



GHOST PLANE

By ARTHUR STRINGER

W.N.U. SERVICE

CHAPTER I

"Lindy's in!"

Cruger, at his desk, heard that cry from a ground-worker passing the open window. He smiled as he looked up from his time sheet. There was always a note of triumph in the call of the port boys when Lindy came in.

Cruger got up from his chair and crossed to the doorway, where the sunlight fell flat against the river slopes and proclaimed that spring had come again to the North Country. He stood there until he caught sight of his long-legged bush pilot swinging up from the landing dock.

Cruger went back to his desk and his figure-stripped time sheets as the long legs strode into what was overgenerously known as the Administration Building of Norland Airways. It was a place of plain boards and tar paper, with only the two poles of its radio antennae to crown it with any passing sense of dignity.

Slade, when he stepped into the map-hung office, again made Cruger think of a panther, but this time it was a panther in a cage. He seemed too big for the room.

"I'm glad you swung back early," said Cruger. "And I want to tell you, first crack out of the box, that we're going to take the crepe off the door."

"What does that mean?" questioned Slade.

Cruger, instead of answering, took up an official-looking envelope.

"Before we begin," he casually observed, "you'd better give this the once-over." He surrendered the envelope. "You know what it is?"

"I've an idea," said Slade, after inspecting the insignia.

"You're a quick jumper, aren't you?" retorted Cruger, his eye on the weathered young face that held a touch of discontent somewhere.

Slade's smile was wide yet non-committal.

"They yelp for flyers," he said, "and while they're yelping they turn me down." He got up from the safe and paced the narrow floor. "I must be bad."

Cruger's shrug was a condoning one.

"I'd say it's because you're good," he parried. "Good enough to be needed right here in this northern run. And those tin hats happen to know you hold a key position."

Slade turned on him.

"Did anyone in this outfit broadcast that, just to block my enlistment?" was his indignant demand.

Again Cruger shrugged.

"Who are we to interfere with the War Office? It ought to be big enough to make its own decisions."

But Slade didn't seem to hear him.

"They hot-air about wanting men who're hard-trained and resourceful. Well, I ought to ring in on that. I've kept more than one lemon-crate up when every law of aeronautics said it ought to be down."

"You're resourceful, all right," accented Cruger, "but you'd be in clink with a broken heart after two weeks of army rules."

"I'd learn," said Slade, "along with the other leathernecks."

"But they'd all move too slow for you," contended Cruger.

"That fight doesn't look slow to me. And I ought to be over there while the show's still on."

Cruger smiled the smile of a man with an extra shot in his locker.

"There was a time," he observed, "when bush flying seemed to stack pretty high with you."

"But if you can't get a little excitement in your day's work," Slade was saying, "you may as well give up. And you said, two weeks ago, we'd have to."

"Before we go into that," retorted Cruger, "we ought to check up on the all-round dullness of this bush run of ours. I s'pose there was no excitement in that mercy flight of yours to Murray Bay when you picked up those two frozen huskies? Or in finding your Flying Padre when he was stymied on Lac de Gras last winter with a busted propeller and a factor's wife in labor and delirious with flu all at once?"

Slade had his own memories of that event. But his smile remained morose.

"She had her baby in the plane, four feet behind me high-tailing it for the Fort Smith hospital," he acknowledged. "The nose-over on the lake ice gave Doc Morlock a bad arm, so his girl Lynn had to get busy."

The softened note on the name did not escape Cruger. But he let Slade go on.

"She knew what was needed, all right. When we were swinging over Lesser Slave Lake I heard that baby give its first squawk."

"But you saved two lives, didn't you? I suppose there wasn't any excitement in that?"

The shrill of the desk 'phone cut off Slade's impending response. And while Cruger answered the 'phone the man in the flyer's jacket walked to the window and looked out. Beyond the rough-boarded hangar and the landing docks he could see the friendly cluster of planes on the tarmac.

"You're flying," Cruger was saying, "into the Anawotot country."

Slade's turn, at that information, was quick.

"What nut's going into that wilderness?" he demanded.

"They go into some queer places, these days," observed the older man.



"I'm glad you swung back early," said Cruger. "We're going to take the crepe off the door."

But what held his eye the longest was the smaller blue monoplane that looked faded and weathered and sadly the worse for wear. That, he knew, was the plane of the Flying Padre, the mercy-flighter and man of medicine who was sometimes known as the Grenfell of the Outer Gulf. And in it the Padre's daughter had gone along as pilot and helper. But never again, Slade remembered, would the clear-eyed Lynn Morlock take over the controls while her tired father held back the hand of Death two thousand feet above the lake-spangled Barrens. That, he surmised, was already a thing of the past.

