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FOUR COLOR COMIC

No. 54

• J. KIL WAGTIN •
DELL
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FLASH GORDON



FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Serialized in Dell's Flash Gordon



AFTER CROSSING A STREAM, WHICH SEEMS TO RUN UPHILL, FLASH AND HIS FRIENDS FIND THEMSELVES DRAWN INTO A TUNNEL AS IF BY A GREAT MAGNET. FLASH GRABS DALE AND CLINGS TO A ROCK AS DESIRA AND ZARKOV ARE SUDDENLY SWEEPED UPWARD!



UP THEY FLOAT TOWARD THE TOP OF THE TUNNEL! "WE HAVE NO WEIGHT!" EXCLAIMS ZARKOV, "THIS IS SOME AMAZING SORT OF SUSPENDED GRAVITY!"



THEN WITH INCREASING SPEED, THE SCIENTIST AND QUEEN DESIRA "FALL UP" IN A HUDDLED HEAP TO THE CEILING OF THE TUNNEL! "ARE YOU HURT?" ZARKOV ASKS, AND DESIRA REPLIES IN A PUZZLED TONE: "NO, BUT I'M ALL MIXED UP--WE'RE STUCK UP HERE! WHAT IF WE FELL DOWN?"



ZARKOV EXCLAIMS: "THERE IS NO POSSIBLE MAGNETISM THAT COULD HOLD THE HUMAN BODY LIKE THIS--EXCEPT A CHANGE IN GRAVITY! WE CAN'T FALL!"

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FLASH, DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO THE POINT OF "NEUTRAL GRAVITY"--WHERE DESIRA AND ZARKOV STARTED FALLING UP--HOLDS DALE SAFELY BY CLUTCHING THE SIDE OF THE TUNNEL WALL. BUT AS HE WATCHES ZARKOV, HE SAYS: "DALE ARE YOU GAME TO JOIN THEM?"

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FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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UP WHERE DESIRA AND ZAEKOV ARE STANDING ON THE ROOF OF THE CAVE, GRAVITY IS SOMEHOW REVERSED. FLASH SAYS: "WE CAN'T GO BACK BECAUSE OF THE ROCK TERMITES. COME ON, DALE, LET'S FACE WHATEVER STRANGE WORLD LIES AHEAD FOR US!"



SO SAYING, FLASH LOOSENS HIS HOLD ON THE WALL AND HE AND DALE FLOAT THRU THE AREA OF NEUTRAL GRAVITY.



AS THEY APPROACH THE ZONE OF REVERSED GRAVITY, THEY "FALL UP" WITH INCREASING SPEED TOWARD THE CEILING. FLASH CLUTCHES DALE IN HIS ARMS AND, WITH HIS USUAL LIGHTNING COORDINATION, TURNS OVER IN MID-AIR AND LANDS ON HIS FEET!

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FLASH QUICKLY ADJUSTS HIMSELF TO THIS WEIRD, UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD: "WE'LL HAVE TO GO ON ALONG THE TUNNEL. WALK CAREFULLY - THIS FIELD OF UPSET GRAVITY MAY END AND THEN WE'D FALL!"



INSTEAD OF WEAKENING, THE UPWARD-PULLING GRAVITY GETS SWIFTLY STRONGER, SO THAT THEY FEEL AS IF THEIR BODIES WERE SEVERAL TIMES THEIR USUAL WEIGHT. "I CAN HARDLY WALK," DALE GASPS.



"THE GRAVITY-PULL IS GETTING WEAKER. I'VE PASSED THE CENTER OF THE MYSTERIOUS FIELD. I'LL BET THIS IS CAUSED BY SOME HUGE METEORITE OF SUPER-DENSITY THAT IS LODGED IN THE GROUND ABOVE THE CAVE ROOF! GREAT SCOTT! WHAT'S THIS COMING AT ME?" EXCLAIMS FLASH.

FLASH GORDON

BY
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RAYMOND

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PINNED TO THE ROOF OF THE CAVE BY THE UPWARD GRAVITY, FLASH HAS ALL HE CAN DO TO COPE WITH THE STRANGE CONDITIONS OF THIS TINY UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD. SUDDENLY, HE FINDS HIMSELF BEING ATTACKED BY GREAT DRAGON-BATS, THEIR SWORD-LIKE BEAKS THIRSTING FOR HIS BLOOD!



FLASH DROPS TO HIS KNEE, DODGING THE FIRST BAT. HIS RAY-GUN BLASTS THE SECOND INTO SHREDS---



OTHER BLOOD-MAD CAVE-BATS FOLLOW THE FIRST TWO, BUT FLASH'S QUICK EYE AND TRIGGER FINGER ARE MORE THAN A MATCH FOR THE WHEELING, DIVING SWARM---



AFTER ANNIHILATING THE LAST OF THE GRUESOME CREATURES, FLASH HURRIES BACK TO DALE AND ZERKOW. HIS GREAT STRENGTH HELPS THE GIRLS PAST THE CENTER OF THE HEAVIEST UPWARD PULL OF GRAVITY--



AS THEY CONTINUE ALONG THE CEILING, THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL BECOMES STEADILY WEAKER-- UNTIL DALE BEGINS TO FLOAT. SHE CRIES OUT AND FLASH GRABS HER, SHOUTING: "BE CAREFUL, EVERYBODY! GRAVITY IS RIGHTING ITSELF!"

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FLASH GORDON

BY
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RAYMOND

Week 7 - Part 2a



FLASH REALIZES THAT THE STRANGELY REVERSED GRAVITATIONAL FORCE IS RIGHTING ITSELF, CLINGING TO DALE, HE CALLS TO THE OTHERS: "BE CAREFUL-- YOU MIGHT FALL! GET OVER TO THE SIDE WALL AND HANG ON!"



