

FLAME TRAIL

BY MARIE DE SERVAUD

SYNOPSIS: Seeing a desperate young man (Ted Gaylor) from setting a forest fire to get a job, Kay Cranon offers him a place at the Lazy Nine; she believes he is decent. She rides home to find her ranch house and barn lost in flames. Josh Hastings, owner of the Flying Six, who wants to buy the Lazy Nine and marry Kay, invites her there, but she distrusts him. However, her young sister, Bab, and peppery Aunt Kate plead with Hastings, and Ted joins Kay's outfit and rides to town with Kay and the insurance papers. Dan Steele, the banker, dashes her hopes of rebuilding—the insurance money has to go toward the mortgage.

Chapter Eight Friend Or Foe?

"Even if this fire hadn't happened, you were sailing very close to the wind," said Dan Steele. "Yes, and what made this fire happen?" Kay flung out darkly. "How far is Josh Hastings ready to go to get my ranch?"

"Kay, I'm amazed at you! Do you realize what you are implying?" Dan Steele gazed sternly at the rebellious brown eyes. "Don't say that again! I don't like to see you receive a friendly offer in such a spirit."

"Friendly offer!" Kay scoffed. "If he's so friendly, why doesn't he lend me the five thousand to rebuild?"

"I suggested that to him, but he feels that for your own good, you should face the fact now that the ranch is too much for you to carry, and give up the idea once and for all. You can't afford to antagonize a good friend, Kay. He's doing you a mighty friendly turn right now, in offering his hospitality to you all."

"Yes, he's got me in a trap, and he knows it," Kay sprang to her feet and faced Dan Steele with reckless abandon. "But I'll get out of it somehow. You mean to be a real friend, I know," she caught her lip to choke back a sob, "but how can you be a banker, when you can't see through that man? Why can he pull the wool over everyone's eyes but mine?"

She turned away and fumbled with the door-knob in a wild desire to escape before she broke down. Pulling the door open, she gave a little cry and recoiled a step. On the threshold, smiling and urbane, stood Josh Hastings.

How long had he been there? How much had he heard? Dimly conscious of Dan Steele's surprised and apologetic glances, Kay pushed past the newcomer and ran out of the bank.

Preventing A Loan

"WELL, well. Kay seems to be in kind of a rush," Josh Hastings gave no sign of having heard any of the conversation, but Dan Steele eyed him uneasily. He had never had much more than a passing acquaintance with Hastings, and as he looked now into his imperturbable eyes that resembled discs of bright blue china in his florid face, he wondered if possibly Kay was right in her estimate of this man. He certainly hoped that none of Kay's wild talk had been overheard.

"Reckon the poor kid took it kind of hard about the insurance," Hastings went on, and Dan Steele felt his vague suspicions dispelled by the genial sympathy of his tone.

"She did, poor child," he answered with extra heartiness to make up for his momentary unfriendly thought toward his visitor. After all, he mustn't allow himself to be influenced by a hysterical girl, which, in spite of her good sense, Kay obviously was at the moment. "She'd counted on having that money to rebuild."

"She didn't take any too kindly to my suggestion, I gather?" Hastings surmised shrewdly.

Dan Steele shot him a quick look and he added, "From the way she streaked past me I reckoned I wasn't rating very high with her right then. Poor kid!" His tolerant laugh again allayed Dan Steele's fears that he might have heard Kay's wild accusation.

"She'll probably come around, when she gets over the shock and had time to think about it," Dan Steele said. "I told her your offer was a fair one and advised her to take it. Seeing how terribly she feels, though," he went on, half ruminating to himself, "I'm almost inclined to stretch a point and lend her a few thousand to rebuild myself."

"You'd be doing her anything but a kindness," Hastings argued earnestly. "It's far better for her to face the situation now, and take this chance to get out. This fire will really prove a blessing in disguise, in the end."

"Something in what you say," Dan Steele answered thoughtfully. "Still, the interest on five thousand isn't any too much to live on. And some day, the ranch will be worth a whole lot more than that."

"Sure it will, if it's properly handled," Hastings agreed. "But with a girl struggling against all

the odds she'll have to meet, it's a hundred to one she'll lose the whole thing without salvaging even a nest egg of five thousand.

"Reckon you're right," Dan Steele sighed. "Raising false hopes isn't any kindness, that's sure." "As to Kay's future, with her hair and eyes she's got no call to worry about that," Hastings gave a sudden laugh. "I'd be willing to insure that myself, if worst came to worst! And she might do worse, at that," he ended jocularly.