Cruger, as he hung up his receiver, caught the passing look of raptness in the Viking blue eye.

"It's just about as big a game, Lindy, as a man could get into," he said out of the silence. "It's still as good as dog-fighting Messerschmitts. And we're both going to stay in it."

Slade swung about and faced his partner.

"That wasn't the tune you were singing two weeks ago?"

Cruger's laugh was slightly defiant.

"They had us backed against the wall two weeks ago. I told you our shoeing was wearing thin and we couldn't buck the big companies another month. But Norland Airways is going to stay on the map."

Slade's face lost its diffidence.

"What's changed the picture?"

Cruger's answer to that was not a direct one.

"We've both got all we own in this one-horse outfit and we can't afford to see it fold up. While you were out fighting head winds I've been in here doing a little fighting of my own. And I've just got my hands on a reconditioned Lockheed that'll give us a second air truck and release Abbott and his Postcraft for Winnipeg and Toronto passenger traffic. You'll like that Lockheed. They've slapped a fresh coat of aluminum paint on her."

"What'll she carry?" asked the flyer.

"A pay load of thirty thousand pounds a rip if she has to."

"Where'll you get your pay loads?" exacted Slade, remembering how war conditions had put a sag in sub-arctic mine work.

"I'm coming to that, stick-jigger. The traffic's still there, if you're willing to go after it. And I've gone after it. I've under-bid the big outfit and corralled enough business to keep us busy till freeze-up. I've got Fort Norman oil and a new slice of the Yellowknife stuff for you. I've got a renewal of the Coppermine contract. And what's more, I've got a Santa Claus in spectacles who's handing over enough ready dough to keep our cash tank from running dry."

The Viking blue eye became more alert.

"Who's your Santa Claus?"

"He's a passenger," said Cruger, "you're going to fly into territory that'll make London look like a tea-room on a rainy afternoon."

Cruger sat back, apparently waiting for a question. But Slade, with his world to reorganize, merely walked to the window and looked out.

"You're flying," Cruger was saying, "into the Anawotot country."

Slade's turn, at that information, was quick.

"What nut's going into that wilderness?" he demanded.

"They go into some queer places, these days," observed the older man.

"But the Anawotot's as empty as Sahara. Why, the only human beings north of the Kasakana are two frost-bitten old quartz-pounders, two half-demented old derelicts who've been bushed for three years and would bump off if I didn't tote 'em in their flour and sawdust."

"You're going well past the Kasakana this time," Cruger announced. "Into country you've never seen before."

"For what?" asked Slade.

Cruger took his time about answering.

"For swans' eggs, I understand."

Slade's sun-bleached brows came a little closer together.

"Just what does that mean?"

Again Cruger took his time.

"It means we've got a simple-minded naturalist out there, an ornithologist answering to the name of Frayne, who wants to be flown north so he can find the breeding ground of the trumpeter swan. I never saw a trumpeter swan. Did you?"

Slade stood thoughtful a moment.

"Yes, I saw a trumpeter, only last spring. I played tag with him over Lac la Martre. He must have had a wing-stretch of nine or ten feet."

"I'd call that quite a stretch," said the man at the desk.

"You're telling me?"

"They may be impressive," said Cruger, as he opened a desk drawer, "but from what I can gather they're dying off. And this man Frayne wants to sleuth out their nesting quarters before they follow the dodo and disappear for good."

"And he's going in to the Anawotot alone?"

Slade's brow-pucker seemed one of incredulity.

"No, he's taking an over-sized blond named Karnell along with him."

"A blond?" croaked Slade. "You don't mean a skirt?"

"Anything but. This blond is all male. He's square-headed and gorilla-jawed and looks like something that's been worked on by a snarling iron."

Slade found the picture unpalatable.

"But who's your friend Frayne?" he persisted with a shrug of distaste. "Where does he come from? And why does he pick on us?"

"That's neither your problem nor mine. But he's the Norland's friend, all right. He may be a simple-minded crank. But he's so well heeled that money doesn't seem to mean much. And at this stage of the game we're going to handle a Christmas present like that with care."

Slade nodded his understanding.

"But he must have a screw loose somewhere," maintained the younger man, "or he wouldn't be heading for what he's sure to get in that Anawotot country."

"You needn't lose sleep over that," contended Cruger. "He may be after birds' eggs, but he seems to have a working knowledge of sub-arctic conditions. I didn't find him much of a talker, but I stumbled on the fact he'd been trophy-hunting in the Himalayas last winter. And the winter before he hunted the snow leopard in Siberia and Tibet."

"Then I suppose he's English," said Slade. "One of those English big-game guys who go around with a monocle and a tin bathtub."

