

A New Airship Serial by

Herbert Quick
Author of "DOUBLE TROUBLE"

VIRGINIA of the AIR LANES

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CHAPTER XXV—Continued.

Now that he had found the hold, Carson was too much at a loss to reply. He would not ask admission—and he had no idea that he would be admitted if he did. But he must see Virginia. Utterly estranged as they were, this night voyage had a reason—the hope of seeing her, of asking her forgiveness, of trying to see that when she dropped from the sky to his feet, he had loved her, that when she had come to live with that uncle of whom she had heard so little, and had found the last Carson in him, the temptation was so marked in duty that it was too strong for him. And had he ever once in that delicious, perilous time of action "Uncle Theodore," inexorably presumed on the relationship, or failed in goodness? True, he had let her stay as his niece; but had not his father always thought himself of the same blood? Virginia must know some weight to his traditions. She must see that, while too remotely related to be objectionable in a nearer, dearer way, he was too probably of kin to have turned her away. And, surely, when once he could look in her eyes, all the dear, disguised avowals and acceptances in the mistaken past must come back to him better than a stranger. He would find in Shayne's hold, if it were the last act of his life.

With the ancient instinct of the sur-reptitious lover, he made for the angle between two dark wings of the great house. Glimmers of light from two windows were their sole sign of occupancy; then center of human conscience being about that core of light in the court. The wings seemed like low adjuncts for conservatories or billiard rooms; and the angle between, with its light mottling, looked like a flower sprinkled lawn, on which the Carson felt confident of placing the Virginia gently, and with no disturbance. Beyond this had been too much engrossed in the management of the aeroplane to make plans. With a slow soaring movement she came into the angle like a steamer into her slip—and found, instead of a lawn, a gravel roof cluttered with tables and chairs as if for the serving of refreshments. Among these the Virginia nosed in, dumping some chairs, a table and two potted palms into the court, and settled down amid crackling furniture and crashing pottery—a beautiful landing, in a rather unsuitable spot.

Craighead leaped out on the roof. "Let's run!" said he, in a stage whisper. "They must have heard that, and if they catch us, we're in for it!"

"Stay here," said Carson, in a low tone. "If we must, we can fly in the Virginia. I'll see if anything's broken!"

The roof had reached Shayne's hold just in time to escape the storm, and the weary Virginia had retired, sick of the barking of her aunt upon the disgrace of her return with "Uncle Theodore," weary of telling how innocent it had been, how gentle and considerate he was, how ideal their life would always seem—all in spite of her anger at Mr. Carson. She had taken dinner on the roof, watching the march of the storm, wondering where that airship was in which she and some one had so nearly met their death. She was angry, and she detested her aunt, but she hoped he was safe, that his campaign for the control of the air against her uncle might succeed—though that seemed the wildest of presumption. While her maid prepared her for bed, she thought how much happier she had been at Carson's Landing, with no attention save a steer of hot water brought up by old Chloe.

Her uncle had spoken of a wireless message from Winger at Mobile, relating no doubt to Theodore and the Virginia; and she was horrified to think that he could keep up communication with the man who had tried to murder both her and Theodore. With a book close to the light, she was composing her mind to sleep, when into the dreamy quietude came a purring that was so unmistakable the voice of the aeroplane that Virginia rose, with her hand to her heart, in an amazement not all unpleasant, wondering where her nameable might alight, and what Shayne's hired constabulary might do with Theodore—when from the roof came a seraph as if all the furniture were being moved at once; chairs and tables went over the parapet with a crash—and the voices of Craighead and Carson came in at the window, low, hurried and agitated.

"There was a hustling in the lower hall, as people ran to the windows that gave on the court, and rushed out to see what had fallen. Virginia turned out the dim light—I wonder why?"

"Well," she said, in answer to her maid's tap, "what is it, Fanny?"

"I heard an awful noise," said Fanny. "It seemed to come from 'ere, miss."

"Some things fell into the court," replied Virginia. "Please tell the servants; and say that things must not be piled upon the parapet. That's all, Fanny."

"Are you quite sure, miss?"

"Yes, yes! Run at once and tell them. I am quite in earnest, Fanny!"

Fanny's footsteps went out of hearing, and Virginia walked to the window. There lay the dear little airship, that she and Theodore had planned campaigns for, and conquered the world with. This wing, which had poked so nearly through her window, was the very one upon which she had hung to test the balloons—and she reached out and patted it with her hand. Theodore was passing the other way, now, moving chairs and tables, peering into every bearing and gear for signs of damage. Craighead was scurrying the parapet as if looking for a staircase.

"It's a miracle," said Theodore, at last, "but she's all right and ready to rise at a touch!"

"Thank God!" said Virginia.

"Did you find a way down?" asked Carson, all unconscious of the nearness of what he sought.

