

GHOST PLANE

By ARTHUR STRINGER W.N.U. SERVICE

THE STORY SO FAR: Because he and his partner, Cruger, need the money to keep Norland Airways in business, Alan Slade has agreed to fly a supposed scientist named Frayne to the Anawotio country in search of the breeding ground of the trumpeter swan. Slade's suspicions about Frayne are aroused when he watches the swan-hunter and his partner, Karnell, put their supplies on the plane. They appear to be carrying prospectors' equipment. While in town on an errand Alan goes with Lynn Morlock, daughter of the local doctor, to give first aid treatment to a flyer hurt in a fight. The flyer is Slim Tumstead, who has already lost his license for drinking and who, to Slade's displeasure, appears to know all about Frayne's expedition and about the Lockheed Cruger bought with the money Frayne paid them. During that night the Lockheed is stolen by a masked man who heads north in the plane. Slade, en route to the Anawotio with Frayne and Karnell, runs out of gas and is forced to land near the camp of his prospector friends, Zeke and Minty, whose one interest is gold. Frayne shows no interest in either gold or the black egg-shaped object Minty has just told him is pitchblende.

Now continue with the story.

CHAPTER VII

"It was for this, I take it, that you came into such empty country," Frayne quietly suggested.

Minty laughed. "Not on your life, stranger. It's only the good old yellow metal I ever git me and Zeke steamed up to the bolilin' point."

"Of course," said the other. He inspected his nails and snapped shut his knife blade. "But there is more of what you call pitchblende in this territory?"

"Oodles of it," chimed in the quavery-voiced Zeke. "The dang stuff bothers us in our strippin'."

"From what you say," observed Frayne, "I assume it to be some sort of mineral. But I remain unenlightened as to either its use or its value."

Minty, however, was not to be sidetracked.

"If you'd been around Great Bear for a spell," that old sourdough was saying as he reached for the egg of pitchblende, "you'd sure have seen 'em scramble for this stuff like a she-bear scramble for a honey tree. Fein' down through five hundred feet o' rock for it! And then totin' it three thousand miles to that Port Hope plant where it takes sixty tons o' chemicals to git one gram o' what they want out of it!"

The ornithologist's reaction to that statement seemed perfunctory. He merely shifted back a little from the heat of the stove.

"For this, stranger," pursued the indignant Zeke, "is what they git radium from. And radium's worth just thirty-five thousand smackers a gram."

"But such things, my friends, stand remote from the field of my immediate interest," maintained the quiet-voiced ornithologist.

"Same here," concurred Minty, "seein' it takes million-dollar machinery to squeeze a pinprick o' color out of a trainload of ore. And the surface pitchblende in this district, that assay-office sharp reported, ain't as rich in radium as the deep-lyin' Great Bear stuff. What this seems 't have, accordin' to assay, is an overdose o' helium."

"I know what helium is, of course," Frayne admitted with an accruing note of irritation. "But I am not interested in such things."

Slade felt the need of putting in an oar.

"You get more than helium, Minty," he announced, "and more than radium. You get uranium. And, in pitchblende like that, uranium is just about a million times more abundant than radium."

"And what good's uranium?" demanded Minty.

"It's the key," said Slade, "that's going to unlock the new Age of Power."

Frayne's gaze wandered about the cabin.

"You are no longer young," he observed. "Life owes you a little comfort."

"We'll git it, later on," conceded Minty. "And when me and this leather-gulleted old skillet pal o' mine strike Outside you'll sure see us hittin' the high spots."

"That is a possibility which might be easily achieved," observed their quiet-voiced visitor.

"I don't git you, stranger," said Zeke.

"Supposing," pursued Frayne, "somebody should buy you out, pay you well for what claim you have here and take over this camp you have spent so much time and labor in making comfortable?"

Slade smiled a little at the manner in which the newcomer once more seemed intent on buying up a right-of-way. But the pilot sat silent, conscious of the covert glance that passed between the two old sourdoughs.

"Who'd be doin' that?" demanded Minty.

Frayne's abstracted smile seemed fortified with some unparaded power.

"I might," he said after a moment of silence.

Slade was not surprised by the prompt hardening of the two weathered old faces. He knew, even before it came, what the answer would be.

"We're sot here," said Zeke, "and we're a-goin' to stick it out to the end."



She lingered on the rock point and looked up at the aerial migration.

Slade got up from his chair and crossed to the door.

"I'll have a look at my ship," he explained, "before we turn in for the night. And if you two old bushwhackers will rustle us an early breakfast we'll push off at sunup."

But Slade, as he made his way down to the lake front, was troubled by some small voice of uncertainty that refused to articulate itself.