"He's got equipment, all right," conceded Cruger. "And he's paying us quite handsomely for flying him in."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Star Dust

STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO

By VIRGINIA VALE

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

JINX FALKENBURG received an urgent request from a group of soldiers at a U.S. military outpost recently; signing themselves as the boys in "Hut # 33, Iceland," they begged her to send them a large picture of herself in a bathing suit, as soon as possible. "We want to put it on the wall for two important reasons," they wrote. "1—It will give us something interesting to look at. 2—It will help to keep the captain's eyes busy when he comes around to inspect our quarters." She sent a picture five feet high!

"Once Upon a Honeymoon" unites three of the screen's top figures in the studio where each has previously scored triumphs—RKO Radio. They're Ginger Rogers and Cary Grant, who've both made plenty of hit pictures, and Leo McCarey, producer-director of such delightful films as "Love Affair" and "My Favorite Wife." "Once Upon a Honeymoon" is the kind of thing they all do best.

Thousands of moviegoers, on reading of Elmer Davis' appointment as director of the Office of War Information, recalled seeing him on the screen. To "Information Please" fans he was one of the highlights of the series issued by RKO Pathe.

Bill Stern, NBC director of sports and famous sportscaster, plays himself in Samuel Goldwyn's "The Pride of the Yankees," which stars Gary Cooper and is based on the



BILL STERN

life of the late Lou Gehrig. Theresa Wright, Walter Brennan and Babe Ruth head the supporting cast. Stern flew from the Coast to participate in the scene showing "Lou Gehrig Memorial day," which marked Gehrig's retirement.

J. Carroll Nash is going to be seen as an ape-man, no less, in 20th Century-Fox's "Buried Alive." It's this company's first effort in the horror line, and just the title promises well. John Shepperd and Lynne Roberts will have the romantic leads.

Rosalind Russell is booked for another of those pictures in which she's such a clever and handsome young business woman that she makes business women in the audience green with envy. This one will be "Portrait of a Lady," and the plot (which somehow has a familiar ring) deals with the efforts of a husband to win his wife away from a business career.

"Guerrilla Brigade," the Soviet picture which was shown in New York recently, has been booked by the RKO circuit and is scheduled for national release. This is the first time in some years that a Russian picture has been booked by a major theater chain here.

Those bitter little quarrels between actors and motion picture companies no longer mean what they once did, not since radio's here to stay. When Madeleine Carroll and Paramount disagreed not long ago, the beautiful Miss Carroll merely departed for New York and picked up some engagements to broadcast, at \$2,500 each. Paul Muni and his studio parted, so he did a stage play, got \$5,000 apiece for several radio performances, then signed with another studio, John Garfield and Warner Bros. disagreed, and radio grabbed him.

William L. Shirer talks to his friend, Edward R. Murrow ("This Is London") every Sunday before their respective broadcasts. The conversation is over a private wire, and the first thing Murrow asks is about the baseball teams.

ODDS AND ENDS—Janet Blair, former singer with Hal Kemp's orchestra and now playing the title role in "My Sister Eileen," is rehearsing the songs for a new civic opera to be presented late this summer in Los Angeles. . . . Mainbocher, famous dressmaker who's been responsible for many of the Duchess of Windsor's costumes, has been signed to a term contract by Fox. . . . Bob Burns has a new bazooka, made from scraps from P-38 bombers by the boys who build the planes. . . . Donna Reed's wearing the silver wings of a pilot on the Anti-Submarine Patrol in the Atlantic. Lt. Donald Arlen.

Here Are Low-Cost Vacation Items for the Girl Who Sews

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



THOSE who give wholehearted and patriotic co-operation to the economic emergency of our nation's wartime program can be practical and saving this summer in the matter of "clothes" expenditure without sacrificing the joy that comes with the satisfaction of having a charming vacation wardrobe. They can do this just by making home-sewing a thrifty hobby.

It's more than ever important these days to in no wise underestimate the morale value of a becoming new frock, and you owe it to yourself and those who look to you for inspiration to appear at your best, especially when you want to make the cherished moments of a holiday memorable. So get out the family sewing machine and start right away on a pretty-clothes program. Even if you have never stitched a seam in your life, don't throw up your hands in despair. Your local sewing center can teach you modern sewing shortcuts and dressmaker tricks in a few afternoons and evenings.

