

GHOST PLANE

By ARTHUR STRINGER

W.N.U. SERVICE

THE STORY SO FAR: To keep Norland Airways in business Alan Slade agrees to fly a so-called scientist named Frayne and his partner, Karnell, to the Anawotto river in search of the trumpeter swan. With the proceeds Slade's partner, Cruger, buys a Lockheed plane, which is stolen. When he returns from the Anawotto Slade starts out to recover the plane. In this he is being helped by an eskimo named Umanak and by his old prospector friends, Zeke and Minty. Acting on a hunch Slade has gone to Frayne's camp and has discovered that the missing plane is hidden there. Slim Tumstead, a flyer who has lost his license for drinking and is little more than an outlaw, has been flying it for Frayne. But when Slade attempts to examine the plane's cargo he is knocked unconscious by Karnell. Tumstead saves him from being killed by Karnell, only to abandon him later on a deserted island because he "knows too much." Tumstead has just taken off again, after leaving Slade with only a knife, a pound of German army chocolate, a can of "bully" beef and what looks like an empty tin.



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CHAPTER XIV

He placed the knife on the shore slope. Beside it he placed the pound of German chocolate, and beside that again the tin of bully-beef. After studying them for a long time he reached for the tobacco tin.

This, when he opened it, proved not to be entirely empty. In it, to his surprise, he found half a dozen steel fishhooks.

He stared at them for a full minute, remembering how more than one bush pilot had the habit of carrying such things in his emergency equipment. They gave a promise of food, in case of a forced landing in a wilderness threaded with waterways.

Then, with a gasp of apprehension, he crawled about the slope, carefully retrieving the scattered lengths of cord that had been cut from his wrists and ankles. The best of them were only a few feet in length. But he had proof enough of their strength. And when knotted together they would provide him with a fish line that might land anything from an inconnu to a five-pound whitefish.

That gave him the courage to climb the rocky ledge behind him and examine his island. There was growth enough about him, he saw, to make a shelter of some sort, growth enough for firewood and the smoking of fish. And along the westerly shore where the slopes ended in sedgy meadows his gaze came to rest on a wide field of bulrushes. That gave him new hope.

He was alone in an empty world. But as he stood straight on his lonely ridge of rock he told himself that he hadn't yet reached the end of his rope.

Two embattled and odd-looking figures groped their way northward between the muskegs and the rocky hogbacks that stretched out to the skyline beyond Lake Avikaka. Each man carried a rifle and a cartridge belt that bristled with shells. Each was further burdened down with a blanket roll and a grub bag. From the waist of one dangled a belt-ax, from the waist of the other swung a skillet and tea pail.

They went on, stoically slapping at black-flies and mosquitoes, until weariness overtook them and a lowering sun told them it was time to call it a day. Then they made camp, cooked their bacon and flapjacks, adjusted their mosquito bars, and rolled up in their worn and smoke-stained four-pointers.

When morning came they broke camp and once more hit the trail. They saw the sun climb higher in the heavens and the muskegs become fewer as they advanced into a country of bolder rock ridges with a scattering of tamarack along their southern slopes. They saw the shadows lengthen and the light once more thin out. And once more they made camp, and slept, and pushed on again.

"We're on the proper trail all right," observed Minty as he mounted a knoll and surveyed the surrounding landscape. "There's the black-water lake I skirted on my way back."

"There's been folks here before us," asserted Zeke, pointing to where scrub spruce had been cut along the hill slope.

"From the first crack out o' the box," said Minty, "I had a queer feelin' about that two-eyed swan-hunter. I knew he wasn't edgin' up into this district of ours for any good."

"Then why's he here?"

"That's what I'm a-goin' to find out," retorted the grizzled old prospector, "before he gets another sneakin' shot at my carcass."

It was as they were circling cautiously along the westerly arm of the lake that Zeke stopped short on a ridge crest that ended in a deep-water bayou. For moored close in under a cliff there he saw the scarred and sun-bleached wings of a plane.

"That's the Snow-Ball Baby," was Minty's sudden exclamation.

