

SERIAL STORY

The Isolated Continent

A Romance of the Future

By Guido von Horvath and Dean Hoard

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SYNOPSIS.

For fifty years the continent of North America has been isolated from the rest of the world by Z-rays, the invention of Hans Prudent, the president of the United States. A message from Count von Werdenstein, chancellor of Germany, that he has succeeded in penetrating the rays hastens the death of Prudent. Dying, he warns his daughter Astra that foreign invaders are now certain to attack. Her father, Alfred, Napoleon Edison, a former pupil of Prudent's, offers to assist Astra and hints at new discoveries which will make North America impregnable. A man giving the name of Chevalier de Leon offers Werdenstein the secret of making gold in return for European disarmament. The chevalier is made a prisoner. Countess Rosina, a spy, becomes a prisoner in the hope of discovering de Leon's secret. She falls in love with him and agrees to join him in an attempt to escape. By the use of rockets she summons a curious flying machine. He escapes and sends a message to Astra which reveals the fact that he is Napoleon Edison. He informs Astra that the countess and the man of Europe have sailed to invade America. He calls on Astra the following night and explains his plans for defense. By the use of aeroplanes made of a new substance which is indestructible, he expects to annihilate the aerodromes. He delivers his secret to Werdenstein on his flagship demanding immediate withdrawal. He is attacked and by destroying two warships and several aeroplanes, forces von Werdenstein to agree to universal disarmament. The countess, who had remained in America as a guest of Astra, receives an offer from von Werdenstein of the principality of Schomburg-Lithow in return for Edison's secret. Edison and his assistant, Santos, go in search of the countess. They find it on the estate of Schomburg-Lithow. The countess gets Santos into her clutches. She promises to reveal Edison's secret as soon as von Werdenstein turns over the Schomburg-Lithow estate to her. On the day of the wedding of Astra and Edison the countess and Santos flee the country. Santos perfects a machine, is made a count and marries the countess, now princess of Schomburg-Lithow. Edison finds a new deposit of gold and builds a new fleet of airships. He accidentally discovers a liquid that will render opposing airships helpless. Santos completes a fleet for the princess. The aviators of the fleet elect her queen. She plans to master the world. Werdenstein sends an ultimatum to Edison. He discovers the princess' real plans and is in despair.

CHAPTER XXII.—Continued.

An hour later an aerodrome landed the chancellor in Berlin. He retired to his library and sank into the chair before his desk in despair. The weapon that he had counted on had turned against him. He, too, was glad that he had sent Captain Hochamberg on his mission before the visit to Suemeg.

The next day four aerodromes started from Suemeg. They were carrying, suspended from their bodies a tremendous bomb. Their orders were to reach the Island of Ciryne by morning of the coming day.

When Washington received the news that the European monarchies, with the exception of England, had sent an ultimatum, most people simply smiled and asked: "What can they do? Napoleon Edison can take care of them."

Captain Von Hochamberg waited in vain for orders to reach him at Liverpool, and at eight o'clock he opened the sealed order. There was another sealed envelope in the packet and this order: "Take this letter personally to the address mentioned in the quickest possible manner."

The sealed envelope was addressed to "Mrs. Napoleon Edison, Washington, U. R. of A."

The captain left the German consulate and hurriedly secured a stateroom on the quickest route to the United States, and at eleven that morning he sailed for New York.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Second Victory. It was the Tuesday before Thanksgiving day.

No one would have thought that the sunshiny, clear sky would soon be the field of the first aerial encounter.

Napoleon took leave of his wife and mother, assuring them that as soon as he had finished his task he would hurry back to them. After another embrace from Astra he ascended to the roof of the Crystal Palace and stepped into the Eagle. He was alone.

He floated slowly toward the east.

His preparations were complete. Jerome Whistler had marshaled all the men together and they had taken the aerodromes from the island. The busy little place was as silent as the grave this Tuesday morning.

Napoleon rose high in the air and connected his 'graph with young Sullivan who, with his three helpers, had been patrolling the Pacific Ocean all night. Young Sullivan told him that they had sighted four blue-flagged aerodromes headed for America an hour before. They were grouped together and carried a large, heavy object.

Napoleon told Sullivan to stop them and make them drop the object into the ocean. If they refused to obey Sullivan was ordered to use his judgment in his treatment of them, but they were not to be permitted near the coast. Young Sullivan bowed and the connection was broken.