"Only the old way by which I came off the back stoop of the station," replied Craighead. "It's a matter of specific gravity. As to getting back, unless you brought your specific gravity with you, I really don't see, old chap, how it's going to be managed."

"Once down I can force my way up," said Theodore, raising his voice in his intensity. "Do you think I'll go back without seeing her? No! You stay here, and—"

"Mr. Craighead!"

The voice came from the darkness of the house, cool, calm, self-possessed.

"Present!" answered Craighead. "But don't shoot! I'm a starving man, in charge of a maniac!"

"Please come here, Mr. Craighead!" said the soft voice.

"Virginia!" cried Carson.

"Please tell your friend," said the voice, "that if he presumes to address any person except yourself, this window will be closed!"

"Got that?" asked Craighead. "Or will you have the message repeated at your expense, to avoid possible errors?"

Craighead approached the glimmer of white drapery, and Virginia gave him her hand, which he gallantly kissed.

"You may tell your friend," said Mrs. Carson, "that his coming here is a foolish, hazy thing, and quite uncalculated for. No one here can either see her, or would if she could."

"You hear, old man?" queried Craighead. "The imprisoned damsel saith it's all a mistake. She don't want no knight!"

"This lachry business lacks appeal, being hackneyed and overworked. Do I correctly interpret the speech from the throne—and to the throne?"

"You may tell him," went on Virginia, "that his movements have been reported, and the Aeroplane Power company is about taking legal steps—I don't know what to contest with him—I don't know what!"

"That's in my department," replied Craighead. "I don't allow my friend to coin an expression—and that shall be with him in the courts. The great Craig speaks with his specialty!"

"And now go!" said Virginia. "Your coming here at all is perfectly shameful!"

A murmur of voices arose from the court, and lights flashed out, illuminating the roof and the girl's form and face, as she stood at the window in flowing white robes like an angel.

"I can't go!" said Carson. "I must speak! I was wrong not to tell you of your mistake, but I loved you from the moment I picked you up from the sand and carried you into the cabin! I couldn't say you had no place to go! I wanted you! And I didn't think of anything that—that could remind me of—or of your reputation!"

"Mr. Craighead!"

"Assum!" responded Craighead. "But not prepared to rectify. Let's not discuss this talk any more. Speak to the villain direct. The current is burning out the wire. Let him talk to you or install a transformer. Help! Help!"

"Tell your friend," went on Virginia, "and her voice now faltered—"that I shall consider what he says—"

"I believe," cried Carson, "that I am the last of the Carson family! My father always taught me—"

"—and that I shall cease to be angry by ceasing to remember! And now, you are impertinently your precious interests and risking arrest!"

"Of that," said Theodore, "we are not at all afraid!"

"Speak for yourself," quavered Craighead, "as the cries below redoubled. 'I'm scared stiff!'"

"We are here for no bad purpose," said Theodore firmly, "and we shall not fly—"

"Foolish boy!" cried Virginia. "They will confine you during pleasure, through officers that can act legally, and study the airship, and steal your creation! Go, I beg of you, go!"

"There's a knocking at the door, and loud voices demanding admission. Virginia extended her hands imploringly as she spoke; and Theodore acted them.

"I will go," said he, "when you tell me when I may seek you and make my explanation! I have the right, Virginia!"

"Oh, oh," she cried. "You are cruel! You are putting the blame of your ruin on me! Go! Go!"

"When may I see you again?"

"When you have won your fight for the Virginia," answered she. "When the fruits of your genius are saved to you—if you will go at once! Or when you are completely ruined—may!"

"Hurry, old man!" cried Craighead. "They're putting up ladders. Hurry! I'll go ball you see her again some time. When you're ruined, will be the soonest—if you don't come. Fly with me! Fly!"

Shayne's voice was heard outside the door, giving orders that it be broken in.

and some person put himself against it unavailingly. A flat cap appeared above the roof; and as the man under it mounted the ladder, carrying a pistol, Craighead seized an overturned chair, and scowling his legs into the breast and face of the scolar, dumped him neatly into the arms of three or four servants in the court—after which he examined the chair leg, shouted, "No meat on it! I shall starve!" and threw the chair down after the man. Leaping into the car he shouted to Carson to come, or he would have to walk.

Theodore clung to Virginia's hands. His fighting blood was up, and he hated to miss seeing the dear face of his foe. The discharge of the pistol, however, admonished him of the seriousness of his situation, and emphasized Virginia's pleading. He clasped her in his arms; she feebly pushed him off, but yielded to overpowering force.

"Within a few weeks," said he, "I shall be ruined, or successful. And I shall come—for your love!"

"I promise nothing," she whispered, "so go to consider—Oh, Theodore, go! Please, for my sake, go!"