"That's Lindy's old crate all right," agreed the perplexed Zeke. "But where's our puddle-jumper?"

They still hesitated in their approach. But curiosity finally overcame them. When they found no pilot there, after invading its cabin, they regarded each other for a moment of silence.

"I don't like the look o' this," Zeke finally asserted.

"Chances are he's scoutin' round on foot," maintained Minty as he clambered ashore. But Zeke, who remained to assess the cabin's contents, shook a dubious head.

"There's grub and extra gas in there," he reported when he rejoined his companion. "There's even blankets and fly nets and one o' them new-fangled air mattresses."

"Then you'll see him headin' back here pronto," Minty persisted.

But at the end of an hour's wait the azure of his optimism was shadowed by a cloud or two.

"Something's happened to that boy," averred Zeke as his old eyes once more swept the silent rock ridges.

"Then it's up to us to roost here and keep an eye on his plane," was Minty's suggestion.

"I don't like the idee o' that ship anchored close in here where any outsider could climb aboard," said Zeke. "Where she ought to be is out in the middle o' that lake with a quarter-mile o' water between her and shore."

"How'd you git her there?" asked Minty, as he studied the plane. "I always had a hankerin' for knowin' how to handle one o' them contraptions. And right now that hankerin' is stronger'n ever."

But Zeke had his own ideas about the matter.

"I could float her out and anchor her there with a couple o' rock-slabs tied to her moorin'-lines," he explained. "Then she'd be where no one could sneak up on her."

"And how'd you git back?" demanded Minty.

"I'd blow up that air mattress of Lindy's and paddle ashore. And when our bush hawk shows back he can sail out to her in the same way."

"S'posin' he don't show back?"

"Then it's up to us," said Zeke, "to find out what's keepin' him away from a ship he'd never desert of his own free will."

But the shifting of the Snow-Ball to its new berth was no easy matter. And even with the plane safely anchored in mid-lake Zeke's troubles were not over. The inflated air mattress, from the first, proved a precarious craft. When halfway to shore, in fact, Zeke lost his balance and went overboard, with Minty's anxious eyes watching his struggles as he floundered about and finally resumed his perch on the little raft of rubber.

Minty, standing guard on his rock point, knew what would be needed, and needed at once. He dropped his rifle and lost no time in gathering wood and starting a fire. The flames were roaring by the time the wet and bedraggled Zeke crawled up the shore slope. His teeth were chattering and his language was blasphemous.

"Quit cussin'," admonished Minty, "and git out o' them clothes before they chill you to the bone."

Zeke's shirt was dry by the time he was ready to drink his tea. And his ill temper had departed by the time the dignity of clothing was restored to his sinewy old body.

"We can't squat round these embers no longer," he announced.

"What we've got 'o do is snout out them white-skinned Comanches who're musclin' in on our domain."

"Lead me to 'em," said Minty as he shouldered his pack and took up his rifle.

But Zeke, at the moment, was busy mounting a near-by ridge. He stood scanning the blue-misted slopes between him and the lowering sun. He squinted long and closely at the wooded crest across a wide valley studded with glacial hardheads. And as he looked he saw a puff of smoke bloom for a moment against the hill-top spruce gloom at the same time a bullet whined over his head.

His reaction to that was automatic.

He dropped to the far side of the ridge, where he lay shouting for Minty to get under cover. But Minty disregarded that advice. He stood with his rifle at half-arm, studying the wooded crest across the valley. But the whine of a second bullet sent him ducking behind the shelter of a hardhead.

"They want fightin', eh?" he cried as he leveled his rifle along the stone

top. "Well, they'll git it a-plenty."

But, after a two-man council of war, they realized that closing in on the enemy was not so simple as it might seem.

"If they want to do it Injin style," said Minty, "it's okay with me. There's no reason why two can't play at that game."

"But dodgin' round rock corners ain't goin' to find Alan," Zeke protested. "And our first job is to git trace o' that boy."

If they declined to retreat, however, they made their advance a more circuitous one. When night-fall came they quartered off at an angle, advancing craftily from rock shadow to rock shadow, their old eyes searching every ridge slope and hollow. But they encountered no sign of life. When weariness overtook them one would sleep for two hours while the other kept watch.

