

FLAME TRAIL

BY MARIE DE SERVAUD

SIS: Fire destroys Kay's Lazy Nine ranch house and barn. Josh Hastings, owner of the Flying Six, tries to buy her ranch and court Kay. She hates him and is determined to keep her ranch and rebuild. Ted Gaynor, a puncher she impulsively hired, fights Scrap Johnson, a cowhand who molested Kay. They shoot it out, wounding each other. Hastings finds them unconscious and murders Scrap with Ted's gun. Ted crawls to a shack where a girl named Marion nurses him through a feverish week. The gun is found and Sheriff Farley searches for Ted. Kay decides to look around herself at the scene of the shooting.

Chapter 30

Calling The Fire Patrol

THE miles slipped past, and Kay finally came to the wooded slope of the eastern divide. Remembering that this was the region Tom Runyon was patrolling, she speculated idly on the chances of meeting him.

In one way, she hoped she wouldn't. Yet, on the other hand, she might be able to give him her idea of the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of Scrap Johnson, and so make his attitude less antagonistic to Ted. The probabilities were that Tom Runyon hadn't heard anything about it, and it might be well to get the trend of his first impressions.

As she gave Flicker free rein to make the steep climb, she realized that Tom Runyon might be a valuable ally. With his knowledge of woodcraft, he might be able to pick up signs that Zeke Farley had passed by. Kay didn't want him to go with her now, but she was safe enough on that score, because he couldn't leave his patrol duty until relieved. Rapidly calculating his free times, as he had outlined them to her, Kay found that he wouldn't be off duty until tomorrow.

She decided it would be a good plan to get in touch with him now. Cupping her hands about her mouth, she sang out a ringing halloo. There was a mere chance that he might be within earshot, although it was unlikely. If that failed, however, Kay had another means of summoning him. She listened intently, but the echoes of her call died away without any answering shout. After two or three more tries, she waited until she reached the top of the ridge.

Dismounting, she made her way to a nearby outcropping of rock and hastily gathered some twigs and dried bits of brush. She pulled out her waterproof match box that she always carried in her saddle pocket, and lighted the little heap.

A thin column of smoke rose lazily in the clear air, and Kay sat back with an amused smile to see how long it would take the famous fire patrol to discover it. She fed the small blaze from time to time, carefully keeping it on the rock.

Relaxed after her long ride, Kay felt the peace of the solitary place gradually steal over her. She planned what she would say to Tom Runyon.

Half an hour or more passed, before the sound of a horse crashing through the brush of the cliff below her, came to Kay's ears. Sitting up straight, she waited with laughing eyes.

Enlisting Tom's Help

AFTER a few minutes more, she heard him dismount at the base of a shoulder of rock just beneath her. The next second, she was confronted with a grizzled man, a gun, and Tom Runyon's grim face behind it.

Kay chuckled wickedly at the change in his face as he caught sight of her. The hand holding the gun dropped to his side and amazement mingled comically with chagrin and pleasure in his expression.

"You!" he exclaimed. "Hell's bells, I thought I'd run the firebug to earth at last! He gave a pleased guffaw as he slipped his gun back in its holster and strode over to Kay with outstretched hands.

"Say! This is some surprise! That was a smart way to get hold of me, all right! Believe me, I didn't waste any time getting up here, when I saw that smoke!" He gazed with appreciation at Kay's bright color and the mischievous smile with which she greeted him.

"You do it as often as you like!" Tom Runyon boomed, as he scattered the fire and stamped it out.

"How's everything going at the ranch? That fighting puncher-carrier of yours back yet?"

Kay drew a quick breath of relief. He hadn't heard, then!

"You haven't seen anything of Zeke Farley around, have you?" she asked, to make assurance doubly sure.

"Haven't seen a soul since I lit out from the Lazy Nine last week. I don't mind telling you," he bent

to Kay with the elaborate gallantry that always gave her that sense of uneasiness with him. "That I've been counting the hours until I could get relieved and get back there. I never dared hope for this break!" He smiled fatuously, and drew closer. "What would Zeke Farley be doing around here?"

In a few words Kay told him of the finding of Scrap Johnson's body, and the gun she had given Ted Gaynor.

"Of course, the ordinary, everyday mind jumps right away to the conclusion that Ted is the murderer," she ended. "But I knew you had more intelligence than that, so I wanted to see you and get you working on it from another angle." Kay gave him a sidelong look to see if she was putting the matter on too thick, but Tom Runyon's pleased smirk was untroubled by doubt.

"Well now, I'll be glad to do anything I can," he offered heartily. "I can't say I was much impressed with this Gaynor guy that time I saw him up here with you, but if you say he's all right, that's O.K. with me."

