

Virginia of the Air Lanes

A ROMANCE OF FLYING

... By ...

Herbert Quick

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CHAPTER XIII.

DEVILFISH VERSUS BIRD.

WHEN the aeroplane was run out on her ways by the long shed in which she had been built there was a flutter of expectancy among those so deeply concerned in her flight.

"The first mate always sails with the ship, uncle," Virginia suggested.

"Would you really go on the trial trip?" he asked.

"Try me," said she. "I want to."

"You'd be worth a dozen of Captain Harrods," replied Carson. "He hasn't the faintest idea of the principles of the Virginia, while you could fly her in a week."

"I could now," asserted Virginia. "The Virginia is a simple, manageable little thing, like her namesake."

"If she shows all her namesake's sweet traits"—began Theodore.

"Then I'm to go?"

"Captain," cried Theodore, "here's a girl that wants to ship as first mate! Make sail, captain. We're going."

But Virginia seated herself beside Theodore, wearing a dress of soft white wool, a close fitting little cap on her head and carrying a jacket over her arm.

"Now, shall I keep the manometer readings? Oh, you haven't any! Well, then, the altimeter statorscope?" she suggested.

"It's self registering," said Theodore. "Really there's nothing to do except in emergencies, and"—

"And there'll be no emergencies!" she cried. "Throw in the clutch, admiral of the circumambient inane! You do the work, and I'll play lady! We're off!"

"Are you willing," said he, turning to her, "to forgive me for this and everything I may ever have done, whatever happens?"

"Whatever happens or doesn't happen, I forgive you!" she cried. "Throw in the clutch before the gyroscopes stop and the Virginia gets brain fag—or shall I?"

"Just for luck," said Theodore, "you throw it in."

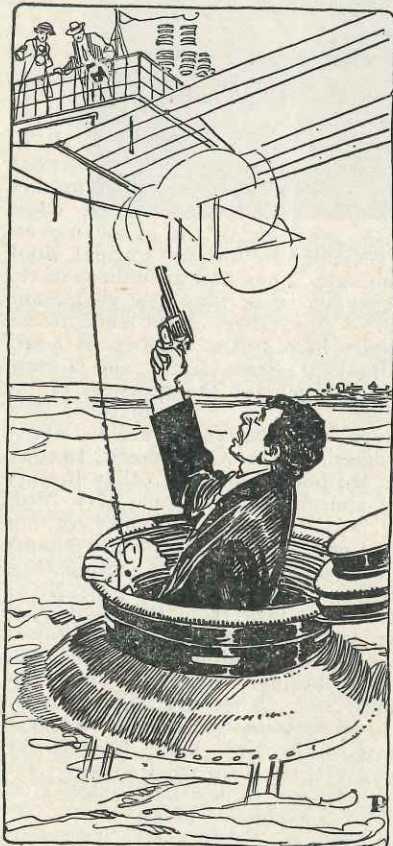
She threw over the lever, and the wing sections started like 40,000 boys' "buzzes." The big bird rose perpendicularly from the ways and fanned the ground no more. Theodore turned on a little more speed, put the rudders apart to bring her head to the light seaward wind, and as she mounted

"bring her down a foot or so! I'm too weak to climb."

"Cheer up!" called Theodore. "It's risky, but I'll try."

If he was to be saved there was no time to be lost. So thought Carson as he depressed the Virginia more and more. Wizner set his teeth in a fierce determination to put both man and ship out of the field at once. He was the sole custodian of the secret of her construction save for Carson. If he could drown her and master the secret of the glass globe he could rebuild her, make his terms with Shayne, be the greatest in his line. And he seized the nacelle with fierce energy, threaded a steel chain through an opening in the structure and dropped back into the water, holding the chain in his hand. It ran around the aluminium beam with a sharp, rasping, startling rattle.