"I don't like this lull in things," observed Zeke as he blinked about the silent ridges. "Makes me suspicious them swan-hunters might be puttin' something over on us."

"Let 'em try it," barked Minty after a look into his cartridge chamber.

Zeke's weathered old face remained troubled.

"But while we're pirootin' through these empty pine woods and indulgin' our personal appetite for lead-singin' they might be back-trackin' to Alan's Snow-Ball Baby. And I don't want 'o see anything happen to that boy's ship."

"It won't," averred Minty, "while I've still got a trigger to pull."

"Then my vote," said Zeke, "goes to gittin' back to that plane and standin' watch there until Alan shows up."

Minty adjusted his blanket roll and tightened his belt.

"I reckon you're right for once," he conceded.

Seated on the barren shore of his sub-arctic island, Alan Slade knew a recurring pang of despair much sharper than any pain in his abused body.

His first task, he told himself, was to take in the circle of his world, the only world that remained to him. His steps grew steeper as he mounted the shore slope and worked his way up to one of the bolder ridge crests.

From that vantage point he carefully studied his island.

That island, he found, was not so large as it had first seemed. So far as he could see it was empty of animal life. And this seemed confirmed as he explored its irregular shoreline. Along the rockier shore to the east, where he had hoped to stumble on driftwood, he found nothing beyond a tangle of bleached bottles and branches, the best of them little thicker than a caribou-prong. They were useful only as a reserve of firewood.

The thought of a fire reminded him that one of his first needs was a shelter of some kind. He knew the north too well to nurse much fear of marauding animals. More than wandering bear or wolf, his enemies there would be the voracious arctic mosquito and the black-fly that left a burning ring of poison about its bite.

Under one of the higher crests he found a rock-jut with an over-hanging lip that made a shallow cave. The floor of that cave, he saw, he could bed with dried moss and sedge grass. The face of it he could close in with loose rocks and a matrix of scrub-timber branches from the near-by slopes. It would not only protect him from wind and rain but with a smudge fire going in its entrance it would be a defense against mosquitoes and black-flies. It would, for the time being, be his home.

To it he carried his beef-tin and his chocolate, his sheath knife and his precious little can of fishhooks, together with every carefully salvaged foot of the equally precious cord that had been cut from his wrists and ankles. For on those strands of cord, he remembered, might yet hang his hope of deliverance. With the evening coolness deepening around him he felt the need of a fire. He regretted not having an ax.

"They want fightin', eh?" he cried as he leveled his rifle along the stone

top. "Well, they'll git it a-plenty."

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

Reviewed by CARTER FIELD

Coming Election Has Political Insiders Guessing Again . . . Effect of Bus Speed Restrictions Debated . . . Bell Syndicate—WNU Features.

WASHINGTON. — Though there are always upsets in nation-wide elections, the best opinions, obtainable here at the political hub, are that there will not be as many missing faces as an actual result of the election, when the next congress convenes, as there will be due to primaries and conventions.

In the senate, for instance, there are very few close contests in prospect. The Democrats are hoping to retire Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, and C. Wayland Brooks of Illinois, to private life. Privately they admit little hope of any other gain. The GOP is hoping to knock off Prentiss M. Brown of Michigan, Theodore F. Green of Rhode Island and Clyde L. Herring of Iowa.

But it is very difficult to find a Democrat who is willing to bet even money against either Lodge or Brooks. Similarly it is difficult to find Republicans willing to lay even money against Brown, Green or Herring.

Yet these are really the doubtful seats. True, there is the case of Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska, running independent again, but with the endorsement of President Roosevelt and no serious Democratic opposition. There might be a miracle which would put a Republican in that seat. It would seem about due, on the old doctrine of the pitcher which went to the well once too often.

Politics Always Perplexing

Massachusetts politics is always perplexing—and dubious. The administration is most anxious to beat young Lodge. He is too often embarrassing. He not only knows too much about the war, now since his service in North Africa, and also about domestic issues, but he has some of the smartest political advisers extant.

