GHOST PLANE

By ARTHUR STRINGER

W.N.U. SERVICE

THE STORY SO FAR: To help save Norland Airways from bankruptcy Alan Slade agrees to fly a so-called scientist named Frayne and his assistant, Karnell, to the Anawotto river in search of the breeding ground of the trumpeter swan. Slade is suspicious of Frayne, who has nevertheless paid them enough to enable Cruger, Slade's partner, to buy a new Lockheed. Just before leaving he goes with Lynn Morlock, daughter of the local doctor, to give first aid treatment to a flyer named Slim Tumstead. Slade is not pleased to learn that Tumstead, an outcast flyer who has lost his license for drinking, knows about the new plane and about Frayne's expedition. That night the Lockheed is stolen by a masked thief who heads north. On the way to the Anawotto with Frayne and Karnell, Slade runs out of gas, and they are forced to spend the night at the cabin of Slade's prospector friends, Zeke and Minty, where Slade keeps a gas cache. Frayne shows no interest in the fact that the surrounding country is rich in pitchblende, source of a new kind of power. But the next morning Frayne decides to stay near there and not go on to the Anawotto. While Slade is on the way back, Lynn Morlock's father decides to operate on the blind Eskimo, Umanak, in the hope of restoring his eyesight. Umanak is anxious to see again so he can hunt the "devil bird" he hears. Slade has returned, the operation is over, and he and Lynn are talking. She has received a letter from Barrett Walden who, for Lynn's sake, has offered her father a job in Ottawa. Lynn feels that his frontier work is too hard for him.

Now continue with the story.

"But you might remember you don't own this country."

CHAPTER IX

Her father watched her as she read the closely written pages. It came home to him as he studied the stooping figure in white, the vital young figure with its ripening lines of womanhood, that they could not always be together.

"How about Alan?" he repeated as the girl in white looked up from her letter.

"Barrett's been pulling wires again," she observed without meeting her father's eye.

"For whom?" was the Padre's prompt demand.

"For you," said the girl with the letter. "He writes that he's had a cable from the Minister and there's an opening for you in the Department of Timber and Mines. He says it's a grand chance for somebody in the know to co-ordinate the medical care of miners."

The Flying Padre's face hardened a little.

"And who asked Barrett to pull wires for me?" he demanded.

"It was his own idea," acknowledged Lynn. "But he naturally held back until he knew I agreed with him."

The stooping shoulders stiffened.

"No," he said with conviction. "I can't go to seed. Not yet."

Lynn looked at him for a moment or two of silence.

"Barrett," she said, "will be disappointed."

Her father swung about on her. "You know, of course, why he's doing all this?"

"I was only thinking of you, Dad," she said as she leaned against his towering shoulder.

He lifted her head and looked into her face.

"But there's always a string to arrangements like that. And in this case that string would be you." She attempted a protest against that, but he stopped her. "Barrett's a good egg. I like him a lot. And I don't blame him for being in love with you. But I happen to know you're not in love with him."

"Would that be so important?" she asked.

He stroked the cropped head that looked so boylike and yet remained so womanly.

"You're not such a bad egg yourself," he said with a stabilizing sort of gruffness. "I happen to know something that you've got tucked away in that lopsided heart of yours. And I'm not going to sell my girl's happiness for an old-age pension and a berth in Barrett Walden's Department of Timber and Mines."

Slade, after checking over a series of uncertainties, decided to head for Echo Harbor. Cruger, back at Waterways, had told him to follow up any clue that showed itself. And this shadowy plane that had been seen flitting between tidewater and some unknown hinterland base was worth looking into.

That base, Slade acknowledged, may have been unknown; but he had a theory or two of his own which, he felt, kept his quest from being entirely a wild-goose chase. He knew well enough the vastness of the country over which he was flying, with here and there only a time-bleached Eskimo cairn to mark its destitution. And to look for a plane in that tangle of river and muskeg, of ice-scored bluffs and starveling tree growth, seemed very much like looking for a needle in a haystack.

He was further depressed by the discovery that a sea-fog, rolling in from the Arctic Ocean, was cutting off his view of the broken coastline. Where he should have found Echo Harbor he saw only a blanket of gray mist. So he turned south and winged his way into the clear, sweeping the horizon with his glasses as he went. But still no sign of life came to him.