HOLDING PRECARIOUSLY TO THE WALL, THEY WORK THEIR WAY THRU THE AREA OF DANGEROUS "NEUTRAL" GRAVITY TO A POINT WHERE NORMAL GRAVITY ONCE MORE EXERTS ITSELF

HAPPY AT BEING OUT OF THE AREA OF CONFLICTING GRAVITIES, THE FOUR FRIENDS RENEW THEIR EFFORTS TO FIND AN EXIT FROM THE CAVE. FLASH OBSERVES THAT THE TUNNEL SEEMS TO SLOPE UPWARD--



THEN SUDDENLY, THERE IS SUNLIGHT AHEAD! FREEDOM AT LAST! WITH CRIES OF JOY, THE WEARY FUGITIVES RUSH TOWARD THE TUNNEL'S EXIT---



"NOW I KNOW WHERE I AM!" DESIRA CRIES, AS THEY REACH OPEN GROUND. "THAT'S OUR FAMOUS 'MAGNET MOUNTAIN'-- NO WONDER EVERYTHING WAS SO MIXED UP! NOW I CAN FIND THE WAY TO MY CAPITAL!" FLASH SAYS: "MAYBE YOUR COUSIN, PRINCE BRAZOR HAS GOTTEN THERE FIRST!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX RAYMOND

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"WE'RE APPROACHING ONE OF MY OUTPOSTS--I CAN ORDER A JUNGLE CAR TO TAKE US TO MY CAPITAL," SAYS QUEEN DESIRA. BUT FLASH, REMEMBERING RUTHLESS PRINCE BRAZOR, SAYS: "I HOPE YOU STILL HAVE A CAPITAL, DESIRA!"

"WHO ARE YOU?" ASKS AN OFFICER AT THE OUTPOST. "I'M QUEEN DESIRA," SHE ANNOUNCES. "YOU WILL SEND FOR A SWIFT JUNGLE CAR FOR MY TRANSPORTATION, CAPTAIN..."



FLASH SENSES SOMETHING PECULIAR ABOUT THE CAPTAIN'S ATTITUDE, AS HE USHERS THEM INTO THE OUTPOST AND LEAVES TO CALL THE PALACE ON THE SPACEPHONE: "NONSENSE!" SCOFFS DESIRA. "HE'S MERELY NERVOUS IN THE PRESENCE OF HIS QUEEN!"



BUT FLASH HAS NOT SURVIVED A THOUSAND DANGERS BY BEING FOOLISHLY TRUSTING. THE CAPTAIN MUTTERS INTO THE SPACEPHONE: "IT IS THE SUPPOSEDLY DEAD QUEEN, KING BRAZOR! SHALL I ARREST HER AS AN IMPOSTOR?"



"SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR CONVERSATION," SAYS FLASH, AS HE BREAKS THE SPACEPHONE CONNECTIONS, "BUT YOU ARE NOT GOING TO ARREST ANYONE! REACH FOR THE SKY, TRAITOR!"

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FLASH GORDON

BY
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"QUEEN DESIRA WILL PUNISH YOU FOR TRYING TO HAND HER OVER TO PRINCE BRAZOR" SAYS FLASH TO THE OUTPOST CAPTAIN. BUT THE MAN PROTESTS—KING BRAZOR SAYS SHE'S AN IMPOSTOR



BLINDED BY THE REWARD BRAZOR WOULD PAY FOR, THE OFFICER LUNGES AT FLASH—ONLY TO BE KNOCKED COLD!

FLASH CALLS HIS COMPANIONS TO BREAK THE BAD NEWS: "BRAZOR HAS SEIZED YOUR THRONE AND DECLARED YOU DEAD, DESIRA. I FEAR THAT MOST OF YOUR SUBJECTS WILL BELIEVE HIM!"



BUT DESIRA INSISTS ON ANNOUNCING HER RETURN: "BRAZOR IS A TRAITOR WHO TRIED TO KILL ME! I CALL ON ALL MY LOYAL SUBJECTS TO OVERTHROW HIM AND SUPPORT ME!" BUT FLASH KNOWS THAT BY THIS TIME BRAZOR'S PICKED TROOPS MUST ALREADY BE ON THEIR WAY TO THE OUTPOST.



FLASH AND ZARKOV BOLDLY DISARM AND IMPRISON THE SMALL OUTPOST GARRISON IN THEIR OWN GUARDHOUSE. THEN, WITH COMMANDERED GRYPHS, SUPPLIES AND WEAPONS, FLASH LEADS HIS LITTLE PARTY BACK INTO THE WILD OF TROPICA.

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FLASH GORDON

BY
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RAYMOND

Illustrated by Alex Raymond

AFTER IMPRISONING THE OUTPOST GARRISON, FLASH, LEADS HIS FRIENDS INTO THE WILDS OF TROPICA: "I'LL ROUSE MY PEOPLE—THEY'LL OVERTHROW BRAZOR AS SOON AS I APPEAR IN MY CAPITAL!" SAYS DESIRA. FLASH SMILES AT THE QUEEN'S OPTIMISM AND REPLIES: "I WISH IT COULD BE AS SIMPLE AS THAT!"



INSTEAD OF CROSSING A JUNGLE STREAM, FLASH CHANGES THEIR COURSE! "WHERE ARE YOU GOING?" ASKS DESIRA, UP THIS SHALLOW RIVER, "ANSWERS FLASH: "THE WATER WILL COVER OUR TRAIL."



"HOW DARE YOU CHANGE MY PLANS!" SNAPS DESIRA, ANGERILY! "I SAID WE'RE GOING TO MY CAPITAL!" FLASH SHRUGS: "WE KNOW YOU'RE THE REAL QUEEN— BUT BRAZOR HAS CONVINCED YOUR PEOPLE THE QUEEN IS DEAD AND YOU'RE AN IMPOSTOR."



SUDDENLY, DESIRA'S GRYPH STEPS INTO A HOLE IN THE RIVER BED, AND SHE IS TOO BUSY TO ARGUE MUCH TO FLASH'S RELIEF



FLASH HAS NOT UNDERESTIMATED THEIR ENEMY BRAZOR PERSONALLY DIRECTS TROPICA'S MOBILE SCOUTING FORCES BY SPACEPHONE, AS THEY COMB THE WILDS AROUND THE LONELY OUTPOST WHERE DESIRA WAS LAST SEEN. THEIR ORDERS ARE TO SHOOT THE IMPOSTOR ON SIGHT!