That is the reason the administration leaders persuaded Joe Casey, who had a sure Democratic district for his house seat, to make the try against Lodge.

Again the habits of voters over a lifetime will help Lodge. The Bay state ballot markers are used to having a Lodge and a Walsh in the senate. It is the normal thing.

In Illinois the administration has been anxious to beat "Curly" Brooks, and the Chicago Tribune, FDR's pet hate among newspapers, is just as anxious to re-elect him.

Brook's pre-Pearl Harbor record did not hurt him, apparently, in the primary, and his chances for the six year term seem better than fair.

Of all the senators who have survived the primaries and conventions the one in most danger from the election seems to be Prentiss Brown of Michigan, but the independent candidacy of Gerald Smith, old Huey Long and Father Coughlin lieutenant, gives even him a sporting chance.

Problem: How Will Bus Schedules Fare?

Time was when any governmental move to cramp the style of inter-city busses would have been hailed with loud cries of joy by the railroad executives.

But the railroad men are worried about the effects of the recent order which will hold the speed of all rubber-tired vehicles to 35 miles an hour. No one in either railroad or bus circles has figured out how to maintain present bus schedules at this reduced speed.

Busses making long runs between important cities have been accustomed to running more than 60 miles an hour whenever possible.

Despite this high rate of speed on the road, the schedule of most bus lines has not been too attractive when compared to the time of the better trains between the same points.

The inter-city bus runs as fast as a train on the good stretches of road, but it loses a lot of time going through city streets to its downtown terminals.

The competing train, running on its own right of way, with tunnels in two of those cities, and few grade crossings, gains an enormous time advantage.

As every passenger on a long cross country bus ride knows, the big loss of time is made at the stops. Where a train would stay in a station only a few minutes, the bus generally stops 15 minutes or longer. It has to make stops on long trips for the passengers to get food.

Few trains make any stops today for the convenience of its passengers. All this adds up to a situation which, beginning on October 15, will put a heavy time penalty on the bus passenger.

These Fashions Meet Demands Of an Alert 'Teen-Age Group

By CHERIE NICHOLAS



FOR novelty, variety, color intrigue, general wearableness and utilitarian service attuned to the demands of youth; for that young look that fashion-alert juniors and 'teen-agers want in the clothes they wear, this season's entrants into the fall-winter fashion contest score about 100 per cent perfect.

First and foremost, color is the magic word that turns even the most simple fashion into a thing of beauty, and it's color that is stampeding its way right through the entire fashion picture this season. The "big idea" centers brightly around daring color contrast as interpreted by the use of a jacket in one color topping a skirt of another, or by the use of materials of contrasting hues seamed and patched together with amazing adroitness.

A fashion that has completely captured the fancy of modern youth is the two-piece that tops a plaid or checked wool skirt with a vivid velveteen jacket which is cunningly detailed with buttons and which relates itself to the skirt it companions by taking on a binding of its material. It's just as effective and style-correct to contrast monotonous. A fuchsia-purple skirt may be worn with a fuchsia-red jacket, a bright red jacket with an autumn leaf green skirt and so on.

Every girl nowadays is building her wardrobe around two basic items, namely the softly styled dressmaker suit and the little wool dress that doesn't miss a "trick" in taking on fetching trimming detail. Even the simplest little jersey frock is audaciously taking on glitter touches in way of nailheads and jewelry-embroidered necklines, and the latest gesture of the demure jersey dress is to go so far as to steal the glory of a sequin-embroidered motif now and then. The intriguing modes pictured in the above illustration were given prominence at a recent fashion revue presented by the style creators of Chicago as types which have won the unanimous vote of young girls.

It is evident that the suits shown have succeeded in capturing the

spirit of youth which young moderns demand. The suit to the right interprets the contrast idea in that it teams a vivid Kelly green wool jacket with a yellow pleated (complying with priority rulings as to hemline measurement) skirt of black. The black binding around the jacket effects a tie-up between skirt and jacket-top that achieves a unified costume. Self-fabric surface decoration is placed high on the jacket front in a manner to suggest pockets.