"You mean..." Dan Steele looked up in surprise, and gave a knowing whistle. "So that's the way the wind blows!"

"Why not?" Hastings defended. "I'm only 37. That way, she can have the ranch with me thrown in! But I didn't mean to get off on that tack." He frowned at his momentary indiscretion. "Forget I said it, will you? The time isn't ripe for that yet. I just wanted you to realize that I've got Kay's real interest at heart."

"I do realize it," Dan Steele said heartily, "and you've convinced me I'd be making a mistake to lend the money."

"Then you'll keep on persuading her to accept my offer, will you? Though I don't see how she can help herself. There isn't any one else around here right now who has five thousand, that I know of."

"You've said it," the banker agreed. "I'll do my best."

"Say," Hastings paused as he reached the door, "who was that guy that came in with Kay? The fellow who was waiting for her outside?"

"I don't know," Steele answered. "I didn't see him. One of her punchers, I reckon."

Hastings shook his head. "Not unless it's a new one, and I doubt if she's engaging any new punchers right now. He looked like a bird I had a run-in with a few years ago. Only he's grown a lot thinner, if it is the same one." His jaw set in an ugly line.

"Sorry I can't help you out," Dan Steele accompanied him to the door. "But I'll do my best in that other matter. I'll go out to the Lazy Nine in a day or so."

"Stop over and see us when you do," Hastings urged. "It mightn't be a bad idea to drop a word or two in Aunt Kate's ear. She's a sketch!" He gave a sudden guffaw and winked at the banker. "I'm getting her on my side, all right! It was a lucky break having her show up when she did."

"You're being mighty generous and hospitable," Dan Steele said warmly.

Hastings gave a magnanimous wave of his hand. "Glad to do it, he said, "if it is the same one." His jaw set in an ugly line.

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STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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THE LONGEST WILD GOOSE CHASE!
 L59, GERMAN WORLD WAR DIRIGIBLE WHICH TOOK ONLY 2 WEEKS TO BUILD, MADE A NON-STOP, 95-HOUR, FLIGHT OF 4,230 MILES WITHOUT REACHING HER OBJECTIVE!
 EN ROUTE TO EAST AFRICA WITH SUPPLIES FOR BELEAGUERED TROOPS, SHE WAS RECALLED TO BULGARIA BY AN ERRONEOUS WIRELESS MESSAGE, EVIDENTLY "FRAMED" BY ENEMY SECRET SERVICE MEN!
 7-14-37 McLaughlin Syndicate, Inc.

Longest Wild Goose Chase.
 German troops in East Africa were in a bad way toward the end of 1917. Under the command of General von Lettow-Vorbeck, they were cut off from supplies by British forces and, in desperate need of medicine, food, ammunition and other provisions. There seemed no way of reaching them with provisions by land or sea. Only the air offered a road through.

The L59, a dirigible completely constructed in the amazing time of two weeks, took off from Jamboli, Bulgaria, on November 21, 1917, and pointed its nose toward Karthoum, around 2000 miles away. Aboard her were three tons of medicine and a heavy load consisting of the rest of the materials needed by the beleaguered troops. Ahead of the ship lay the most ambitious journey ever attempted by a dirigible up to that time.

For two days the L59 drifted steadily onward, remaining in constant radio communication with the high command in Berlin by means of a relay station. Within but a short distance of her goal, the following message came through:

"Last foothold of Lettow-Vorbeck, Bevela, lost. All Makonde highlands in possession of the British. Part of Lettow's captured. Rest in north in bad position. Return immediately."

Regretfully, the ship was swung around in obedience to the order and arrived back in Jamboli two days later. All non-stop flight records had been shattered. The L59 had covered 4230 miles and had been aloft 95 hours. Yet, so far as its objective was concerned, the trip had been worthless—and strange as it seems, the message that had made it worthless was false! Lettow-Vorbeck had not surrendered. Berlin officials, lacking direct communication with the German East African forces, had received their information from an intercepted radio message sent out by the British. The British had "taken" the account of the German surrender, probably knowing that German operatives were picking up and decoding their messages. It is believed by authorities that British secret service men broadcast the fake surrender story with the hopes of accomplishing exactly what took place—the recall of the L59.