He was upturned in pleading, and he kissed her mouth—once, twice; and as her door crashed in he gently released her, leaped into the car, and threw on the clutches. The aeroplane, rising, soared above the great house, and sped off into the night, amid the whistling of bullets and the crackling of firearms. The attack on Shayne's hold was repulsed—but its leader was jubilant.

CHAPTER XVII.
AMATEUR DAY IN COURT.

"What is the business, Mr. Craighead, of the Universal Nitrate and Air Products company?"

Mr. Craighead, looking down into Broadway from the window of his office, ceased his mysterious counting and talking, snapped a stop watch and turned to the group of reporters. His look was reproachful.

"Gentlemen," said he, "you are crass Roman soldiers. I am Archimedes making calculations; and, instead of allowing him to equate his equations, you javelin him with questions. The journalist Marcello who sent you that Ark won't be disturbed!"

"But, sir, about these absurd studies of middle Broadway," said a young man with a snub nose.

"I am determining," said Mr. Craighead, "the ratio of out-of-town visitors to fifth dwellers, by observing the number who try to see the comets. The Carson-Craighead company must know this. Then my plan for aiding the Society for the Pre-

vention of Noise—by the way, there's a story in that!"

"What is that?" asked a tall, young man who wore a bored look and glasses.

"A law," said Mr. Craighead, "to compel calumny to take out licenses." "That's like to now!" snapped a young woman in a sailor hat. "You're stalling us off!"

"It hurts me," said he, "to be accused of deceit, by one so fair, in terms which make it a cinch that she's wise to all the flash patter along the pike of slang." "That about this noise story," said the snub-nose.

"My bill," resumed Mr. Craighead, "will compel calumny to be so trained in good vocal schools, that their cry, or bay, or yowl will resound through the streets emotionally, surpassing the domineering of hounds, when the horn of the hunter is heard on the hill. Each will be given a pitch for his 'Keb! Keb!' Minor effects may be introduced through accidents or accidents. Full choruses will swell to the blue dome in blockades. This raw material for music far more vital than Wagner's or Strauss' will be written down by the tonic sol-fa system and Mrs. Gentle maid will be young again. At the ferries and stations serried columns of calumny will compete in antiphonal chant, deep, mustat, elevating like a Greek chorus. Art, in that day—"

"This reform, Mr. Craighead," said the starchy young lady, "will come with your plan of teaching burglary and housebreaking in the public schools?"

"Do not sneer," protested Mr. Craighead. "Until we do that, the yegmen have us fad. And sneering distorts the features. Relay sneering!"

"But about the Universal Nitrate and Air Products company," said a fat man with perpetually poised pencil, "and its connection with the aeroplane company?"

"Merely fortuitous," replied Craighead. "The aeroplane company is an ephemeral agency for pro-and-I scorn it!"

"But you are a director?"

"Oh, yes! Oh, yes!" replied Craighead, "but the greater things had not occurred to me when I went into it. I was ill. I was under a claim. I was chemically in that reaction which results in the product known as tungstate of alcoholism, or malarious conversation. A natural monopolist, General Theodo' Carson, M. A., took advantage of my weakness and got me into it. Honor rolled in dishonor stands, and faith unfaithful keeps me falsely true; and I stay with him in his flight with Aeroplane Power. Then I shall give my whole attention to the Universal Nitrate and Air Products company, which is to the Carson-Craighead Aeroplane as the rings of Saturn

to those of Tammany Hall. And, to originate—"You're really good, Mr. Craighead," said she of the sailor hat, "and if the tungstate of your alcoholic days was worse than this, you ought to have taken something for it."

"I tried to," confessed Craighead, "but Dr. Witherspoon expelled me!"

"But here's the situation as we get it. If we're wrong, we'll stay wrong, unless you set us right—"

"O cursed spite!" roared Craighead. "No more tungstate, if you please," said the young woman. "The Air Products company was a wild-cat looking West Virginia formation to—here she read from a clipping—to extract free nitrogen from the air by the Craighead method or otherwise, for the purpose of obtaining fertilizers to thereby increase the capacity of the earth for supporting population—"

"Is that," cried he frantically, "in our articles? Then all is lost! Let me take it!"

His tragic expression seemed so indicative of something sensational that she gave him the paper, with shaking hand, he took down the telephone and asked for Mr. Willey.

"This you, Filley," he queried. "Here's something that ruins us. * * * A split infinite in the articles. * * * Won't hurt anything? Won't have to be done over? * * * And we call ourselves civilized! * * *

Craighead handed the paper back.

"You have shocked me," said he. "But never mind, dearie! I know not whether to rejoice for the Air Products company, or weep for institutions that allow such a solemnity to be legal as to thereby increase. Really now, wouldn't it cork a purist like myself—"

"Well," said the reporter, "it goes on to say 'and for securing all rights in the atmosphere necessary for its complete reduction to possession for the production of nitrate, ozone and all other atmospheric derivatives; and for the securing of exclusive rights in the air over lands for all purposes whatsoever.' Now that," said she, "for all purposes whatsoever" isn't that pretty broad?"