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FLASH GORDON

BY
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THE OUTPOST CAPTAIN IS RELEASED FROM HIS OWN GUARD-HOUSE: "WHO WAS WITH THAT IMPOSTOR AND WHERE DID THEY GO, SNARLS BRAZOR?"



BRAZOR'S SCOUTS SWEEP THRU THE FOREST, HUNTING FOR THE FUGITIVE QUEEN. INVISIBLE ELECTRONIC DETECTO-RAYS COMB THE SURROUNDING VEGETATION FOR SOME SIGN OF HIDING HUMANS.

"TWO MEN AND A WOMAN WERE WITH HER - THEY PLANNED TO GO TO THE CAPITAL!" MUTTERS THE DISGRACED CAPTAIN



THE FLUORESCO-RAYS OF BRAZOR'S SCOUT CARS FOLLOW THE FUGITIVES' TRAIL TO THE RIVER BANK, WHERE IT ENDS. BRAZOR FUMES: "THAT FOX, FLASH GORDON, HAS TAKEN TO THE RIVER AGAIN!"



THE SCOUT CARS SPLIT INTO TWO PARTIES AND TAKE TO THE WATER, ONE SEARCHING UPSTREAM, AND THE OTHER DOWNSTREAM.



MEANWHILE FLASH AND HIS PARTY HAVE LEFT THE STREAM AND TAKEN TO THE FOOT-HILLS OF A VAST MOUNTAIN RANGE. DESIRA REINS UP ALONGSIDE OF FLASH AND SAYS: "ON THE OTHERSIDE OF THESE MOUNTAINS IS THE DESERT OF FIRE -- PLEASE DON'T TAKE US THERE, FLASH!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Published by F. Zeme, Chicago



"I WON'T LET YOU TAKE US TO THE FIERY DESERT, FLASH! IT'S FANTASTIC TO THINK THAT BRAZOR COULD TRAIL US THIS FAR!" SAYS DESIRA, IN ANSWER, FLASH DISMOUNTS AND LEADS HIS FRIENDS TO A CLIFF EDGE. HE POINTS FAR BELOW THEM: "TAKE A LOOK AT SOMETHING FANTASTIC THEN - BRAZOR'S SCOUT CARS ARE CLIMBING TOWARD US!"



FLASH TURNS TO ZARKOV, SAYING: "YOU RIDE AHEAD WITH THE GIRLS. WHEN YOU REACH THE EDGE OF THE DESERT, WAIT FOR ME. I HAVE A PLAN THAT MAY DELAY BRAZOR'S SCOUT CARS."



SMILING THE REASSURANCE HE DOES NOT QUITE FEEL, FLASH TURNS TO WAVE FAREWELL TO HIS FRIENDS BEFORE SETTING ABOUT SCALING A HIGH BLUFF.



ATOP THE BLUFF, FLASH DRAWS A BEAD ON A DISTANT LEDGE AND WAITS FOR THE CRAWLING SCOUT CARS TO APPROACH - THEN THE MOMENT IS AT HAND! HE FIRES ONCE, TWICE, THREE TIMES--

11-9-42

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FLASH'S PERFECTLY PLACED RAY BLASTS LOOSEN A GREAT SECTION OF ROCK, WHICH THUNDERS DOWN TOWARD BRAZOR AND HIS ARMORED UNIT!

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Revised 11-4 Page 101A



THREE WELL-PLACED BLASTS FROM FLASH'S RAY-RIFLE BRING AN AVALANCHE ROARING DOWN ON BRAZOR'S SCOUT CARS, AS THEY PURSUE FLASH AND HIS FRIENDS ACROSS A MOUNTAIN RANGE ---



FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Adapted by E. King

FLASH'S MAN-MADE AVALANCHE HAS KNOCKED OUT TWO OF BRAZOR'S SCOUT CARS. THE REMAINING CARS FOLLOW FLASH'S TRAIL TO THE EDGE OF THE FLAMING DESERT, WHERE BRAZOR CALLS A HALT: "LET THE DESERT TAKE CARE OF THEM!" HE GROWLS, "WE'LL GO BACK AND GUARD EVERY PASS TO CATCH THEM, IF THEY SURVIVE THIS LAND OF HORROR!"



OUT IN THE DESERT, FLASH PULLS HIS STOUT-HEARTED GRYPH TO A HALT AND ANXIOUSLY SCANS THE HORIZON: "DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA PROMISED TO WAIT FOR ME AFTER AN HOUR'S RIDE - BUT THERE'S NO SIGN OF THEM--"



THEN FLASH RISES IN HIS STIRRUPS, AS HIS KEEN EYES PICK UP A DISTANT SIGNAL: DOT, DOT, DASH, DOT -- WHY OF COURSE "HE SMILES, "THAT'S THE MORSE CODE FOR "F" - TRUST OLD ZARKOV TO USE HIS HEAD!"



USING A BLANKET AND THE VENT-HOLE OF A SMOKING VOLCANIC OUTLET, ZARKOV SENDS FLASH'S NAME IN SMOKE-PUFFS.



THE FUGITIVES ARE REUNITED ONCE AGAIN, ALL TALKING AT ONCE, ALL SUPREMELY HAPPY--ALL BUT DESIRA. PERHAPS SHE IS JEALOUS OF DALE--OR IT COULD BE THAT SHE SUSPECTS WHAT LIES AHEAD IN THIS DESOLATE LAND OF MADDENING HEAT--MAYBE A LITTLE OF BOTH--TIME WILL TELL.

FLASH GORDON

BY
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RAYMOND

Published by F. Z. Meyer, Inc.



DESIRA, DALE, ZARKOV AND FLASH HAVE ELUDED BRAZOR BY FLEEING INTO THE FIRE-DESERT. GRATEFUL FOR THE COMING NIGHT, THEY WRAP THEMSELVES IN THEIR BLANKETS AND FALL INTO THE SLEEP OF EXHAUSTION.