Play Too Realistic
 BUTTE, Mont. (UP)—A group of children here were playing a new punchboard game called "Truth" when one of them punched out the instructions "Call the fire department." He did, and the youngster's parents had to apologize to the department for the weird effects produced by "Truth."

to wait until his tepee was torn down.
 Jane Walking Coyote had charge of the distribution of gifts. Among the squaws participating were Inocence Walking Night, Inea Meat, Louise Lone Bear, Mollie White Bird, Eva Old Crow, Nellie Good Bear, Susi Yellow Man and Rose Shoulder Blade. A Mrs. Snake also attended. The men present included Ted Bird, Ben Buffalo, Ralph White Trail, Dawes Whitebird, George Wolf Feather, Harold Island, Hugh Yellow Man, James Night Walker, Alley Yellowman and George Rearing Bull. Miss Standing Elk wore a blue and red shawl around a white-beaded dress. She led a white horse, one of her gifts.

Galvanized to instant attention,
 Ted keenly watched the two as they sauntered past him and made for a large red and black sign announcing that Mike Kelly welcomed the world to his "Puncher's Paradise."

"Sure, my boss says she's up against it. Reckon she won't be so proud and haughty at the next dance."

The puncher who was announcing this news with such gloating satisfaction, suddenly leaned close to his companion's ear and whispered, a leering smile twisting his mouth.

The next minute they had passed by Ted and were pushing in the swinging doors of the "Puncher's Paradise." There was no mistaking either the expression, or the quality of the guffaw, with which the other puncher received the whispered communication.

With narrowed eyes and his mouth set in a grim line, Ted dismounted, slipped the two horses' reins over a hitching post and strode after the pair.

(Copyright, 1937, Marie de Servaud)

Ted starts a fight—and finishes it—tomorrow.

Ted starts a fight—and finishes it—tomorrow.

Brave and Squaw Wed With Real Indian Rite

WATONGA, Okla. (UP)—Emma Standing Elk, pretty 18-year old Montana Cheyenne princess, became the squaw of Horace Howling Water of Hammon, Okla. in a strictly Indian ceremonial wedding, one that attracted hundreds of Indians from far and near.

White men's customs were tossed aside. There was no license, ring, minister, bridesmaids or best man. The Indian encampment was built on the farm of George Rearing Bull, prominent Cheyenne leader, with a large tepee erected in the middle for the bride. There were other tepees scattered about the premises.

The climax came when the groom's relatives, as is the Indian custom, brought gifts to the "bride's tent" and placed them on the ground. The Indians settled themselves around the bride's tepee and divided the gifts among themselves. There were shawls, coffee pots, tea kettles, blankets, flour, pans, dried beef, white men's cigarettes, dresses and other articles.

The exchange of gifts, from all outward appearances, ended the wedding. There was a formal ceremony. The timid bride hid in the house of Rearing Bull to escape curious on-lookers.

The groom was not permitted to see the bride during or immediately after the ceremony. He had

EQUIPMENT

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



GLUYAS WILLIAMS 7-8 (Copyright, 1937, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

MATTER POP

By C. M. PAYNE



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TAILSPIN TOMMY—A Quick Change!

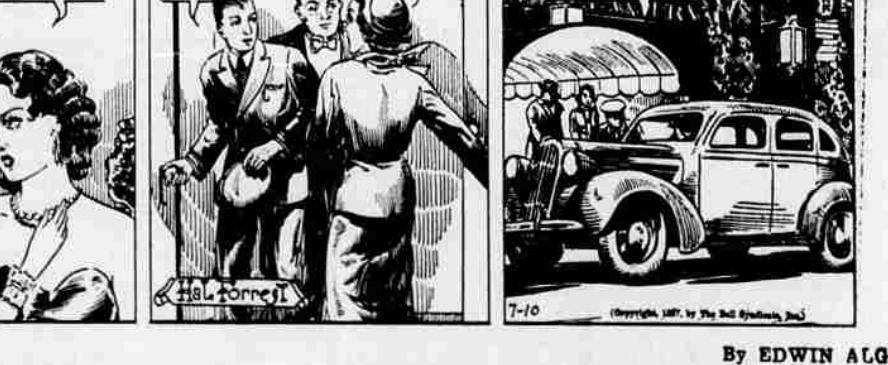
JUSTINA, MANAGED TO DUPE SKEETS INTO BELIEVING THAT SHE AND TOM ARE COUSINS, AND THAT TOMMY HAD JUST PHONED HER, ASKING THAT SHE COME TO HIS AID..



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BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Good News?

HETTY'S GONE OUT TO LUNCH, BEN—SHE TELL YOU ANYTHING? PLENTY!



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THE NEBBS

By SOL HESS



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