You'll find you can gather together a collection of lovable, tubable cottons, rayon weaves, linens and such (washables are smartest to wear this summer) featured at amazingly low cost both in the regular piece goods section and on remnant counters. One of the most effective ways of making a few carefully chosen costumes go a long way toward creating a flexible, mixable all-purpose wardrobe is to plan related color schemes in companion fabrics so that you can wear the jacket of one outfit with the skirt of another, or team up at will matching or contrasting slacks, shorts and blouses. You will find great help in the intriguing stripes, checks, plaids and "plains" brought out this season

in complementary weaves and colors which are really lovely. Destined for fashion success and certain to prove a boon to the slim budget is the eye-catching three-piece playsuit shown to the right in the above illustration. By picking up remnants specially priced for quick selling you can get this outfit together at an almost unbelievably small cost. Gay print shirtwaist (a sportswear favorite this season), jumper-type shorts and a full-gathered front-buttoned overskirt complete this costume which will serve for varied occasions the whole summer through. Don't let the buttonholes frighten you, for with the new buttonhole gadget modern sewing machines have, you can make them in double quick time, even if it is your first venture.

If you covet being a heroine in a fashion success story, make the red, white and blue slacks suit centered in the picture. It consists of navy slacks, white middie, red jerkin and matching beanie cap. You'll get a world of service out of this bright assortment of play togs, and making it yourself will send your pride soaring to the 'nth degree. Notice the precision with which patriotic, colorful, shield-shaped buttons file down the side of the jerkin. By the way, a jerkin of this type is a valuable asset to any vacation wardrobe—it's the "missing link" which will convert any simple casual dress or skirt and blouse into a smart fashion unit.

For after-dark wear you'll be needing many a party frock if you are helping at army entertainment centers. All-American cotton is the wartime ideal for these summer dance-and-dine get-together affairs. You'll be your most glamorous self if you make a budget-minded dress of gaily colorful print like that illustrated to the left in the above group. Especially smart is the corsetted front bodice closing.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Cotton Is Choice Of Summer Brides

According to the signs that tell this is going to be a summer of wartime weddings. Summer with its background of flowers and sunny days and starry nights provides a most inviting setting for picturesque organdies, exquisite batistes, quaint dotted swisses and other such delicately woven cotton sheers as fashion favors this season.

Many a bride-to-be is finding it necessary to change her plans for a pretentious wedding to a program which calls for the utmost simplicity and economy, owing to wartime conditions.

One of the pleasing surprises this summer is the number of brides who are choosing for their wedding gowns pretty sheer cottons, among which organdy seems to be an outstanding favorite. To lend the most enchantment to her picturesque organdy wedding gown a recent bride wore a wide-brimmed halo of finely pleated organdy ruffles, and the effect was entrancing.

'Dunk' 'Em

There is a new word being added to the fashion vocabulary. This new word, "dunkable," is in keeping with the spirit of the times, for the trend is toward making everything washable from gloves to hats and to shoes. Washable, dunkable gloves answer the call of the hour, and you can get these in greater variety than ever before.

Midriff Blouse

Decidedly new is the "midriff" blouse. It's a startling fashion, but young girls are taking to it with enthusiasm. Wear it with the matching printed chintz skirt which is sold as its companion piece.



Farm Topics

High Egg Production While Prices Are Good

Suggestions Given for Improved Pullet Flocks

By H. H. ALP

(Extension Poultryman, College of Agriculture, University of Illinois.)

In times of good prices one is not likely to think in terms of losing money, certainly not so much as when prices are low. There is a great deal more at stake, however, when prices are high, or favorable to the producer. If low egg production exists then, the loss is actually



Courtesy U. S. Department of Agriculture

It is a smile of Victory this young miss has. For with the eggs from her own chickens for consumption here, and abroad where they are sent in powdered form, the necessary energy to carry on the great fight against the enemy is being partly supplied.

greater than it would be if egg production were low during a period of poor prices.

For good egg production at this season of the year, the pullet flock should have:

1. A poultry house which provides four square feet of floor space for each bird.

2. Some form of insulation in the house.

3. A good ration in small feeders, which are freshly filled every day, or at least every other day.

4. Two water containers in a room approximately 20 by 20 feet.

5. A ration featuring some form of milk, whole oats, a good grade of alfalfa, and a vitamin-D oil.

6. A supplemental feeding of moist mash once a day, if necessary. This practice is not essential for all flocks, but in the case of flocks "going stale" or losing weight, and for late, immature pullets.

7. Lights if necessary. Lights might be used in the same situations in which moist mash feeding is suitable. A successful practice has been to use two 10-watt lamps all night in a room 20 by 20 feet.

8. Fresh litter to keep up the spirits of the flock and for the maintenance of health.

9. Regular attention; irregularity plays havoc with egg production.

10. The benefit of some good common sense. It is not bought in bottles and bags.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

For after-dark wear you'll be needing many a party frock if you are helping at army entertainment centers. All-American cotton is the wartime ideal for these summer dance-and-dine get-together affairs. You'll be your most glamorous self if you make a budget-minded dress of gaily colorful print like that illustrated to the left in the above group. Especially smart is the corsetted front bodice closing.

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