NEXT MORNING DALE COOKS A SCANTY BREAKFAST OVER THE FLAME OF A VOLCANIC VENT-HOLE. THEY TRY NOT TO THINK OF WHAT MAY HAPPEN WHEN THEIR SUPPLY OF FOOD AND DRINK IS GONE.

WHILE ZARKOV SADDLES THE GYPHS, QUEEN DESIRA TAKES FLASH ASIDE: "I'VE DECIDED THAT THIS TRIP INTO THE UNEXPLORED DESERT IS A MISTAKE, FLASH! WE MUST TURN BACK!"



"I'M SORRY, DESIRA," SAYS FLASH, "BUT I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OUR LIVES AND I'LL RUN THIS EXPEDITION MY WAY. BRAZOR'S MEN ARE IN AMBUSH SURE THAT WE'LL GIVE UP AND TURN BACK. WE'RE GOING ON!"

FLASH CONTINUES: "WE KNOW YOU'RE THE QUEEN OF TROPICA, BUT BRAZOR HAS THE THRONE NOW. IF YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU REGAIN IT, YOU MUST TRUST MY LEADERSHIP. YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH--LEAD ON!"



AS THEY PRESS ONWARD, THE VOLCANIC DESERT GROWS MORE FORBIDDING EVERY MILE. THEY CROSS GREAT RIVERS OF MOLTEN LAVA--IT IS A LAND OF TERRIBLE HEAT AND UTTER DESOLATION.

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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THE MERCILESS HEAT OF THE FLAMING DESERT HAS TAKEN THE LIVES OF FLASH'S AND ZARKOV'S GRYPHS. THE GIRLS' MOUNTS ARE FAST WILTING UNDER THEIR LIGHT LOADS AND THEIR COLLAPSE IS BUT A MATTER OF TIME



AS THE FOUR FUGITIVES TRY TO CIRCLE THE NIAGARA OF FLAMING LAVA, A HIDEOUS FIRE-DRAGON BELLOWS ITS CHALLENGE --



THE GRYPHS ARE MADDENED WITH FRIGHT AT THE SIGHT OF THE CREATURE THAT SWIMS THROUGH MOLTEN FIRE, AS IF IT WERE WATER. THEIR WILD PLUNGING UNSEATS THE GIRLS --



THE DEADLY BLASTS OF FLASH'S AND ZARKOV'S RAY-GUNS FAIL TO STOP THE ARMORED MONSTER, AS IT LUNGES TOWARD THEM.



DESIRA AND DALE ADD THEIR RAY-FIRE TO THE MENS - BUT, WITH AS LITTLE EFFECT: "RUN!" SHOUTS ZARKOV, "RUN - IT'S YOUR ONLY CHANCE!"

FLASH GORDON

By
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

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FROM ITS HOME IN THE RIVER OF MOLTEN LAVA, A FIRE-DRAGON ATTACKS FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA. FLASH AND ZARKOV RETREAT OUT OF RANGE OF ITS FLAMING BREATH, WHICH HAS ALREADY KILLED ONE OF THEIR GRYPHS VAINLY, THEY TRY TO FIND A VULNERABLE SPOT IN THE MONSTER'S ARMOR---



FLASH HOLDS HIS FIRE AND THE DRAGON TURNS TOWARD ZARKOV, ITS GREAT, GLASSY EYES OPEN WIDE, AS IT SEEKS ITS TORMENTOR---



FLASH OBSERVES THAT WHEN HE FIRES AT THE CREATURE'S HEAD, IT WINKS A HOOD OF INCREDIBLY HARD SHELL OVER ITS EYES. HE SHOUTS TO ZARKOV: "KEEP FIRING--AWAY FROM ITS HEAD!"



AND FLASH'S RAY-BOLTS CATCH THE HIDEOUS BEAST IN ITS ONE VULNERABLE SPOT AND PENETRATE TO ITS TINY BRAIN--



THE MONSTER'S DEATH THROES CAUSE THE VERY GROUND TO TREMBLE - WITH A FINAL SPASMODIC LUNGE, IT DISAPPEARS INTO THE "MOLTEN INFERNO" FROM WHICH IT CAME

FLASH GORDON

BY
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RAYMOND

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FLASH AND ZARKOV HAVE
KILLED THE DESERT-DRAGON*
BUT NOT BEFORE IT HAS
ACCOUNTED FOR ONE OF THEIR
LAST TWO GRYPHS-

"WHAT NOW, FLASH?" DESIRA'S
TONE IS SARCASTIC, "OUR GRYPHS
GONE, FOOD AND WATER LOW--"
DALE INTERRUPTS: "AND OUR
SKINS STILL WHOLE, THANKS TO
FLASH! GRATITUDE ISN'T ONE OF
YOUR VIRTUES IS IT, DESIRA?"

IGNORING DESIRA COMPLETELY,
FLASH STEPS OVER TO ZARKOV: "I'M
GOING TO TRY TO CATCH THAT
RUNAWAY, THAT DEAD GRYPH IS ALL
THAT STANDS BETWEEN US AND
STARVATION."



FLASH KNOWS THAT
HE IS TRAILING A
BADLY FRIGHTENED
GRYPH. HIS ONE
HOPE IS THAT THE
FOREST-HORSE HAS BEEN SO
EXHAUSTED BY ITS FLIGHT THRU
THE DESERT HEAT THAT IT COULD
NOT RUN FAR.



ADJUSTING THE SILENCER ON HIS
RAY-RIFLE, FLASH FIRES A SHOT AT
THE HILL BEYOND THE FRIGHTENED
GRYPH. AS HE HOPES, THE SUDDEN
EXPLOSION STAMPEDES THE CREATURE
AWAY FROM THE NOISE AND TOWARD
FLASH.



FLASH KEEPS OUT OF SIGHT-UNTIL
A SUDDEN BURST OF SPEED
ENABLES HIM TO INTERCEPT THE
RACING ANIMAL!

