

FLAME TRAIL

BY MARIE DE SERVAUD

SYNOPSIS: Kay Crandon of the Lazy Nine impulsively hires Ted Gaylor, a jobless puncher. He helps her fight Josh Hastings, a "friendly" neighbor who wants Kay and her ranch. Ted and Scrap Johnson, a couchman who molests Kay, shoot it out, wounding each other. Hastings sneaks up and kills Scrap with Ted's gun. Ted is arrested and tried for murder, but Kay stops the trial by technical protest. Ted escapes and rescues Kay from a cellar where Hastings had locked her. Back at her ranch, she stays hidden, waiting to turn up at Ted's second trial when he hopes to prove Hastings' villainy.

Chapter 47

Kay And Marion Meet

THEY took Tom Runyon away from the trial to go down and investigate the fire," said Shorty. "They did!" Kay suddenly remembered Tom Runyon's excited conference with the two men she had seen come up to him, when she had been running away from him and Josh Hastings.

"Sure," Shorty leaned forward confidentially. "Say—it looks like that Runyon bird's almost as good as he says he is!" He paused, and fixed Kay with a speculative eye. "You've sure got me guessing, Kay! Here I thought you were kind of taken with this Gaylor guy. Then when it came out at the trial that you'd given away his hiding place to Tom Runyon, I thought Runyon was the lucky fellow! Now, hang it all, if you don't seem a heap more stirred up about what's happened to Gaylor than to Runyon. Women sure are the best!"

Shorty finished his tirade without noticing that Kay's eyes were fixed on him in a sort of trance. "What was that you said, Shorty?" she demanded.

"Why, I was saying that I thought you liked—"

"No," Kay interrupted. "I mean about the trial—about me giving away Ted Gaylor's hiding place to Tom Runyon?"

"Say, that's no news to you, is it?" Shorty asked. "How else could Runyon have reported it to Zeke Farley?"

A great roaring in Kay's ears almost drowned out Shorty's voice. Suddenly the answer to Ted's puzzling behavior flashed before her. How else could he have acted, if he thought she had been the one to betray his hiding place to Zeke Farley?"

"But if Tom Runyon testified that," she protested wildly, "surely he told them that I was delicious and didn't know what I was saying! To my knowledge I certainly never told anyone that I had seen Ted in the shack up here!"

Shorty let out a low whistle. "So that accounts for it!" He wrinkled his forehead. "None. Nothing was said about your being out of your head. I got the whole thing from a fellow who was there."

With a moan, Kay buried her face in her hands. For the moment, she hated Tom Runyon even more than she did Josh Hastings. She could kill him for having given that false impression to Ted!

"Shorty!" Kay bit her lips in an effort to keep her voice steady, and her eyes fixed on Shorty's sympathetic ones. "I—I kind of think I'd like to be alone. Thanks for the supper."

"That's O. K.," Shorty shifted uneasily from one foot to the other. He made one or two false starts in an effort to say something, then abruptly took his leave.

Hunting For Ted

THE gray light of dawn was stealing over the mesa when Kay let herself out the cabin door and ran down to the corral.

Whistling softly for Flicker, she held his head close for a moment, to suppress his joyous whinny. Then she saddled him and headed for the mesa, giving a wide circle to the bunk house.

After a sleepless night, Kay had arrived at one inescapable conclusion. Whatever the consequences, she couldn't let Ted get away, carrying with him the idea that she had betrayed him.

The only clue she had as to where she might find him was his statement that he was going to see if Marion Howell needed him.

In spite of her misery, Kay's heart lightened as it never had before at the thought of Marion Howell. In this new light on Ted's behavior, she saw the whole situation like a clear pattern, and her intuitive certainty that Ted really did love her reasserted itself.

During the interminable night she had fitted all the puzzling pieces of the pattern together. Ted's gruffness and bitterness, after the first moment of abandon when he had kissed her; his remarks, so meaningless before, that he couldn't trust her to know he had gone to Marion; the certainty that Ted's feeling for Marion was that of a grateful friend.