"A broad intellect composed it," said Craighead. "I done wrote that, mahse!"

"And under this clause," said the girl, "you have acquired from land owners over the continent, all their rights in the air over their lands, subject to their use for tillage and building?"

"Oh, do not exaggerate!" cried Craighead. "A symmetrical character requires moderation of statement. We've got these rights from some land owners. We hope—"

(Continued)

HER HAND AND ARM BURNED AND ITCHED

Could Hardly Sleep at Night for About 11 Months. Used Cuticura Soap and Ointment and was Completely Cured.



"My mother had a red spot on her right hand which began to grow worse rapidly. The neighbors said it was a cancer. She got some medicine from a doctor, but it did not do any good. In about a week the tumor began to break out on her arm, too. She used five or six different kinds of liniments and three different kinds of salves. Not one of these did her a particle of good. Her hand and arm would burn and itch so much that she could hardly sleep at night. Her hand was that way for about eleven months. Finally a friend of ours recommended Cuticura Soap and Ointment to us. She bought some immediately and began to use it. The next morning we all noticed a great improvement. Before she had used a half of a box of Ointment and a very little Soap her hand was completely cured. Now her hand is as well as ever. I think Cuticura Soap and Ointment is the greatest skin remedy ever discovered. C. E. Canady, San Leandro, Cal., Mar. 7, 1910."

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Choice of largest room size (9x12 ft.) Rugs; large variety of patterns, including floral, medallion, conventional and Oriental designs, in colorings of red, blue, green, tan, rose and yellow. Rugs suitable for parlor, library, office, dining or bed room use. You will pay \$30 to \$55 in Omaha for duplicates of this quality. Our price only... **\$14.75**

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9x12 largest room size Brussels Rugs, in handsome floral and conventional designs. In rich color combinations to suit any room decoration. All wool 9-wire grade. Others charge \$20. Our price... **\$12.50**

Large room size (7x9-9 ft.) Brussels Rugs, made in one piece—no seams. Heavy 3-inch hemmed ends. Choice of floral, conventional and medallion designs, in colorings of green, red, blue, tan and rose—a usual \$14.00 value, our price... **\$8.50**

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Solid Golden Oak Dining Table, like the illustration. The tops are 42 inches in diameter and extend to six feet in length. They have three leaves, heavy round turned pedestals, and are highly polished.

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Here is a genuine chase leather Turkish Rocker, with tempered springs. It is a easiest chair you ever lounged in, and a most acceptable present.

Solid Oak Table \$1.45
24-inch top, made entirely of solid oak and attractively finished. A very good value.

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This Elegant Dresser is very beautiful and has a plate mirror. Finished in quartered white oak with full swell front, two small top drawers and two large drawers. The price is the kind that comes only once in Grand Rapids.

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Has a plate mirror and full swell front. 2 large drawers. The wood is the finest quality available and the finish is hand rubbed.

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Powerful heater, as well as a great water on coal. There is no other base burner like it, and the features that make it such a wonderful heater, and so economical in the use of fuel, are patented. All doors, joints and window frames are air and dust tight—made so on special machines designed and owned by the makers and also patented. It is absolutely guaranteed to be a perfect heater, give good service and require less fuel than any heater sold for a little money.

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Good Xmas Presents

There was a hustling in the lower hall, as people ran to the windows that gave on the court, and rushed out to see what had fallen. Virginia turned out the dim light—I wonder why?"

"Well," she said, in answer to her maid's tap, "what is it, Fanny?"

"I heard an awful noise," said Fanny. "It seemed to come from 'ere, miss."

"Some things fell into the court," replied Virginia. "Please tell the servants; and say that things must not be piled upon the parapet. That's all, Fanny."

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"Yes, yes! Run at once and tell them. I am quite in earnest, Fanny!"

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"It's a miracle," said Theodore, at last, "but she's all right and ready to rise at a touch!"

"Thank God!" said Virginia.

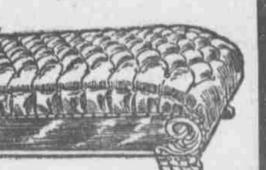
"Did you find a way down?" asked Carson, all unconscious of the nearness of what he sought.

"Only the old way by which I came off the back stoop of the station," replied Craighead. "It's a matter of specific gravity. As to getting back, unless you brought your specific gravity with you, I really don't see, old chap, how it's going to be managed."

"Once down I can force my way up," said Theodore, raising his voice in his intensity. "Do you think I'll go back without seeing her? No! You stay here, and—"

"Mr. Craighead!"

The voice came from the darkness of the house, cool, calm, self-possessed.



Chased Leather Couch \$9.50
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