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Number 12 - A New Story



ASTRIDE THE CAPTURED GRYPH, FLASH RIDES BACK TOWARD THE LAVA CASCADE, WHERE HE LEFT DALE, DESIRA AND ZARKOV. THEN HE IS ALMOST THROWN FROM THE SADDLE, AS A TITANIC EXPLOSION OF THE TORTURED FIRE-DESERT CAUSES HIS MOUNT TO REAR AND PLUNGE IN TERROR---



FLASH SPURS HIS GRYPH INTO A HEAD-
LONG GALLOP, MUTTERING, "WHY DID I EVER BRING THEM INTO THIS GHASTLY LAND?"



FLASH'S WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED. THE EXPLOSION HAS STARTED A NEW FLOOD OF LAVA, WHICH FLOWS AROUND THE HILL WHERE HE HAD LEFT HIS COMRADES, CUTTING THEM OFF---



FLASH GALLOPS ALONG THE LAVA BARRICADE, SEEKING A SPOT NARROW ENOUGH TO JUMP--



THE GRYPH'S STUBBORN TERROR IS NO MATCH FOR FLASH'S WILL--WITH AN INCREDIBLE LEAP, THE BEAST CLEARS THE FIRE--JUMP.

FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

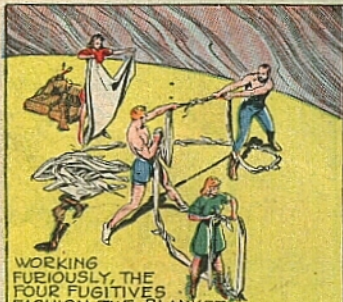
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AN ERUPTION OF THE VOLCANIC DESERT HAS SPLIT THE LAVA CASCADE SO THAT IT FLOWS AROUND THE HILL WHERE FLASH HAD LEFT HIS FRIENDS, THUS CUTTING OFF THEIR ESCAPE. FLASH JOINS THEM BY FORCING HIS GRYPH TO LEAP THE NARROWEST PORTION OF THE FLOOD--



FLASH SURVEYS THE SITUATION, THEN TURNS TO HIS COMRADES: "I HAVE AN IDEA--THE FLOOD IS RISING--WE'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST--GATHER OUR BLANKETS AND TEAR THEM INTO NARROW STRIPS--



WORKING FURIOUSLY, THE FOUR FUGITIVES FASHION THE BLANKET STRIPS AND SURPLUS CLOTHING OF THE MEN INTO A CRUDE ROPE--



FLASH FASTENS ONE END OF THE LINE TO THE GRYPH'S SADDLE AND ZARKOV, A HORSEMAN OF FLASH'S CALIBRE, GUIDES THE NOBLE BEAST OVER THE DANGEROUS FIRE-- JUMP ONCE AGAIN--

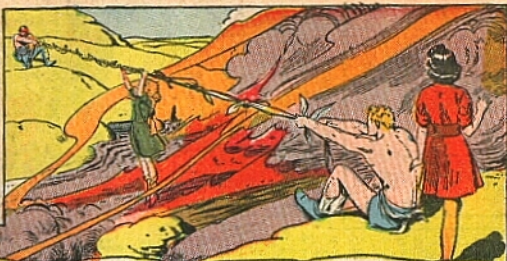


ZARKOV QUICKLY DISMOUNTS, LASHES THE LINE ABOUT HIS WAIST AND BRACES HIMSELF. FLASH DOES LIKEWISE AND THE LINE IS TAUT BETWEEN THEM. AT A NOD FROM FLASH, DESIRA BEGINS HER PERILOUS, HAND-OVER-HAND CROSSING OF THE RAGING LAVA FLOOD!

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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ON A HILL SURROUNDED BY FLAMING LAVA, FLASH AND HIS COMRADES FASHION A LIFE-LINE FROM TORN BLANKETS AND CLOTHING. THE GRYPH CARRIES ZARKOV AND ONE END OF THE LINE TO THE OPPOSITE SHORE, WITH FLASH AND ZARKOV ANCHORING EACH END OF THE CRUDE BRIDGE, DESIRA CROSSES, HAND-OVER-HAND.

WHEN DESIRA REACHES SAFETY, DALE DROPS TO HER KNEES BESIDE FLASH: "I CAN'T LEAVE YOU HERE ALONE, FLASH! HOW WILL YOU EVER GET ACROSS?" FLASH SMILES AT HER: "IT WILL TAKE MORE THAN A LITTLE LAVA TO SEPARATE US-- YOU'D BETTER GET GOING--"



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WITH THE HUNGRY FLAMES LICKING AT HER FEET, AND THE SHOUTS OF ENCOURAGEMENT RINGING IN HER EARS--

DALE MAKES THE DANGEROUS CROSSING



NOW, WITH ONLY HIMSELF TO WORRY ABOUT, FLASH HURLS THE SADDLE BAGS CONTAINING THEIR PRECIOUS FOOD AND WATER TO HIS FRIENDS. HE THEN SCRATCHES A LINE AT A POINT NEAR THE FLAMING STREAM---



FLASH WALKS BACK ABOUT FIFTY YARDS, THEN STARTS RUNNING, INCREASING HIS SPEED AS HE APPROACHES THE SCRATCHED MARK. AT THE HEIGHT OF HIS DASH, HIS FOOT HITS THE TAKE-OFF LINE AND HE SAILS GRACEFULLY TOWARD THE OPPOSITE BANK-- THIRTY FEET AWAY!

FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Revised U.S. First Edition



BY USING HIS WITS AND TORN STRIPS OF BLANKETS, FLASH HAS TRANSFERRED HIS FRIENDS TO SAFETY. IN DOING SO, HE HAS LEFT HIMSELF BEHIND, WITH ONLY HIS ATHLETIC PROWESS TO CARRY HIM TO SAFETY. WHILE ZARKOV, DALE AND DESIRA WATCH IN AMAZEMENT, FLASH SPANS THE RIVER OF LAVA WITH A PRODIGIOUS JUMP.