"How like him," Kay thought, "to risk his own safety for friendship as well as for love!"

A tender smile lighted her face for a moment. She gave Flicker

free rein, and as they raced over the mesa, her mind flew from one memory of Ted to another, always coming back to the dread question: would she find him? Or would she be too late, and have to resign herself forever to be branded in his mind as a traitor?

Goaded by this thought, Kay urged Flicker to his topmost speed. By the time the sun was over the horizon, she was once more ascending the fatally familiar trail.

Up and up she went, then plunged down between the two divides, only to ascend still higher. As she gained the upper reaches, she was aware of a faint, acrid smell.

Kay's eyes scanned the sky to the south, and as a bend in the trail gave her momentarily an unobstructed view, she detected a haze lying low over the far distant wooded ridge.

Certain now that she had smelled smoke, Kay soothed Flicker's restiveness and pushed resolutely on. As Shorty had said, the fire was too far away to worry about, and with all the forces of the fire fighters against it, it was surely under control by now.

As Kay passed the stone monument, marking the old boundary between the states, she felt a glow of satisfaction at the memory of her success in using that fact.

At last the pass was behind her and, with beating heart, she reached the headwaters of the Blitter Root and Clear Water rivers, and made for the back on the south ridge. Leaving Flicker, Kay pushed her way through the underbrush, and came out finally on the clearing.

Tears And Comfort

THE shack loomed at the end of the open space, as deserted looking as ever. Kay ran to the front door, calling first Ted, then Marion Howell.

As she pushed open the outer door, the inner one was pulled back and Marion confronted her. "What do you want?"

"For a moment, Kay was speechless at the change that had taken place in Marion. Her delicate beauty had given way under the strain, and instead of the attractive girl Kay had glimpsed before, she faced a totally different person. Her whole aspect was haggard, and her forehead lined with desperate anxiety.

Kay put an impulsive, pleading hand on her arm. "Please let me come in! I'm Kay Crandon, and I must see you! Is Ted Gaylor here?"

A hard look of dislike flashed over Marion's face. "Why?" she demanded. "So you can give him up again?"

"I didn't!" Kay's agonized denial had a ring of truth that made Marion pause a moment, as she tried to free herself from Kay's detaining hand.

"You must believe me!" Kay went on, holding Marion's arm all the more firmly. "I did see Ted here. But wild horses wouldn't have dragged it from me. I was racing home and was thrown. Tom Runyon found me and carried me back. I was delicious then, and for several days afterward. Whatever I may have said, it is not fair to lay it up against me!"

For a long moment Marion gazed at her. Kay's eyes met hers without faltering, a desperate appeal in their yellow brown depths, that gradually gave way to a mixture of pride and grief.

"You love him, too?" Without knowing what she was saying, Kay burst forth with this exclamation, a confession of her inner fear.

"You poor dear!" Marion's hard look faded, and she drew Kay into a chair. "Of course I don't! I'm engaged myself, so you need have no concern over my feeling for Ted. Nor of his feeling for you. That time you saw us, he was telling me how much he loved you!"

In her sudden revulsion of feeling Kay found herself weeping her heart out on Marion's shoulder, while Marion gently led her to the bunk and sat down beside her, murmuring soothing words, until her paroxysm should have passed.

"Where is he?" Kay sobbed at last, when her emotion allowed her thoughts to become more coherent and articulate. "I can't let him go away, believing that of me!"

Marion made a despairing, helpless gesture. "God knows where he is! He turned up last night when I was on the point of going mad! I don't know what would have happened if he hadn't come."

She shuddered, and her eyes darkened with the tragic anxiety that her sympathy for Kay had for the moment blotted out. "He's gone after my father."

"Your father?" Kay echoed in surprise. "Why, where is your father?"

"I'm going to tell you the whole story," Marion declared impulsively. "I know I can trust you, and I just have to tell someone. I'm nearly crazy!"

"Tell me!" It was Kay's turn to assume the role of comforter.