The young man was using the Hawk, the machine Santos Duprel had used. He went straight forward to meet the four strange aerodromes that were approaching slowly, being handicapped by the tremendous weight they were carrying. He signaled for his three men to come to his assistance. They answered from the north and south and he knew that they would hasten to him. He sped onward, meeting the four strange aerodromes. They had slackened their pace and the foremost answered Sullivan's "Hello."

"What do you want?" he asked in German, through the speaking tube. "I want you to drop that balloon that you are carrying into the ocean right here!" replied Sullivan, decided, in the same language. "We'll drop it in good time, my friend."

When the four aerodromes refused to stop their flight toward Ciryne, Sullivan made a dart forward and upward and those in the burdened crafts, knowing the significance of that upward dart, rose also. "Will you drop that?" shouted Sullivan.

The answer was a hail of bullets. Sullivan was surprised to see that they bored into the protecting shell of his machine. They did not entirely penetrate the clynth. "That is something new," thought he. After the return to Ciryne he examined those bullets and found each tipped with diamond chips.

He saw, in the distance, two other aerodromes coming in answer to his call for assistance.

The four hostile aerodromes continued their fire, and finally Sullivan pulled the lever that discharged the collected lightning. It struck the metal shell of the bomb and the next second an explosion came that sent the flock of machines high up into the air. Sullivan's 'drome, being to one side, did not suffer the shock that the others had, and he succeeded in spreading the wings and checking the upward flight.

The nature of clynth was such that Napoleon could see the widely extended fleet of aerodromes with his naked eye. He dipped downward, and stopped in the air, about two hundred feet above the surface of Pamlico Sound. There the Eagle awaited the Princess. As she made a desperate rush for him, he escaped again, almost by a miracle, then turned and darted after the Princess madly, changing from the pursued into the pursuer. They rose upward together and Napoleon waved a smiling salute to the princess.

The aerodromes of the latter were approaching steadily. She seemed to have forgotten them entirely in the heat of the pursuit, while she was the aggressor, but now, when Napoleon turned against her, she quickly turned to the stylograph and gave orders to her fleet to close in upon them, but not to interfere until it was necessary for her safety.

Napoleon plainly heard the message and waited until she had broken connection, then he faced her machine and unhurriedly pulled a lever that was connected with the tube that had been lately attached to all his aerodromes. A thick stream of white liquid shot out and landed squarely upon the left wing of the Princess. The bird trembled. Santos calmly turned on the emergency dry battery and, like a great wounded bird, the Princess began to settle downward. The white stream was stopped, a deft turn of the wheel, a well-directed move and the Eagle slipped between the wings of the Princess, and she was a prisoner.

Rosita was as pale as death. The terrible disappointment of losing, when victory was so near, made her faint. Then she remembered her fleet and signaled orders quickly. She had not noticed that Napoleon, just before he turned on the liquid that had disabled her machine, had hoisted a red signal, and a great fleet of aerodromes rose from the coast along North Carolina and silently closed in on the fleet of the enemy.

The formation of Pamlico Sound made this maneuver easy and Napoleon had cleverly led Rosita and her fleet into the trap. He turned his Eagle landward and, weighted as he was, moved slowly away. His men had been fully instructed in regard to their action and Whistler led them.

give twice as much speed. The student was willing to learn and imitated Napoleon's action, getting on his trail just as he passed beneath him.

They quickly passed from the horizon of the sixteen other aerodromes. Napoleon was again far in advance when he began to ascend rapidly. As he rose, he saw with satisfaction the faint blue line of the American coast.

The Princess was pressing him closely, rising as he rose. The Eagle slowed down and let them come nearer, then he turned about and faced them. They were rising, each trying to gain in elevation. Rosita cried to Santos: "Why can't we rise faster?" "There are three of us and only one of Napoleon."

"Did you hear that, Sulamov?" sharply said Rosita. He bowed submissively.

"Your ancestors were always ready to die for their sovereign; are you?" "I am!"

"Thank you!" She smiled at the Russian and pointing to the side door of the aerodrome, continued: "This way, my boy, we are too heavy." Sulamov kissed her hand and opened the door calmly. With a last ardent look he jumped.

He could have dipped again and run away, but that was not his game.

They almost touched, and the Princess Rosita shouted through the speaking tube: "Give up, Mr. Peace President; you have no chance!"

Indeed, it seemed so; the larger bird made a leap toward the Eagle. Rosita urged Santos and watched Napoleon, who was following every move of the attacking Princess closely.

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