Then his thoughts went to other things. For on the shore point beside the moored plane he saw the huge figure of Karnell, with the hooded pigeon cage beside him.

"Feeding them, I suppose?" Slade questioned as he bent lower.

At the same time that he saw the cage was empty he heard the guttural voice beside him.

"They got away," mumbled Karnell. "They slipped off, before I could stop them."

Slade studied him for a moment. "That's just too bad," he observed. "In spite of the quick and hostile glance of the other man he was able to laugh a little."

Yet that sense of being enmeshed in movements that were unpredictable returned to him the next morning when, a brief half-hour after his take-off, his passenger barked out an unexpected command to land.

With one hand Frayne held his binoculars poised; with the other he pointed to a lake that lay off to the left, framed in its encircling sprawl of spruce ridges.

"That," he announced, "is where we shall land."

"Why there?" asked Slade.

"I think," said the ornithologist, "I spotted a trumpeter swan."

Slade's one-sided smile seemed an announcement of his doubts as to the truth of that claim. But he remembered Cruger's warning about pilots not being supposed to wonder.

"Okay," said Slade as he turned into the wind and dropped lower. "But you're still a long jump from the Anawotio."

He could hear the mumble of foreign voices as his ship lost headway and drifted slowly in to the shoreline.

He saw the massive-shouldered Karnell wade ashore with an ax in his hand. Two minutes later he could hear the forest stillness ring with the familiar music of an ax blade against tough northern spruce trunks. The sullen giant seemed to know just what was expected of him. In less than half an hour he had his spruce bores trimmed and lashed together in a neatly made landing platform. His movements, Slade observed, were made with the automatic precision one might expect from a military engineer.

Slade sat on a sun-bleached rock and lit a cigarette. He sat there with an achieved air of remoteness, watching the swan-hunter as he made ready to land his equipment. Then the bush pilot's casual gaze wandered out to the empty ridges that ended in an equally empty skyline.

"A nice place to summer," he observed.

Frayne turned and faced him. And when Slade caught the unexpected flash of fire that came from behind the bifocal glasses he realized how some ghostly armistice between him and his passenger had ended. He didn't like the man, and he never would.

"When you are interested in more than engines," that passenger was proclaiming, "you will perhaps learn that uncomfortable localities quite often have undisclosed advantages."

Slade didn't quite know what that proclamation meant. But his smile was condoning as he tossed his cigarette end into the lake and rose to his feet.

"I guess you're right, Doctor," he said with a casualness that carried a note of insolence. "And here's where I pass out of the picture. But before I leave you to your swans' eggs I'd like to tip you off to just one thing. My interest sometimes extends beyond engines."

And this time, apparently, it was the man of science leaning out from the cabin hatch who didn't quite know what the speaker meant.

Lynn could feel spring in the air. Against a softening sky she could

see eiders and snow geese, in vees, heading for their breeding tarns between the slowly greening muskegs. Every swale and slough was noisy with mating whistlers and waveys and loons. But that clamorous love-making failed to lighten her heart. Even the sight of her father, mooring his plane between two saddle-backs in Iviuk Inlet, failed to take the cloud from her brooding hazel eyes.

"What's on your mind?" questioned the Flying Padre as he joined her on the rock point.

"I'm worried about Alan," she admitted. "He haven't had word about him getting out of that Anawotio country."

"That padre wrangled can take care of himself," he proclaimed with slightly forced blitheness. "I've been shooting out messages from Fort Norman to the Pelly, telling him what supplies to fly in as soon as he's free."

"Then why doesn't he come?" "He's got his work to do, the same as the rest of us," was the Padre's reply to that. "And here's where we get busy. I've got to change the dressing on Ukeresak's leg wound and pull a couple of teeth for his plumour of the igloos."

Lynn watched her father as he strode up to their rough-boarded surgery.

But instead of following him she lingered on the rock point and looked up at the aerial migration above her.

Those relentless wings made her think of the equally relentless advance of the white man, the steady and stubborn northward trek of pioneers in their search for earth's bright-colored metals. It was affecting more than the wild life of the country. It seemed to disrupt both the modes and the mores of the natives, breaking up their tribal traditions and leaving them more and more dependent on the palefaces who took their hunting grounds away from them. Both the Eskimo and the Indian, her work along those scattered littoral villages had taught her, were a perishing people.

Yet she liked these people. They so stubbornly claimed their human right to survive; they stood so valorous in their fight against hunger and cold. They were, she felt, the most courageous people she had ever known. They demanded so little of life that a plug of trade tobacco could make them happy for a week, a mouth-organ could turn a funeral into a festa, a bright-colored handkerchief could bring raptures to a sloe-eyed face under its well-oiled locks.