"He's fallen in!" cried Virginia. Theodore looked over the side. A small double chain ran down from the airship, its ends moving about in a most mystifying manner in the sea. And as he looked in astonishment the



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dark blotch of sand rose to the surface and defined itself as the rounded top of the Stickleback, on the black hull of which sat Wizner blowing brine from his mouth, his head shining with water. The manhole opened. Wizner snapped the chain into a ring, slipped into the submarine and reappeared with something small and flat in his hand.

"I'll fix you, you d—d whelp!" he yelled. "Take that!"

He aimed at Carson, fired, and the bullet sang away into the sky. Theodore seized Virginia in his arms and drew her down into the bottom of the car, where they lay panting in each other's arms, panic stricken.

"I must put the ship out of range!"

"I shall have to ask you to protect me," said he, "while I try to cut that chain. They can see with their periscope what I'm doing, and when it is necessary they will come up into the open and fire. By pulling out to sea I can get her at an angle that will force them into the open to shoot. When the manhole opens shoot into it. If you should hit one of them don't let it trouble you."

"I shall kill one of them if I can," said she. "Never mind that! Tell me the things to do!"

"I shall take the pliers and a file," said he. "I don't think the pliers will cut it. I may be too weak to climb back. I don't know that I can do it anyhow. You must take us back to land if I cut her free."

"Never fear. I know every lever." "There's another thing," said he. "We came out with only a little gas. If we go much farther we haven't enough to get ashore with. I think I could soar her in with the aeroplane set of the blades. I think we had better fly low going back and not waste fuel. Keep her gliding about a hundred feet from the water, but if you want the aeroplane set this is the way to fix it."

With a swift movement he showed her the way to manage the mechanism. He lashed a pair of pliers about his neck with a lanyard, thrust a couple of files into his pockets, took off his boots, his coat and waistcoat and stepped to the side.

"You may get ashore," said he, "while I may not. If so goodbye, and God bless you, dearest!"

She threw her arms about his neck and kissed him over and over again. He felt her warm tears on his lips.

"Don't cry!" said he. "Clear your eyes and shoot straight. Goodbye!"

She stepped to the rail and looked fixedly at the black shadow like a gigantic fish that represented the submarine. Carson had disappeared over the side in a terrifying hand under hand descent until he reached the trusswork of the nacelle. The black shadow grew more distinct, the round deck broke water, and as the manhole opened Wizner appeared and aimed at Carson coolly as at a target. Too hastily Virginia fired. The bullet struck the edge of the deck with a vicious spat. Wizner's pistol spoke; his bullet, striking metal, flew singing away, and the girl replied with the third shot of this strange duel. She braced herself against the rail, aimed conscientiously at the middle of the mark presented by the villain below and fired—fired with the curious certitude the marksman feels when he is making a good shot. Wizner had just lifted his arm to fire again, but his hand fell as if struck down by a giant's blow. He dropped back into the darkness like a shot woodchuck, the manhole closed, and the submarine went on toward deep water as grimly as before.

"Good!" said Theodore. "But watch the manhole just the same. I shall have to file the chain. The pliers won't do."

Suddenly she heard Carson calling. "They've hove to," said he. "I think they're going to try drowning us here. Don't lose control of yourself. Re-

out yonder where perhaps no man had been since creation's morn.

"Theodore!"

The file stopped for a minute. "Keep her as she is," said he. "We've got the submarine stopped. I've got the chain about filed through, but I'm a little tired. Keep her as she is for just a little while!"

(Continued Next Saturday.)

DOWN THE CRAGS OF WEST ROCK

By Tom Waite.

I was reclining in a hammock under the old apple tree, when Val, my friend of many happy outings, appeared and sat on the grass near me.

"Did you ever have the desire," said he, "to go somewhere where the foot of man has never trod?"

"Why, yes," said I, "in my kid days it was one of my best dreams, but at the present time it is too difficult to think about seriously."

"Why, no it isn't," said Val, "It could be done in less than three miles from this spot."

"Literally, of course it could," I agreed, "but I suppose it's some new beetle you expect to find somewhere or some relic of the prehistoric man," for Val is a collector of nearly everything collectable.