"I know he's not a murderer," Kay declared positively, "and naturally I don't want a member of my outfit mixed up in a thing like this. I'm going up now to look over the ground at the central divide, and I thought maybe you'd go up there tomorrow, when you are relieved, and see what you make of it. Zeke Farley is all right, but he's kind of clumsy, and he's got a one-track mind. I thought you might run across some signs that he'd missed."

"Sure I'll do it. I'll come right back to the Lazy Nine and tell you what I find. I wish I could go up there with you now," he ended respectfully.

"I know you couldn't do that today, but if you'll go up tomorrow, I'll be ever so grateful. I don't really expect to find anything myself." She turned and walked back toward Flicker, with Tom Runyon beside her. "But I thought I'd like to see the place."

"You're taking a lot of trouble for this bird!" Tom Runyon shot a keen look. "I wonder if you'd take that much pains if I was accused of murder?"

"I would if you were a member of my outfit," Kay swung into the saddle, and added, with a demurely provocative smile. "And you weren't!"

Waving him a gay farewell, she plunged down the trail that led to the valley separating the two divides, crossed the stream and mounted again to yet dizzier heights.

A Stake Marks The Spot A HALF mile or so from the summit, Kay came on one of the granite monuments that mark the meridional boundary between the two states. She drew in for a moment and studied its unadorned surface broken by the smooth spaces left for cutting the words "Montana" and "Idaho."

An empty feeling tempted her to stop and eat her lunch. But she decided to wait until she reached her objective, and pushed on. Finally she headed Flicker through the pass in the profile of the central divide.

Reining Flicker in, Kay gazed at the still pool of water that lay before her. Its surface was stirred by a gentle breeze which seemed the only movement of the apparently insignificant head waters, and yet it held the sources of two rushing rivers in its mysterious depths.

Kay had been to this spot a number of times, as it had always held a strange fascination for her. It seemed incredible, looking at its serenity in the early afternoon sunlight, that it could have been so lately the scene of violence.

Dismounting, Kay took out her lunch. She studied the general lay of the land as she munched her sandwich.

The grass was trampled by footsteps and hoof prints, which were fairly recent. The sheriff and his posse must have come back this way from Clear Water Basin, she decided. They had evidently followed down the south ridge, after crossing the divide.

A short distance from where she was sitting, by the water's edge, a spot was staked out. Kay realized with a shudder that it must have been there the body was found.

Kay tried to reconstruct in her mind what had happened. Suppose Ted had been wounded? What would he have been likely to do? That strange remark of Josh Hastings about Ted's having drawn himself to the water flashed into her mind. Probably that was what he would have done. But after that, what? His instinct would probably have been to stay as near the water as possible, like any wounded animal.

Kay finished her lunch, and experimentally followed the water course a short way northwest. She soon gave this up after coming to a precipitous drop of granite down which the water trickled in a miniature waterfall.

(Copyright, 1937, Marie de Servaud)

Kay discovers Ted and Marion in the cabin, tomorrow.

4-H PAIR TO WIN STOCK SHOW TRIP

Hopeful of winning the trip to the Pacific International Livestock exposition this fall sponsored by the First National Bank of Portland, 4-H club members in Jackson county are completing special projects and preparing entries for county and 4-H fair competition. Choice of a boy and girl from every county in Oregon will be based on outstanding leadership and achievement in club work.

Success of the 1936 contest arranged by the First National bank through its own branch units and county agents brought winning of the affair's scope to include all of Oregon this year, according to Walter S.

Brown, assistant vice president of the bank in charge of the Pacific International visit. H. C. Seymour, Oregon 4-H club director, has again been appointed general chairman of the judging and awards.

Judges will be the county agent, county superintendent of schools and the First National Bank branch manager. In counties not served by the Portland bank's branch system, other local banks will cooperate in selecting a third member of the judging committee.

Weather Northern California: Fair tonight and Tuesday but fog on the coast; normal temperature, gentle northwest wind off coast.

Oregon: Partly cloudy tonight and Tuesday; unsettled in northwest portion; little change in temperature; gentle northwest wind off coast.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.



THE "R" TRIBE -- II SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE MARKIN FAMILY -- STEWART, TENN. RUBY ROSA ROY RHODA ROBERT RACHEL RAY ROBEY RALPH ROE RUTH

A ROOSTER WAS TRIED, CONVICTED AND HANGED FOR THE MURDER OF 1 MAN -- La Caridad, Honduras -- 1937-

SHINGLES WERE USED AS MONEY THROUGHOUT SANILAC COUNTY, Mich., IN 1838... 1000 SHINGLES WERE EQUIVALENT TO \$1.00

"BRITANNIA" RULER OF THE WAVES!