Lynn recalled the expression of the girl Kogaluk, after bringing her aged father, whose hunting days had been ended by blindness, to the Flying Padre. Old Umanak had undoubtedly lost his vision. But a quick examination by the man of medicine had shown that the blindness was due to cataracts which an operation might remove. The Eskimo girl still had faith in the father whom she had to lead about by the hand, like a child.

"Him good hunter," she had said in her hesitating pidgin-English. "Him always good hunter until two winters ago."

"What would you say," questioned Dr. Morlock, "if I flew him out to Fort Smith and brought him back as good a hunter as ever?"

"I say you work good magic," said the daughter of the wilderness. But difficulties had interposed. Umanak had no wish to enter the devil-bird of the white doctor and be flown away from his people. Rather than be taken away from the friendly fish smell and the husky howls of his home he would prefer remaining with darkened eyes.

"I could patch the old boy up here," the Padre had explained, "if we only had the equipment."

"Then why not get it?" "How?"

"Perhaps Alan could fly in with it," Lynn had suggested, smiling a little before her father's smile of comprehension.

"So it's Alan you want?" "I want to see Umanak cured," she had contended. "And I'd stay on, of course, to look after him."

"Then we'll take a chance," the Flying Padre had agreed.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Star Dust

STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO
By VIRGINIA VALE
Released by Western Newspaper Union.

EIGHTY army nurses whose names ought to go down in history because of the courage with which they did their work during the siege of Bataan will receive their due partially, at least, in a picture which Paramount has scheduled for production in the autumn. Called "Hands of Mercy," it will be produced and directed by Mark Sandrich, who'll take a hand also in writing the scenario. Another timely picture will be Metro's "Next of Kin," in which Joan Crawford will appear as a girl without social background, who marries a naval officer, and finds herself confronted with navy snobbery. Joan will come out on top of course!

Bette Davis refuses to call her vegetable garden at her Sugar Hill, N. H., home a "victory garden." Like a lot of other people, she discovered to her sorrow that vegetables won't grow just because you plant them. She says she'll be lucky if she gets one New England boiled dinner out of the whole crop.

Charles Boyer couldn't have Greta Garbo for that murder mystery, "Flesh and Fantasy," of which he



CHARLES BOYER

is both co-star and co-director. But Universal did very well by him by getting Barbara Stanwyck to play opposite him in the second sequence.

Rosalind Russell thinks she knows what the boys in camp expect of picture stars, so she decided to take all the glamour clothes that she could pack into seven trunks when starting on the tour of army camps scheduled to follow completion of "My Sister Eileen." Though on a 16-hour-a-day schedule, she'll have clothes enough to change ten times a day. "I'll wear everything but a bathing suit," she announced. And she looks so fetching in a bathing suit!

Betty Brewer, the Paramount starlet, isn't wasting any time between pictures. The 15-year-old actress, who plays a featured role in "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," is studying singing and taking piano lessons—takes piano from Susanna Lynn and singing from Susanna Foster, also budding stars.

Paulette Goddard's new priority gown was made from just 1 1/2 yards of fabric. Designed by the famous Valentina, it's a dinner dress of black jersey, made with a backless top and a short, peg-top skirt. You'll see her wearing it in "The Forest Rangers."

Warner Baxter, who hasn't appeared on the screen since early last year, when he appeared in "Adam Had Four Sons," for Columbia, has been signed by the same studio to make two pictures a year. They'll be based on the radio program, "Crime Doctor," one of our most popular air shows.

Can't keep "Mrs. Miniver" out of the news. With the announcement that it was being held at the Radio City Music Hall for the ninth week—no other film has been held there for more than six—comes the news that it had been seen in that theater by 1,142,107 persons.

A 400-foot long, 200-foot wide duplicate of the original runway of the Wake Island airfield was constructed in ten days at Salton Sea, Calif., for Paramount's "Wake Island"—a picture that promises to be one of the most stirring of all this year's crop of war films.

ODDS AND ENDS—Gary Cooper's rapidly catching up to Don Ameche as a portrayal of famous men on the screen. . . . Dennis Morgan has been taking daily treatments for the "sand blindness" he suffered while on location near Gallup, N. M., for "The Desert Song" . . . Ginger Rogers taps to only the tune of her own humming in "The Major and the Minor" . . . "Little Miss Marketer," the film which made Shirley Temple famous eight years ago, may be filmed again by Paramount, with Baby Sandy in the leading role. . . . Dorothy Comingsore, has refused all assignments since she made "Citizen Kane."