"Well," said he, "it's something like that. I have always thought it would be a great stunt to go down the face of West Rock on a rope, and two fellows could do it easily enough; at least we could. Just think what we might find on the ledges, or in the crevices."

"I'll go you," said I, "but it will have to be just the right kind of weather when we try it." I often wished to do this thing, and was as eager for the venture as Val.

"All right, old man, and leave the rope and tackle to me, I understand that sort of thing, you know."

"Here is the wildest place I know," said Val, as he dropped a huge coil of knotted rope, "and here's a scrub oak that will do to tie to. I first thought of going down by pulley but as there will be plenty of footholds, it's hardly necessary."

"How long is this rope of yours?" I asked. "It looks rather frail to me."

"Over two hundred feet; best Manila; hold an elephant. Who'll go first?"

"Here's a cent," said I, "heads, you go, and tails, it's up to me."

Val sighed regretfully as the cent came down in my favor, and I prepared for the descent. It was a perfect day overhead, and a cool breeze blew over the brow of the Rock, bearing with it the sounds of busy life from the village below.

"Val," said I solemnly, "if I don't come back I bear you no ill will for originating this scheme. I leave you my hunting leggings that you wore to a frazzle last fall, and the few other things in my den that you covet."

"I don't want your old leggings; nothing is going to happen anyway; and just sing out if there's anything to interest me, will you?"

"All right, my optimistic friend," said I, as I placed my coat in a position to prevent the rope from chafing and swung over the edge and down.

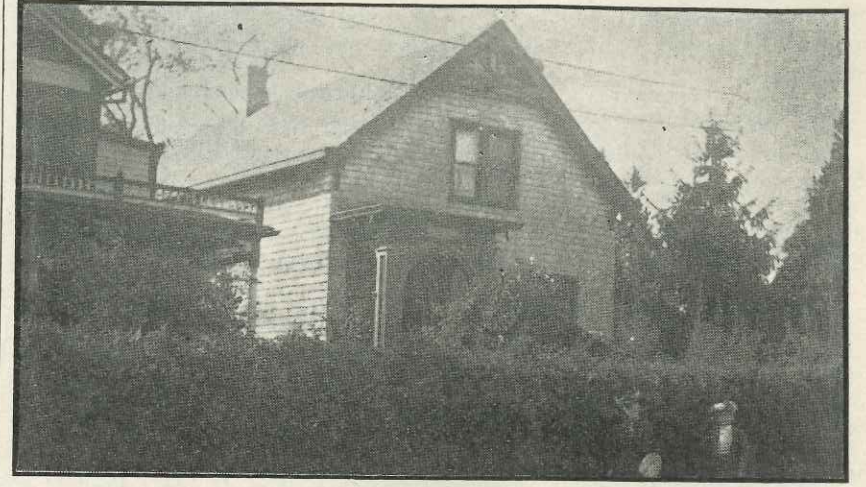
Fifty feet, one hundred feet, and nothing of interest; one hundred and twenty-five feet and I discovered a

INTERESTING ARTISTS' COLONY ESTABLISHED AT SHORT BEACH

Unique in many respects and much like the famous colony of artists at Lyme is the Bostwick Artists' colony at Short Beach. The colony was established more than ten years ago by Miss M. A. Bostwick, the artist, who built the "Studio," one of the characteristically Bohemian places in the charming

turning from "Sans Souci," after a call at the "Studio," said it was worth a trip just to see the pictures.

The cottages owned by Miss Bostwick, and included in the "Colony," are the Studio, Sans Souci, the Stone House, the Villa Heinrichen, Bostwick Lodge, Fernwood and Linger Longer. Miss Bostwick sold Linger Longer



THE STUDIO AND SANS SOUCI.

shore resort. Miss Bostwick is an artist of no small talent, and has done work which has been recognized as of real worth among art connoisseurs. She was formerly a resident of Hartford, where she studied under the auspices of the Hartford Art society.