ZARKOV FINDS HIS TONGUE: "FLASH, DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOU JUMPED OVER THIRTY FEET? ON EARTH IT WOULD BE A RECORD!" BUT WE'RE NOT ON EARTH, GRINS FLASH. "LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE."



AFTER FLASH AND ZARKOV RETRIEVE THEIR CLOTHING FROM THE MAKE-SHIFT LIFE LINE, THE GIRLS MOUNT THE ONE REMAINING GRYPH AND THE FOUR FUGITIVES PUSH ON ACROSS THE DESERT.

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FOR DAYS THEY PLOD ON, SEEKING AN END TO THIS LAND OF MERCILESS HEAT AND DESOLATION. THEIR FOOD RUNS OUT--AND FINALLY THEIR GRYPH CAN GO NO FARTHER--



TOO OFTEN WHEN THE WATER FLASK IS PASSED AROUND, FLASH RAISES IT TO HIS LIPS BUT DOES NOT DRINK--ONE DAY DALE TAKES HER SIP, THEN TURNS TO FLASH, HER EYES TEAGIC: "IT'S GONE," SHE WHISPERS, "I'VE DRUNK THE LAST DROP!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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THE PLIGHT OF FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA GROWS DESPERATE, AS THEIR FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY GIVES OUT, WITH THE END OF THE VOLCANIC DESERT NOWHERE IN SIGHT. ALTHOUGH THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN WITHOUT WATER FOR DAYS, FLASH'S FAST HAS BEEN LONGER. STILL, HIS UNQUENCHABLE SPIRIT INSPIRES HIS COMRADES TO FIGHT ON



WHILE HIS EXHAUSTED FRIENDS REST, FLASH STRUGGLES TO THE TOP OF A HIGH PLATEAU, DISCOVERING THAT WHICH HE HAD SCARCELY DARED HOPE--A DISTANT MOUNTAIN RANGE!

"THE EDGE OF THE DESERT!" HE CROAKS, "THANK HEAVEN! I PRAY WE CAN MAKE IT!" AND HE HURRIES BACK TO TELL THE OTHERS--



BUT FLASH'S EXERTIONS HAVE WEAKENED HIM GREATLY

A STRANGE DIZZINESS OVERTAKES HIM-- HE STUMBLES AND FALLS OFTEN--



"A LITTLE REST AND I'LL BE ALL RIGHT," HE MUMBLES, THEN HIS EYES WIDEN IN AMAZEMENT! "WHAT'S THAT? IT CAN'T BE TRUE, IT MUST BE A MIRAGE!"

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FROM ONE OF THE STEAMING VENTS OF THE DESERT, FLOATS A HORDE OF STRANGE LITTLE MEN! SMALL WONDER THAT FLASH CANNOT BELIEVE HIS EYES! CAN THIS BE REAL?

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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WHILE FLASH IS RETURNING TO DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA WITH THE GOOD NEWS THAT THE EDGE OF THE DESERT IS IN SIGHT. HE IS OVERCOME BY EXHAUSTION. FOUR DAYS WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER ARE TOO MUCH, EVEN FOR FLASH. WHILE RESTING ON THE HOT SAND HE IS AMAZED TO SEE A SWARM OF LITTLE MEN EMERGE FROM A VOLCANIC STEAM VENT AND FLOAT TOWARD HIM.



"WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?" CROAKS FLASH. "WE'RE PIXIES," ANSWERS ONE OF THE LITTLE MEN. EVERY CHILD KNOWS THAT! YOU GROWN UPS DON'T BELIEVE IN US, SO WE DON'T LIKE YOU! WHAT'S MORE WE THINK WE CAN WHIP YOU!"



THEN BEFORE FLASH CAN GET TO HIS FEET, THE PIXIES ARE SWARMING ALL OVER HIM, STRUGGLE AS HE MIGHT, FLASH IS SLOWLY BORNE TO THE GROUND



MEANWHILE, ZARKOV, BECOMING ALARMED AT FLASH'S ABSENCE DECIDES TO GO AFTER HIM.



ZARKOV COMES UPON FLASH, THRESHING ABOUT ON THE GROUND - "HELP ME, ZARKOV," HE PANTS - "GET THESE PIXIES OFF ME!" ZARKOV'S HEART SINKS. "PIXIES?" "HEAVEN HELP US - HE'S DELIRIOUS!"

FLASH GORDON

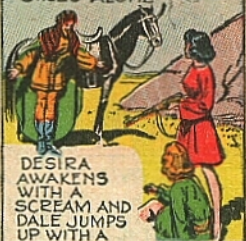
BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Serialized in 5-page strips

ZARKOV HAS SOWN IN SEARCH OF FLASH, LEAVING
THE EXHAUSTED DALE AND DESIRA TO REST IN
THE SHADE OF A GREAT BOULDER



THE CHIEFTAIN
APPROACHES THE
GIRLS ALONE



DESIRA
AWAKENS
WITH A
SCREAM AND
DALE JUMPS
UP WITH A
RIFLE. GUNDAR BOWS
LOW: "YOUR SER-
VANT LADIES!"

FIERCE RED-BEARDED GUNDAR, SON OF
THE DESERT, RESTLESSLY ROAMING THE
BAD-LANDS IN SEARCH OF A CARAVAN TO
PLUNDER, SEES THE SLEEPING GIRLS
FROM THE CREST OF A DUNE
"BY MY BEARD, GENTLEMEN -- TWO
JEWELS WORTHY OF THE KING'S CROWN!"



BUT DESIRA'S
SCREAM HAS REACHED ZARKOV'S
EARS AS HE STRUGGLES BACK
WITH THE DELIRIOUS FLASH--
ZARKOV SHOUTS: "DALE! DESIRA!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?"



IN A TRICE, FLASH AND
ZARKOV ARE SURROUND-
ED BY GUNDAR'S
RAIDERS.



