A. O. Grimes, Mrs. E. E. Blanchard, Mrs. John H. Robinson, Mrs. E. R. Moulton, Mrs. Amos Voorhies, Mrs. Catherine Gray and Mrs. Alice Brown.

Presiding the installation ceremony a banquet was held at the Del Rogue

SOCIETY and Clubs

D. A. R. News

By Jane Snedcor.

Four new D. A. R. chapters have been organized in Oregon already this year and a fifth will be organized at the University of Oregon just before the state meeting the last of this month, a record of which, Mrs. John Y. Richardson, state regent, is justly proud. Wednesday evening she visited Grants Pass and installed the Rogue River chapter there, presenting the new chapter with a gavel, made partly of timbers taken from the White House and partly from wood taken from Old Ironsides. Mrs. Joseph T. Peters, state chairman of the historic spots committee, presented the new chapter with an embroidered veil to be used when a historic marker is dedicated.

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hotel. During the evening Mrs. Ida Lee Patterson, Mrs. Joseph T. Peters, Mrs. Harold Chase, Mrs. Wm. H. Saxton, Mrs. Harry B. Moore, Mrs. W. F. Edwards, Miss Ethel May Handy, all of Portland, spoke. Mrs. Gordon McCracken, honorary state regent, Mrs. Ernest C. Reed, regent of Champagne chapter, Mrs. Wm. P. Holt, state chairman, Mrs. M. M. Morris, regent of Crater Lake chapter, Mrs. B. G. Harding, state registrar, and Mrs. H. C. Galey, regent of Mt. Ashland chapter, also gave brief talks.

State Regent Mrs. John Y. Richardson gave the address of the evening and in her own charming manner outlined the work of the national society, and gave suggestions for the future work of the new chapter. The members then made Mrs. Richardson an honorary member of the Rogue River chapter.

Ten members of Mt. Ashland chapter and 13 from Crater Lake chapter attended the installation and welcomed the new chapter into the southern Oregon district.

Foreign Missionary Society to Meet.

The Foreign Missionary society of the First Methodist Episcopal church will observe Founders' Day at the regular monthly meeting on Tuesday afternoon at the home of Mrs. Emma Wheldon on South King street. Mrs. Bliton will conduct the study program.

THE DALLIES, Ore., March 3.—(AP)—The drilling of test holes for foundations and preparation of the abutment on the Oregon side was undertaken today as the first step in construction of another interstate bridge over the Columbia river, linking Oregon and Washington.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

THE MOVIE OVERCOAT

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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SALES TAX FOES TO FILE PETITION

PORTLAND, Ore., March 3.—(AP)—Sponsors of the referendum on the state sales tax said today they had "upwards of 17,000 signatures" on petitions, and that the referendum would be filed with the secretary of state next Wednesday. The law requires that no less than 16,000 signatures must be affixed to the petitions.

Dr. A. A. Slaughter, Ray Gill, master of the State Orange, and Ben Osborne, labor leader, said a number of petitions still are in the hands of circulators over the state.

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

BEER SALES INCREASE DESPITE RUM RETURN

PHILADELPHIA.—(UP)—Despite the return of legal liquor, beer still remains the popular drink in Philadelphia.

Brewers in this area announced recently that sales of beer suffered no decrease after December 3 and that sales now appear to be on the increase. Warm weather, they believe, will bring further increases.

BRITANNIA BEACH, B. C., March 3.—(AP) As her engineer, stricken by a heart attack, dropped dead at the throttle, a mine locomotive ran wild last night and plunged 600 feet down a shaft of the Britannia Mining company, crushing an elevator and killing two other men.