The "Studio" has been the center of art and musical attractions at Short

last January. The first five cottages mentioned above are in the vicinity of the Studio and the new Short Beach school house, directly on the trolley road, and convenient to the beach. The others are in Bostwick park. Three new houses have been added to the colony the past year and one-half in this new park. One is owned and built by



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She threw over the lever, and the wing sections started like 40,000 boys' "buzzes." The big bird rose perpendicularly from the ways and fanned the ground no more. Theodore turned on a little more speed, put the rudders apart to bring her head to the light seaward wind, and as she mounted higher and higher he tried her control. He pushed over the lever that determined the thrust of the driving blades, and she shot in over the dunes like a wild thing until he headed her back for the gulf. Well inside the bar, so that an overturn might not mean a drowning, he circled about in a wide curve, which he gradually narrowed by a more extreme use of the helm until she was spinning round and round in an orbit, in which the tips of the inner wings were almost stationary and "treading" air like a pausing swimmer.

"That tests out the balancing device!" shouted Theodore. "How's that?"

"Aye, aye, sir!" said Virginia. "That do sure test out the balancing device. And if you let her chase her tail like this much longer I'm going to be indisposed. Please whirl her the other way awhile, unkie."

Virginia walked forward. They were flying higher now, and she could see the pine woods far inland, with their square patches of plowed fields, their white houses behind the great green globes of the china trees. Far over the northwest soared a great aeronat, silver white, as if covered with tin foil.

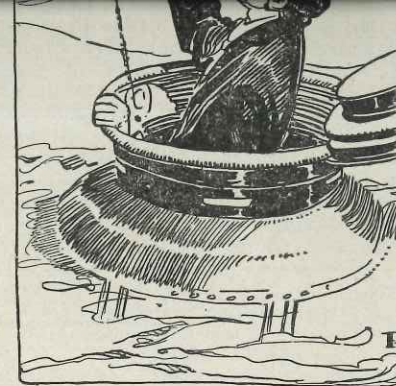
"I wonder if that isn't the Roc?" queried Virginia.

"If it is," said he, "and she comes about this place we'll show her what real aviation is."

Then they swept over and down the coast. They turned back and swirled out over the sea.

"Oh, look, look!" suddenly said Virginia. "There's some one in the water!"

Below floated the half collapsed and sinking go-devil of a submarine. Beside it lay a great blotch of darkness so symmetrical that Theodore was impressed with the sudden idea that it was a submarine rather than a patch



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dark blotch of sand rose to the surface and defined itself as the rounded top of the Stickleback, on the black hull of which sat Wizner blowing brine from his mouth, his head shining with water. The manhole opened. Wizner snapped the chain into a ring, slipped into the submarine and reappeared with something small and flat in his hand.

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"I must put the ship out of range!" cried Carson, leaping to the lever.

She rose like a feather for just a moment, and then she swung about like a kite with its string fouled, anchored by some devilish contrivance. Carson stepped to the side again and looked over. The Virginia hung some thirty yards above the water, and straining backward and downward ran the steel chain looped through her works and fastened by both ends to the submarine. The harsh, raucous laugh of Wizner rose with horrid significance from the Stickleback's manhole, which was again above water and open.

"Don't be in a hurry!" he shouted. "Stick around with us awhile. We're going out where it's deep. Come in; the water's fine! Got your bathing suits? When she draws short telephone down. Don't yell, for there won't no one hear you. There won't no one hear either of you again in this world except just you two. By-by! See you in Davy Jones'—d—n you!"

And with this, as if pulled down from below, the man vanished into the dark interior, the manhole closed, and the chain, like a line taken by some titanic fish, started out to sea. The airship had been captured by the submarine! The mechanical devilfish was not running very deep; her round deck rose awash sometimes, but with the manholes closed, and with no sign save the erection of her periscope that she was more than an inert mass of steel she swam on.

Still seated where Theodore had placed her, Virginia looked at him in questioning terror. He was white and horrified. At this moment he was depressing her in her flight so as to get all possible slack in the chain, so that by a sudden upward rush he might break the tether. Once, twice, thrice he did this, but the chain held.