(Copyright, 1937, Marie de Servaud)

Tomorrow, Ted witnesses the end of Marion's demented father.

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 CONSCIENCE FUND!

OVER \$630,000 HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THE U. S. TREASURY IN UNSOLICITED CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CONSCIENCE STRICKEN PERSONS... DEPOSITS HAVE RANGED FROM A 2-CENT STAMP TO A LUMP SUM OF \$30,000...



Conscience Fund

Striking is the contrast in citizenship ethics displayed by the Americans recently exposed for their tax dodging methods as compared to the spirit shown by "Conscience Fund" contributors. Following is a letter received a while ago by officials of the U. S. Treasury:

"Sir: Kindly credit this amount of \$440.00 to my account. This will close up the amount of money that I received from the Government in 1910-1921 for compensation which I was applying for same. This money was not stolen but a matter of principle, and I am very thankful. This promise I made if I gain my health I will return same.

"This is a sacrifice which I fulfilled, and I am the father of five children. This matter learned me a great lesson in the line of character and good Americanism. Hoping I did not annoy you people in this transaction, I wish to thank you."

Up to May 31, 1937, a total of \$630,302.29 had been received by the U. S. Treasury Department for the "Conscience Fund." All money so received is added to the treasury's general fund.

A lump sum of \$30,000 received a while back is the largest single amount contributed. One of the smallest contributions was sent with the following letter:

"Dear President:

"I am in a dreadful state of mind and I thought I would write and tell you all. About two years ago I used two postage stamps that had been used before on letters, perhaps more than two stamps, but I can only remember doing it twice. I did not realize what I had done until lately. My mind is completely turned on the subject and I think of it night and day. Now dear President, will you please forgive me and I promise never to do it again. Enclosed find cost of three stamps."

From One of Your Subjects.

Monday: What World War Navy Sank More of Its Own Battleships Than Were Sunk by the Enemy?"

ing that the Portland Central Labor council was within its rights in expelling the union.

On September 8 the court will hear the appeal of Orey G. Coffey, former Salem police officer, convicted of accepting a bribe of \$10 a month to permit a Salem resident to operate a slot machine.

The money went to the producers through banks, life insurance companies, merchants, tax bodies and other creditors in all sections of the state. The funds refinanced old indebtedness. Voluntary scale-downs in connection with cash settlements reduced obligations by \$3,100,000.

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

Loans To Farmers Total \$23,526,198

PORTLAND, Aug. 28.—(AP)—The District Land bank at Spokane has supplied Oregon farmers with \$23,526,198 in loans during the last four years, a survey showed today.

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TAILSPIN TOMMY—What Does Tommy Mean?