THE FOUR FUGITIVES ARE GIVEN FOOD AND WATER,
THEIR FIRST IN DAYS. A LITTER IS PROVIDED FOR
FLASH AND THE DESERT RAIDERS SET OUT FOR
THEIR MOUNTAIN RETREAT. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN
TREATED KINDLY THUS FAR, DESIRA KNOWS THAT THEY
ARE CAPTIVES OF THE MOST-FEARED OUTLAW IN TROPICA!

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FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

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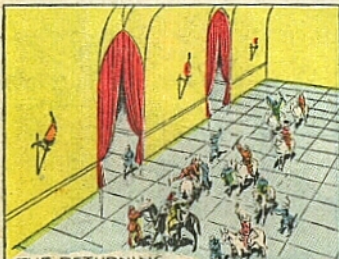
AFTER RESCUING
FLASH, DALE
ZARKOV AND
DESIRA
FROM THE
DESERT---



GUNDAR, THE RED-BEARDED OUTLAW, ORDERS
HIS CAPTIVES BROUGHT TO HIS HIDEAWAY,
HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS, BORDERING THE
BADLANDS --- A WAITING SENTRY
SIGNALS THE APPROACH OF THE RETURN-
ING DESERT RAIDERS --



AT THE SIGNAL, TWO
MEN PUT THEIR
SHOULDERS TO AN
APPARENTLY BLANK
CLIFF WALL AND A
FINELY-BALANCED
SECTION OF IT
SWINGS SLOWLY
INWARD ---



THE RETURNING
HORSEMEN FILE THRU THE SECRET
PORTAL INTO A VAULTED HALL OF
POLISHED STONE. IT ECHOES
TO THEIR CLASHING ACCOUTRE-
MENTS AND LAUGHTER.



FLASH AND ZARKOV ARE
BORNE TO RICH QUARTERS
GUNDAR BECKONS TO A
SHAMBLING INDIVIDUAL:
"DOCTOR, SEE THAT THESE
MEN HAVE THE BEST OF CARE!"



IN ANOTHER CHAMBER, HUNG WITH PLUNDERED SILKS AND
TAPESTRIES, THE OUTLAW IS CONFRONTED BY A TOUSLE-HAired
BLONDE: "INSTEAD OF GOLD AND RICHES, YOU BRING BACK WOMEN!"
GUNDAR LAUGHS: "BEAUTY? GOLD? I'LL GLADLY BARGAIN
WITH KING BRAZOR -- THEY SHOULD BRING A GOOD PRICE --
PARTICULARLY SINCE ONE IS EX-QUEEN, DESIRA!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Number 111 - New York

FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA ARE BROUGHT TO GUNDAR'S MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN HIDEAWAY. THERE THEY ARE PLACED IN CARE OF THE OUTLAW'S PHYSICIAN SO THAT THEY MAY QUICKLY RECOVER FROM THEIR DEEPER TRIDAL.



"FINE!"
ANSWERS THE DOCTOR.
"YOU KNOW, PRINCE,
THAT MEDICINE I --"
GUNDAR WHIRLS ON HIM,
"MY NAME IS GUNDAR OR
REDBEARD! REMEMBER
THAT, YOU DRUNKEN FOOL!"

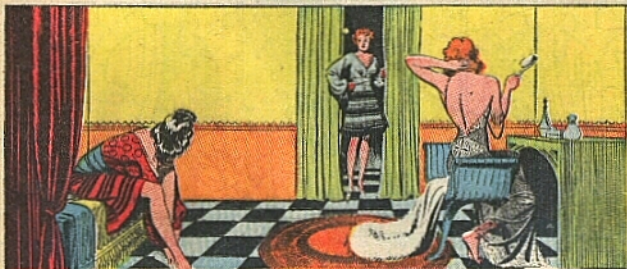
NEXT MORNING GUNDAR SENDS FOR THE DOCTOR. "I AM NOT A VAIN MAN, SAWBONES, BUT DID YOU EVER SEE A HANDSOMER BEARD? RED TOO -- A MAN'S COLOR! HOW ARE OUR GUESTS THIS MORNING?"



FLASH AND ZARKOV AWAKEN, FULLY RECOVERED. "I'M GOING TO FIND THE GIRLS!" SAYS FLASH. "THIS GUNDAR MAY BE DIFFERENT, AS YOU SAY -- BUT HE MAY BE JUST A TREACHEROUS, MURDEROUS BRIGAND!"



GUNDAR FLINGS BACK THE CURTAINS COVERING THE ENTRANCE TO FLASH'S ROOM -- "A BRIGAND, YES -- BUT NOT WITHOUT HONOR! MY WORD IS MY BOND. NO HARM WILL COME TO THE GIRLS -- WILL YOU JOIN ME AT BREAKFAST?"



IN THEIR NEW-FOUND LUXURY, DALE AND DESIRA DRESS UNHURRIEDLY. "MY!" EXCLAIMS DALE. "THIS OUTLAW CERTAINLY HAS PRINCELY TASTE --" A VOICE INTERRUPTS HER -- "YES, AND IT RUNS TO BLONDES! BREAKFAST IS READY!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX RAYMOND

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FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA ARE CAPTIVES OF GUNDAR. THE OUTLAW: "YOU HAVE SAVED OUR LIVES— WE HOPE TO REPAY YOU!" SAYS FLASH.



AS THE GIRLS ENTER THE DINING HALL, DESIRA AUTOMATICALLY EXTENDS HER HAND, PALM DOWN. THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN BENDS OVER IT, MURMURING: "A QUEEN IN BEAUTY AND BEARING, IF NOT IN FACT!"

GUNDAR LAUGHS: "YOU—PAUPERS? WHAT WITH? I'M A BUSINESS MAN, MY BLOND FRIEND!"

DESIRA SNATCHES HER HAND AWAY: "INSOLENT ROGUE! I'M STILL YOUR QUEEN—AND I'LL LIVE TO SEE YOU SWING ON THE GALLOWES!"



GUNDAR CHUCKLES: "RED HAIR AND SPIRIT! I LIKE BOTH! BRAZOR WILL PAY WELL FOR YOU!"