"What is it, Theodore? What is it?" said she.

fixedly at the black shadow like a gigantic fish that represented the submarine. Carson had disappeared over the side in a terrifying hand under hand descent until he reached the trusswork of the nacelle. The black shadow grew more distinct, the round deck broke water, and as the manhole opened Wizner appeared and aimed at Carson coolly as at a target. Too hastily Virginia fired. The bullet struck the edge of the deck with a vicious spat. Wizner's pistol spoke; his bullet, striking metal, flew singing away, and the girl replied with the third shot of this strange duel. She braced herself against the rail, aimed conscientiously at the middle of the mark presented by the villain below and fired—fired with the curious certitude the marksman feels when he is making a good shot. Wizner had just lifted his arm to fire again, but his hand fell as if struck down by a giant's blow. He dropped back into the darkness like a shot woodchuck, the manhole closed, and the submarine went on toward deep water as grimly as before.

"Good!" said Theodore. "But watch the manhole just the same. I shall have to file the chain. The pliers won't do."

Suddenly she heard Carson calling. "They've hove to," said he. "I think they're going to try drowning us here. Don't lose control of yourself. Remember this is a fight, and we aren't whipped yet. Do you hear?"

"Yes," said she. "But it's so awful—so awful! If you were only up here where you could— Tell me what to do! Tell me what to do!"

"Do you see how the chain shortens?" asked Carson. "She's going down. If the water's deep enough she can drown us unless we can overcome her gravity. Turn the index so as to show a dead down thrust of the blades and then full power on the last speed. It will take fuel, but it's the only way. Hurry!"

The airship sank, sank, nearer and nearer to the water. But without waiting to learn how the girl was carrying out his orders Carson again attacked the chain, and the shrill "screak" of the file greeted Virginia's ears as she turned the indicator and threw on the power. As they had never done before the great engines purred, the wing blades trod the air with a terrific roar, but with remorseless suction-like force the submarine drew her down closer, closer to the water, and she seemed lost. The sinking was slower now, but nevertheless more and more of the chain disappeared in the sea every moment. Virginia looked and despaired. The waves were so terrifyingly near, death in their cold depths seemed so unthinkable horrible, she bowed her face in her hands. The "screak, screak, screak," of the file kept on with the regularity of a machine. Carson was at work. He might be drowned. But when he went under he would go fighting. He was a man!

She stepped to the side and called to him.

"I think," said she, "that we are doomed. Is there anything I can do?" "You might advance the spark," said he. "Not much, just the least trifle. Yes, I reckon they've got us."

She sprang to the machinery and did this last thing ordered by her com-

that sort of thing, you know."

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Val sighed regretfully as the cent came down in my favor, and I prepared for the descent. It was a perfect day overhead, and a cool breeze blew over the brow of the Rock, bearing with it the sounds of busy life from the village below.

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"I don't want your old leggings; nothing is going to happen anyway; and just sing out if there's anything to interest me, will you?"

"All right, my optimistic friend," said I, as I placed my coat in a position to prevent the rope from chafing and swung over the edge and down.

Fifty feet, one hundred feet, and nothing of interest; one hundred and twenty-five feet and I discovered a shelf in quite a depression of the cliff that I desired to explore, but could only reach it by swinging. This I succeeded in doing and fastened the rope to a projection to keep it within reach.

I landed facing outward, and as I turned and stooped to pick up an arrow head that had lain there bleaching for hundreds of years, I gave a yell of delight, for there beyond was a dark cavity; unmistakably the entrance to a cave. I peered within, but could tell nothing of its dimension owing to the darkness, but judging from the sound of a stone I cast, it might prove extensive.

Obviously I could do nothing without a light, and after much yelling I managed to make Val understand what I had found, and that we required candles from the village; that he should say nothing of the find and return as soon as possible.

What a sensation! When this becomes known, the Park commission will have steps, or possibly an elevator, leading to my cave, and—yes, it would, of course, be named after the discoverer. Thusly I ruminated while waiting for Val.