THE NEBBS—The Unexpected Happened



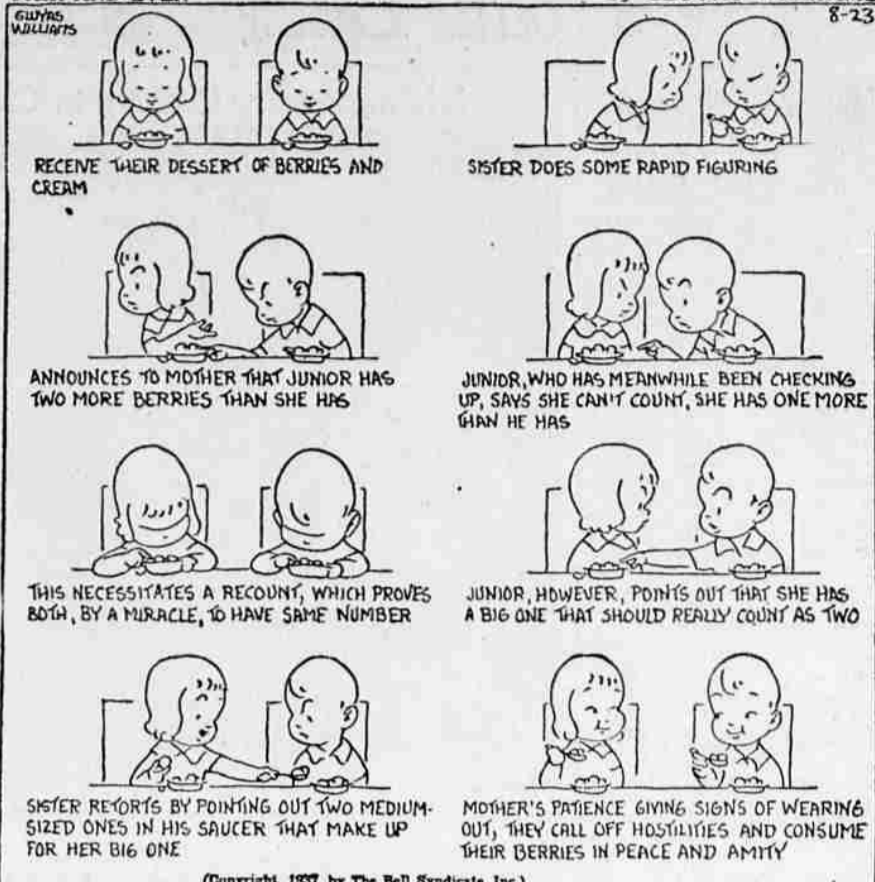
BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Public Sympathy



SUPREME COURT OPENS FALL TERM ON SEPT. 7

SALEM, Aug. 28.—(AP)—The state supreme court will open its fall term September 7, hearing the appeal of the Weighers, Washouettes and Cereal Works union an International Longshoremen's affiliate, from a Multnomah circuit court order hold-

FAIR AND EVEN

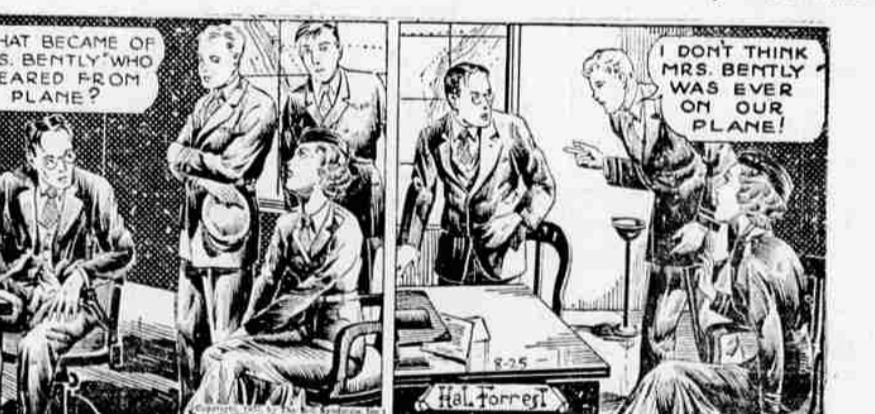


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By HAL FORREST

By EDWIN ALGER



THE NEBBS—The Unexpected Happened



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M'COLLOCH READY BY OCTOBER FIRST

PORTLAND, Ore., Aug. 28.—(AP)—Claude McColloch, recently appointed federal district judge to succeed the late Judge John McNary, arrived here today from Washington, where he conferred with President Roosevelt.

McColloch said it would require about three or four weeks for him to dispose of his law practice at Klamath Falls but that he expected to "be in harness" by the first of October.

McColloch had hoped to confer with Federal Judge James Alger Fee but learned he was at Fort Lewis for his vacation. McColloch will leave for Klamath Falls tonight.

Harry Bovin, speaker of the house

Trailer-Wed Pair Finish Honeymoon

ELOIN, Ill., Aug. 28.—(UP)—Gusmond Johansen and the bride he wed in an automobile trailer moved into a new home today after a 9,000-mile honeymoon. Johansen and his former bride, Erna Schutte, were married in Chicago last December. The minister stood in the trailer bathtub to officiate and the bride and groom took their vows between the stove and the refrigerator.

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