THE "BRITANNIA" owned by the late GEORGE V. SAILED MORE RACES AND WON MORE TROPHIES THAN ANY OTHER YACHT EVER BUILT -- 231 FIRTS IN 625 RACES!

Ruler of the Waves Out in the choppy English Channel waters off St. Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight, a dull explosion cast a momentary glow through the black, foggy night of July 10, 1936. The sleek hull of the greatest yacht in racing history poised in outline for a moment, then slid beneath the waves—scuttled by order of the late George V. the vessel's owner.

Rooster Execution A spectator at a cock fight at the town of La Caridad, Honduras, in 1937.

Shingle Money With most of its currency made almost worthless by the "wild cat" banking panic of 1837, the county of Sanilac, Michigan, adopted shingles as its chief means of exchange. Practically all business was conducted with the "shingle money," a thousand shingles being equivalent to one dollar.

Brand Name Urged For Oregon Dairy Products PORTLAND, Aug. 8.—(AP)—W. L. Goslin, secretary to Governor arting, urged the members of the Dairy Co-operative association at its picnic here yesterday to coin a suitable brand name for use in advertising Oregon milk and by-products.

Redlands Will Speak At Writers Conclave PORTLAND, Aug. 9.—(AP)—L. E. Nelson, Redlands, Calif., poet, will be the chief speaker of the National League of Western Writers, of which he is president, at its convention to be held here starting next Sunday.

Redlands Will Speak At Writers Conclave Use Mail Tribune want ads.

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THE WORLD AT ITS WORST By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



IN AN ILL-ADVISED ATTEMPT TO BE FUNNY YOU HAVE REMARKED JOKINGLY TO YOUR SMALL NEPHEW THAT CLOUDS ARE COMING UP SO PERHAPS THE PICNIC HAD BETTER BE CALLED OFF

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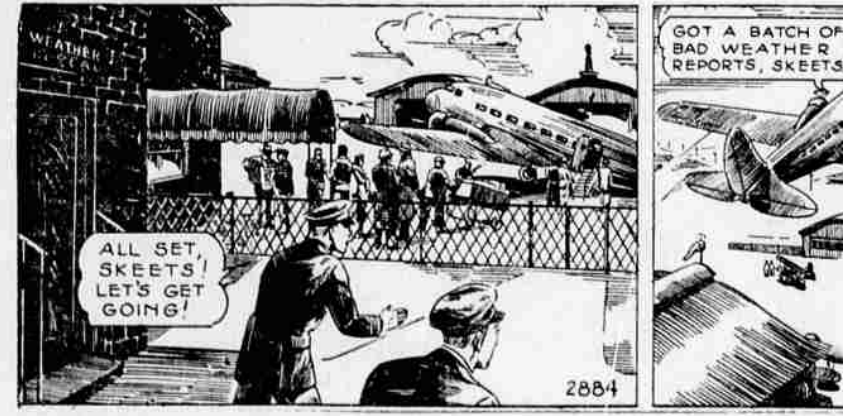
S MATTER POF K BEATING TIME TO RADIO



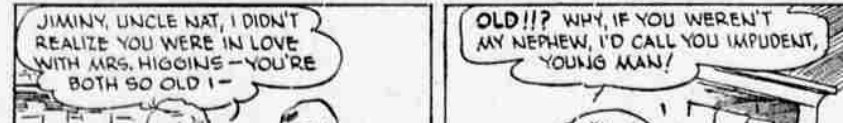
WHY ARE YOU PUNISHING THAT CHILD ITS SELF DEFENSE, HONEST? GIMMICK YOUR WIFE!

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—Dirty Weather Ahead!



ALL SET, SKEETS! LET'S GET GOING! GOT A BATCH OF BAD WEATHER REPORTS, SKEETS!



LIKE MY GRANDMOTHER, YOU DID ALL YOU NOTICED WAS THAT VEILED LADY!



I'D LIKE TO SEE 'ER WITHOUT TH' VEIL, TOM!



KEEP YOUR MIND ON YOUR WORK, HERE COMES OUR DIRTY WEATHER.

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—It's Love!



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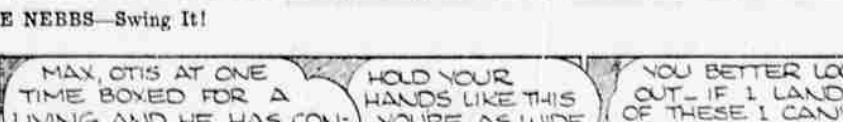
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THE NEBBS—Swing It!



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