One hour, two hours, passed; then I saw the rope vibrating, and grasping it I helped Val to the shelf.

"Great stunt you gave me," he puffed. "I'm all in. Where's your old cave?"

"Lord," said he when he saw the opening, "let's get busy; what do you think of my idea now?"

We had to stoop to enter, but in a few feet it opened into a nearly square chamber about ten by fifteen feet, with a high jagged roof, where the bats were fluttering by the score.

As we advanced over the nearly level floor Val stumbled over a pile of debris and out rolled a white object and crumbled against the wall.

"It's a human skull," said he, examining the fragments, "too bad it broke; though it seems we are not the first here after all."

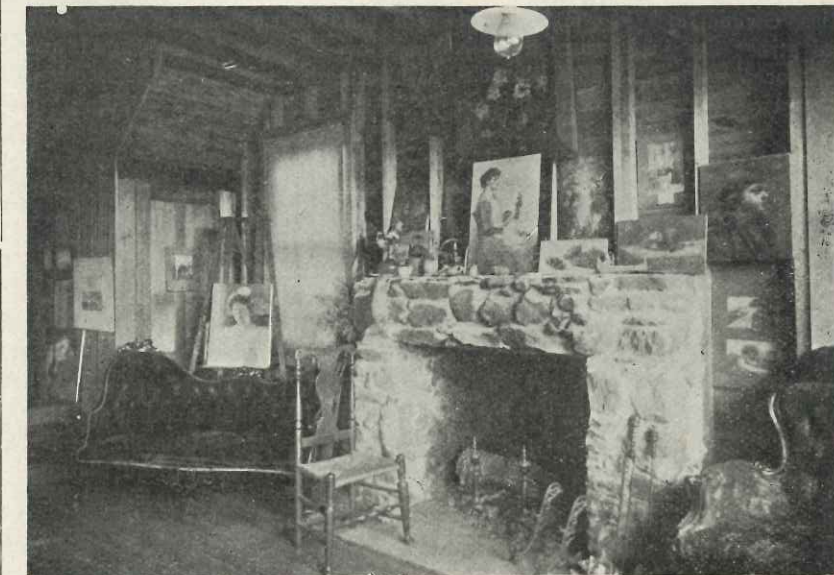
There were other bones in the heap that crumbled at the touch; sixteen



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Beach, and it and its neighboring cottages offer special inducements in securing reasonable accommodations for artists and their friends. Many teachers have profited by a sojourn at one of the cottages so near to the water. The natural beauty of Short Beach is enticing, and the fall is particularly pleasant at this popular resort. Although

Frank A. Bonney. A bungalow has been built by George Stoddard, a nephew of the noted lecturer of that name, and a third has been built by Mr. Fred Gardner. On the "White Birches" site a little summer cottage will be built later for Miss Bostwick. One or two more building lots there are still to be had. Miss Bostwick built three of



FIREPLACE IN MISS BOSTWICK'S STUDIO.

the public musicales have laxed somewhat of late years, many interesting informal affairs are still enjoyed by the cottagers of the Bostwick colony.

Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings are open to the general public after 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Miss K. L. Hussey, the artist, and Miss L. M. Chaffee, the lace-maker, will receive with Miss Bostwick. Classes in painting may be made for the fall, including talks in the "Studio" and out-of-door sketching. A visitor just re-

the cottages, Fenwood, the Studio and Stone House.

The little colony, which has been in existence ten years or longer, is attractive to artists, school teachers, music teachers, and music lovers, and is open early and late in the season, only closing for very cold weather, to open in May again. As an ideal place to spend the summer in an artistic atmosphere, and to enjoy the charms of the Sound with all the attractions of the country, the Bostwick colony is unsurpassed.

his gun," said Val. "I am glad, however, as it will look well in my collection."

In a corner of the chamber we found several soapstone bowls and dishes; nu-

And have you noticed that the air in here is comparatively fresh? That shows there is an outlet somewhere."

"That's true," said I, "but have you noticed that our candles are getting low? We'd better continue this trip