This section of the sub-arctics, he felt as he stared about him, had for obvious reasons remained overlooked. If there was mineral in those lonely gray ridges below him the new frontier hadn't crawled that far north to find it. It still seemed to ache with emptiness. And for that reason, as he winged his way over the gray wastes, he knew a distinct quickening of the pulse when he caught sight of a faint plume of smoke beyond a darker stretch of spruceland that circled a lake studded with many small islands. For smoke meant fire; and fire implied the presence of human life.

Slade dropped lower, avoiding the island-studded lake and circling off to a companion lake that offered clearer water for a landing, a mile or more to the southeast. His eyes searched the shoreline as he drifted into a ridge-sheltered cove where he could moor and land without trouble.

He mounted the ridge and once more peered about at the starved-looking spruceland. But he could see no sign of life. Yet on second thought he stepped down to his plane and quietly removed a breaker assembly. With that out, he knew, his engine was tied up. And he had no intention of taking chances.

His next line of procedure, he decided, was to push on overland in search of that small but unmistakable wisp of smoke. But the going was not easy. He found it best to follow the rock ridges where the footing was safe even though the direction of his advance was variable.

His presence there, he knew, had been well advertised to any watcher between the spruce ridges and the rushes. Yet he advanced with both caution and quietness. Twice he was compelled to back-trail and seek out more solid footing. His final line of advance, he saw, was taking him out to a rush-fringed point abutting into an island-dotted lagoon that was half reed-beds and half open water. It looked lonely and empty.

He was on the point of turning back and rounding the lower arm of the lake when he was arrested by an unexpected sign of life in the reeds ahead of him. This was confirmed, a moment later, by the discovery of footprints in the soil about him. But whoever or whatever lay hidden there refused to disclose itself.

So he pushed quietly on, following the vague path where other feet had preceded his own. He went on until a turn in the narrow runway brought him to a thicker tangle of shrub-willow and rushes.

There, just at the water's edge, he caught sight of a man.

This man was crouched low in a blind of rushes, wattled roughly together. Beside him lay a pair of binoculars and a telescopic camera. But at the moment he was making use of neither. He was merely crouching there, intent and motionless, staring out over the island-dotted lake.

Slade knew it was Frayne, even before he saw the bony face that turned to flash a look of annoyance at the intruder.

"Quiet, please," was Frayne's preoccupied command as his gaze went back to the watery vista in front of him.

"What's happening?" Slade questioned.

"What I have traveled eight thousand miles to find," was Frayne's quietly asperous reply. The half-whispered and half-hissed words came clearly tinged with reproof. "It is a trumpeter swan, making love to his mate."

Slade peered through the rush tops and caught sight of two floating islands of white along the remoter reaches of the lake. The thing that impressed him was first their size and then the snowy whiteness of the feathered bodies that glided in and out between the darker bodies of land that turned the lake end into an archipelago.

"Then you're getting what you came after?" Slade suggested. He noticed for the first time the collapsible rubber canoe, plainly lighter than any Indian birchbark, which lay half-concealed in the fringe of rushes.

"Not when outsiders interfere with my studies," retorted the ornithologist. "Where is your plane?"

"A mile or two southeast of here," Slade explained.

"I won't have a plane disturbing this territory," Frayne proclaimed with an unexpected note of passion. "It means all my work has been for nothing."

Slade's laugh was curt.

"You're welcome to your wilderness," he said. "I'm looking for something bigger than swans."

"Then kindly leave the swans to me."

"Sure," said the unruffled flyer, "but you might remember you don't own this country."

"Perhaps not," was the sharp-noted response. "But the sooner you leave it the happier I'll be."

"Thanks," said Slade. His mouth hardened a little as he stood eyeing the other man. "And what would you do if I happened to hang around?"

Frayne became conscious of the challenge in that question. His thin lips compressed and for a moment he remained silent. Then he shrugged and stared out over the wattled brow of his blind.

"You would not be so foolish," he quietly announced.

That announcement, Slade saw, was not without its own tacit challenge.