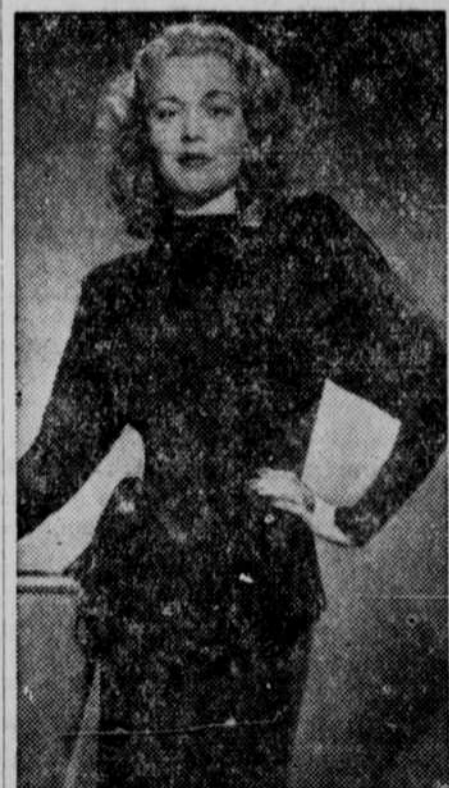
The other suit is done in pale beige wool with a slightly ribbed surface. The prominence of beige is notable in both dress and coat collections. The slender gored skirt and slit breast pockets and the general bid for simplicity which it makes is in keeping with the fabric conservation program. Note especially the girlish round neckline which is important fashion news. The new square shoulder look is stressed via deft seaming.

Every youthful wardrobe is supposed to have its quota of flattering little one-piece frocks to wear under the winter coat. The significant thing about the two frocks pictured is that they owe much of their charm to bright yarn trimming touches. It's a jersey-dress season and no mistake! Both models pictured are fashioned of natural wool and rabbit's hair jersey.

Style features of interest in the dress to the right are the wool embroidered pockets and the use of wool yarn stitching about the neck and shoulders. The tie-belt is also an interesting detail. The two-piece to the left features contrast sleeves knitted of bright red yarn. The edges, too, are finished off with matched red yarn.

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

Spaghetti Trim



Here is an effective use of the new and smart "spaghetti" fabric loop trim. There is an epaulet of the loops at one shoulder and also a modish peplum effect. This is one of those good looking black dresses that go anywhere in perfect style. Smart styling features are the long fitted-below-the-elbow sleeves with the new deep armhole cut that is now so extremely fashionable. The slim, sleek silhouette so admirably achieved is what every woman covets. Designers are using self-trim, color contrast and sparkling accents to achieve the variety so noticeable this season.

'Winter White' Is Again a Favorite

The young set adores "winter" white for the date dress or for informal party wear. And so the craze is on for whites and near whites as it was last season. Favored materials in the much beloved white include the new Aralac flannel, wool and rayon mixtures and a very smart looking wool and rayon boucle, but the darling of all is the white jersey frock that is enlivened with gay yarn embroidery or vividly colorful insets, jewel buttons or perhaps crocheted wool edgings and gilt leather touches done in applique.

White fur, especially in boxy short casual coats and capes, is also popular. Young girls are wearing these white fur casuals with slacks, and later on they will be wearing them with their skating costumes.

Priorities Coin a New Word—'Companion' Suit

Women who are looking to the future are buying wisely and thoughtfully. They look upon a suit of good quality as the answer to their need for a costume that will be ready to wear on all but the most formal occasions.

Buying a "companion" suit made up of jacket, skirt and matching long topcoat this year is very different from last year's procedure. This season priority rulings do not permit buying the three pieces as a unit, the parts must be sold separately. However, designers and manufacturers are making it possible to secure a perfect match even if the topcoat must be purchased separately.

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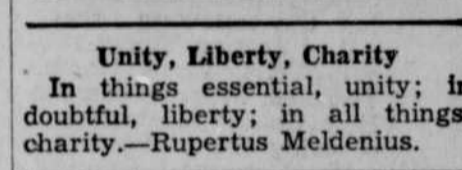
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