Fabric-Conserving Fashions Possess a New Kind of Style

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



LET no one think that specifications for conserving materials in wartime have put restrictions on attractiveness. On the contrary, the new order of things is ushering in a fashion cycle fraught with a newness in chic and charm that is excitingly interesting. Instead of finding them disappointing, you'll find that the new styles have exactly what every woman is looking for—neat silhouette and fine basic design, together with innumerable little niceties of detail which are flattering and lovely and expressive of all that is best in costume technique.

The manipulation of fabric so as to use less yardage simply fascinates with its artfulness and resourcefulness. Materials favored for the new "priority fashions" are those which lend themselves best to a delightfully feminine, draped and modeled styling which achieves the utmost in figure flattery. For this purpose rayon crepes are proving ideal for the entire dress or used in combination with satin, faille or velvet.

The working of two fabrics together is fashion news of outstanding importance for fall. In fact, the new black-on-black vogue which works black crepe or jersey with satin or faille or touches of black velvet is the fashion high spot of the immediate moment.

Another new trend which reacts to the good in response to the demand for curtailment in the use of metal fastenings is the amazingly clever way in which dresses and coats and blouses are made to close with self-fabric ties, or wraparound devices or with plastic buttons which are as ornamental as they are useful.

New to fashion is the wrap-around frock with surplice back closing. It's a style you'll adore, for it's slenderizing to the 'nth degree. See it pictured to the right in the accompanying illustration interpreted in smart black rayon sheer, a material which is ideal for summer-interval fall wear. Delicate touches of

fine black rayon carry at the neck, sleeves and hemline over the black-on-black idea now so important. A self-fabric sash ties softly at the buttoned back closing. Worn over a correctly fitted foundation garment, this suavely fitted frock has unusual grace and distinction.

Dressmaker tailoring distinguishes the charming two-piece suit frock to the left in the above illustration. Designed for now and later in handsome black rayon faille, this model features the slim long-torsoed silhouette accented by folds of the fabric at chest and hips of the fitted jacket top. The new "priority" suits with close, fitted jackets and slim skirts must be worn over carefully fitted under garments to achieve the smoothly streamlined effect so essential this season.

For the very chic afternoon dress centered in the group sheer rayon crepe in deep, rich black is draped and molded along slim figure-revealing lines. A self-fabric spaghetti trim makes soft little bows at the flattering sweetheart neck and knots casually at the waistline above the skirt draping, which is concentrated at the front.

Tremendous play is being made on the working of black satin with dull-surfaced rayon crepe. Yokes, insets and bandings of the satin, as well as big, soft bows, give pleasing variation to fall frocks of contrasting fabric.

Color contrast is another featured theme. Designers are highlighting striking effects in no uncertain terms, using sleeves of one color and bodice top of another with the two colors appearing in the skirt. Coat dresses have panels of contrasting color to match the color of the plastic buttons.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Black Satin



Black satin suits are big news for fall. Carefully sleek for autumn wear is this stunning suit done in fashion's newest fabric favorite—satin! The little jacket of this New York creation features the new shorter length. It flares slightly, as does also the discretely gored skirt. The highly decorative plastic buttons are in aqua coloring. Together with an aqua colored corsage, they add the prettily feminine touch. The stores are showing satin suits of this type in dark, rich jewel colors, too, but black is the favorite.

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'Black' Is Still an Important Word

At all fashionable gatherings it becomes increasingly apparent that black is staging a triumphant comeback into the fashion picture. The smartness and importance of black is strikingly evidenced in the stunning new black satin gowns featured in a prologue to the fall season.

The new black frocks that make slim silhouettes their theme are appearing everywhere in fashionable gatherings. They look smartest adorned with a single, important piece of jewelry and with giddily colorful long gloves and an enchanting hat to supply the prettily feminine touch.

Then there are the entrancingly "pretty-pretty" black sheers, many of which take on endearing pink or pale blue accents. Black shantung and black linen suits are declared by many to be the smartest town-wear costume of the season. For dressy afternoon wear there's nothing in the way of a suit which outclasses those styled of black bengaline. Women are also expressing a desire for simple daytime frocks made of black rayon jersey.

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HOUSEHOLD TIPS

All wild meat should be soaked clean of blood. An onion roasted with the meat improves the flavor.

Don't twist, bend or tie the so-called cord attached to your electric iron. It is not a cord, but two bundles of wires.

Put a small piece of hard soap in the sewing basket to rub over yarn or thread so it can be put through the eye of a needle with less difficulty.

Peroxide will remove perfume stains from linen bureau scarf. Keep a blotting pad under scarf to protect dressing table or bureau top when perfume is spilled on it.

Knitted garments should be laid flat to dry, shaped to the outline drawn before the garment was washed.

Three sprigs of parsley, one bay leaf, six whole cloves and a bit of thyme tied loosely together in a cheesecloth make an aromatic spice bag for cooking with soups and stews.

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