"Then since you regard this as your territory," he ventured, "I suppose your camp is here?"

"It is not," countered Frayne. "This is merely an observation post. My camp is farther south, toward the Kasakana, since that seems to be caribou country. And we must have meat, of course."

"If you're nearer the Kasakana," ventured Slade, "you must be neighbors to my two old sourdough friends. I mean Zeke and Minty, the men we bunked with on the way out."

"I have seen nothing of them," was the deliberated response. "My one object here is to be alone."

"Thanks again," said Slade. He stood silent a moment before asking: "Where is that camp-mate of yours?"

"Karnell," said Frayne, "is cutting wood and smoking fish, in case we should winter here. I have learned, in unsettled country, to think of the future."

"If you winter here," observed Slade, "you will no longer have your swans."

"A man of science learns patience," retorted Frayne. "They will come back in the spring."

"But before next spring," persisted Slade, "you'll be needing some plane service."

"I have no need for a plane," asserted the other.

"And you've had none?"

"Of course not."

Slade found it necessary to give that some thought.

"Then why did you try to buy a plane, a couple of weeks ago? And why did you want to hire a flyer?"

The opaque eyes regarded him with disdain.

"That," asserted Frayne, "was before I found what I was looking for."

"And now you've spotted your swans you've no need for us?"

"None whatever," was the acidulated answer.

"And you haven't happened to see a plane in this neighborhood?"

"Not until I had the misfortune of seeing yours."

"Then you saw me as I came in?"

Frayne's nod was curt.

"As did my trumpeters, which you disturbed," he announced.

"Before I leave you to your trumpeters," said the flyer, "I'd like to ask just one question. Where do you come from?"

"What difference does that make?" demanded the other.

"Because your manners make me think you are German."

The ornithologist's face hardened. But his voice, when he spoke, was a controlled one.

"If I had my passports here," he quietly asserted, "you would soon learn otherwise." His movement, as he turned away and reached for his binoculars, took on a touch of the valedictory. "And I regret that my interest in bird life must interfere with your curiosity as to my origin."

Slade laughed.

"Well, good luck with your trumpeters," he said as he turned and strode from the blind. He realized, as he studied out the uncertain trail to where his plane must be resting, that meetings like this were mighty rare along the frontier.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Star Dust

STAGE SCREEN RADIO

By VIRGINIA VALE

Released by Western Newspaper Union.

OLD phonograph records are now being collected for our fighting men. The movement is headed by Kay Kyser, Kate Smith and Gene Autrey, and endorsed by Ginny Simms, Lily Pons, Benny Goodman, Guy Lombardo and practically all the other top notchers in music. Used and broken records will be converted into scrap and sold, and new records bought for U. S. army camps, forts, naval stations and marine bases here and overseas. The American Legion and the Legion Auxiliary will do the picking-up. If you've got a man in the service, you know what a fine thing this is.

Columbia has two of last season's greatest grid greats, Bruce Smith of Minnesota and Frankie Albert of Stanford, on the lot in films based on their own lives. Two All-American teams will figure in each picture.

RKO added a potential 26,000,000 customers for its "Sweet and Hot" with the announcement that two highly popular coast-to-coast programs will appear in the forthcoming Tim Whelan musical, which co-

LUCILLE BALL

stars Lucille Ball and Victor Mature. Charles Victor and his "Court of Missing Heirs" program, and Ralph Edwards and the "Truth or Consequences" company have been signed up for the picture.

Director Alexander Hall sent a camera crew around the city to photograph kissing shots for a trailer for "They All Kissed the Bride." He was so impressed by a girl whom the camera caught kissing a young man good-by at a railway station that he offered her a screen test. She was Evelyn Scott, of Salt Lake City. She accepted, but didn't show up—she'd married the man she kissed!

Betty Rhodes, one of the top singing stars in radio, will be Bing Crosby's leading lady in his next Paramount picture, a radio story tentatively titled "Manhattan at Midnight." She has her own half-hour weekly radio show, singing over a 90-station network.

Susan Peters is the happiest girl in Hollywood. She was just one of a hundred ambitious young actresses, with a small role in "Tish"—and then suddenly she had the second feminine role in "Random Harvest," starring Ronald Colman and Greer Garson, and a new long-term contract with Metro to boot. A local girl, she'd been trying for two years to get a start in pictures.

Recently Jack Holt visited his son Tim on location for "Pirates of the Prairie." Seeing some cowboy extras he'd played with, Jack sat down on a bench in front of a saddle shop to talk with them. A shot was made of Tim riding by—and later it was discovered that, by mistake, Jack appears in his son's picture.

Lana Turner is cheering—she won the dramatic role of the young wife in Metro's "Marriage Is a Private Affair," based on the book of that name. It's a rich and sympathetic role, the sort that young actresses dream of getting.

Amelia Earhart's favorite racing plane, the one in which she broke several national records, is being used by Pat O'Brien in his role of a dare-devil pilot for Columbia's "Flight Lieutenant." It had been rented for spectacular film scenes in which O'Brien is supposed to make test dives. It was not until O'Brien saw Miss Earhart's signature scratched on the instrument panel that he learned the plane had been hers.

ODDS AND ENDS—Lucille Manners had terrific "mike fright" until an engineer took a microphone to pieces and showed her how it worked . . . Lionel Barrymore was asked by Rudy Vallee if he would consider taking his brother's place on the Vallee radio program, but he refused because of ill health . . . Columbia's "Lucky Legs" revives the "pixilated sisters" Frank Capra introduced in "Mr. Deeds" in Adele Rowland and Elizabeth Patterson . . . Feodor Chaliapin Jr., son of the famous Russian basso, has a short but spectacular role, that of Kashkin, in "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

For you to make

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BOUQUETS of cross stitch and lazy daisy flowers make bed sets colorful—finish with the crocheted edging.

Pattern 302 contains a transfer pattern of a 4¾ by 18½ and two 4¾ by 13½ inch motifs; color schemes; illustrations of stitches; materials required. Send your order to:

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Household Hints

When ironing puffed sleeves, fold the sleeve in halves, pulling apart as it sticks. In this way you can get down into the gathers at the top. Iron it dry and you will have a pretty puffed sleeve when it is done.

* * *

If the sewing machine needle will not penetrate heavy canvas, try rubbing the canvas where it is to be sewn with a piece of soap.

* * *

Add a pinch of salt to your cream before whipping.

* * *

When bed sheets become worn, pillowcases may be made from the best portions. Seams may be sewed at the sides, if necessary.

* * *

To remove finger marks around a doorway, use a cloth dipped in kerosene and then wipe with a cloth wrung out of hot water.

* * *

Before working in the garden, put soap under and around your finger nails. You will find them much easier to clean.

* * *

Leather never should be cleaned with gasoline, naptha or any hydrocarbon solution. They dissolve and remove all the essential fats in the leather, leaving it dry and harsh.

From Many Fields

Many members of the New York Stock exchange have unusual occupational backgrounds, says Collier's. For example, the roster today includes a former undertaker, jockey, explorer, magician, prize fighter, army general, baseball player, vaudeville dancer, and a night-club singer. There is also an ordained minister, the Reverend Chester Apy, who bought his seat in 1929 and still preaches every Sunday in the Church of the Second Advent in Eatontown, N. J.

Lunch box Vitamins

Easy-to-peel oranges perfect as 'dessert'

Box lunches are tastier and more healthful when you include oranges.

They're delicious *and* the best way to be sure of your vitamin C! Few foods have much. It's easily lost in cooking. Yet needed *daily*, since you do not *store* it.

Oranges also have vitamins A, B_1 and G; calcium, and other minerals.

Those stamped "Sunkist" are the finest from 14,500 growers. Ideal for juice and recipes. *They keep!*

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Room for Courtesy

In life there is always room for courtesy.—Emerson.

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• Clabber Girl's Positive Double Action makes it the natural choice for economical home baking . . . Clabber Girl means Better Value when you buy; Better Results when you bake.

Ask Mother SHE KNOWS

THE
POWER
OF THE PRESS

• Manufacturers and merchants sense the power of the press. Early they began using it to carry their advertising facts and ideas into homes. And they found it a most profitable way in which to tell their story to buyers. And the buyers in turn found it profitable to deal with those who were willing to state in print the values and services they offered.