AT BREAKFAST, FLASH LEANS TOWARD THE RED-BEARDED OUTLAW: "GUNDAR, IF YOU'LL HELP US PUT DESIRA BACK ON THE THRONE, YOU CAN HAVE LANDS—A TITLE—" GUNDAR LAUGHS: "MY FRIEND, IF I COULD CONQUER 'BLOODY BRAZOR,' I'D MAKE MYSELF KING, INSTEAD OF A MERE NOBLEMAN!"



DESIRA LEAPS TO HER FEET: THIS IS SICKENING! YOU, FLASH GORDON, A BARGAINING WITH A CUT-THROAT—A COMMON THIEF WHO FEEDS US OFF MY OWN ROYAL TABLE SILVER! HAGGLING OVER THE QUEEN, AS IF SHE WERE MERCHANDISE! GUNDAR ROARS WITH LAUGHTER: "BY TAO'S BIG TOE, THAT GIRL IS WONDERFUL! I'LL HAVE HALF BRAZOR'S KINGDOM FOR HER!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Number 1 of 10

DESIRA AND DALE SUN THEMSELVES IN GUNDAR'S SOLARIUM AND DISCUSS THEIR CAPTOR. DESIRA SAYS: "DALE ARDEN! HOW CAN YOU DEFEND THAT CUT THROAT?"



"I CAN'T HELP IT, DESIRA," ANSWERS DALE. "I MAY BE A FOOL, BUT THERE'S SOMETHING FINE IN GUNDAR. I HAVE A FEELING THAT HIS TERMS MIGHT BE HIGH—TOO HIGH FOR BRAZOR TO MEET!"



"WE'VE GOT TO GET THE GIRLS OUT OF HERE, ZARKOV! THERE MUST BE A WAY!" ZARKOV GRUNTS: "WE'RE TOO WELL-GUARDED TO TRY ANYTHING FOOLISH. YOU KNOW, FOR AN OUTLAW, THIS GUNDAR HAS EXCELLENT BOOKS. WELL-THUMBED, TOO!"



IN GUNDAR'S STUDY, "HAS THE BEAUTY OF OUR CAPTIVES SOFTENED YOU OR ARE YOU GOING TO SEND YOUR TERMS TO BRAZOR?" PEQUIT SAYS GUNDAR, "I BELIEVE YOU'RE JEALOUS! MY MESSENGER IS ALREADY ON HIS WAY. I HOPE THAT EASES YOUR MIND—I WISH IT DID MINE!"



IN THE LOWLANDS OF TROPICA, ONE OF GUNDAR'S MOST TRUSTED LIEUTENANTS, GALLOPS TOWARD THE DISTANT SPIRES OF THE CAPITAL CITY.



THE MESSENGER IS ADMITTED TO THE PRESENCE OF HIS INFAMOUS MAJESTY. "BLOODY BRAZOR," THE KING OPENS GUNDAR'S LETTER. HE MASKS HIS ANGER WITH A CRAFTY SMILE. "TWO MILLION GOLD MINGOLS AND THE BORDER PROVINCES FOR FLASH GORDON AND EX-QUEEN DESIRA, YOUR MASTER DRIVES A HARD BARGAIN, FELLOW—BUT WE MAY BE ABLE TO DO BUSINESS!"

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FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Illustrated by Alex Raymond



AT THE ROYAL PALACE BRAZOR SPEAKS TO ONE OF HIS OFFICERS, "I DO NOT INTEND TO MEET GUNDAR'S RANSOM DEMAND! I HAVE A PLAN TO CAPTURE GORDON AND DESIRA—AND TO WIPE OUT GUNDAR AND HIS BAND!"



AFTER OUTLINING HIS PLAN TO HIS OFFICER, BRAZOR SENDS FOR GUNDAR'S MESSENGER: "MUCH AS I DETEST DEALING WITH A COMMON OUTLAW, I HAVE NO CHOICE," SAYS THE KING MECKLY.



A FEW DAYS LATER, GUNDAR ESCORTS TWO OF HIS PRISONERS, FLASH AND DESIRA, TO A MOUNTAIN-TOP THERE TO AWAIT THE RETURN OF HIS MESSENGER. "AH," EXCLAIMS THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN, AS TWO MEN RIDE INTO VIEW, "RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!"



A BLINDFOLD IS REMOVED FROM BRAZOR'S OFFICER. HE SPEAKS: "HIS MAJESTY IS GLAD TO PAY GENEROUSLY FOR YOUR PRISONERS, BUT REQUESTS THAT YOU RECONSIDER YOUR TERMS." GUNDAR INTERRUPTS: "EITHER HE MEETS MY TERMS OR I RESTORE DESIRA TO HER RIGHTFUL THRONE!"



FLASH NOTICES THAT THE MAJOR'S MOUNT STAMPS AND PAWS RESTLESSLY, SUDDENLY HE KNOWS WHY—

"HOLD ON, GUNDAR!" HE SHOUTS. "YOUR DEAL IS DEAD. BRAZOR HAS DOUBLE-CROSSED YOU! THE HOOFS OF THAT BEAST HAVE BEEN PAINTED WITH PHOSPHORUS, LEAVING A TRAIL FOR BRAZOR AND HIS TROOPS TO FOLLOW WITH THE FLUORESCO-RAY SEARCHLIGHTS!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Published by King Features Syndicate, Inc.



BRAZOR HAS SENT A COURTIER TO BARGAIN WITH GUNDAR FOR HIS PRISONERS, FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA, BUT FLASH CALLS GUNDAR'S ATTENTION TO THE HOOFS OF THE OFFICER'S MOUNT: "BY TAO'S TOENAILS, YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH," EXPLODES THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN. "BRAZOR HAS PHOSPHORIZED THE BEAST'S HOOFS TO LEAVE A TRAIL TO MY HIDEOUT!"

GUNDAR DRAWS HIS GUN AND WHIRLS ON THE COURTIER: "YOU TREACHEROUS PIG, I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO DOUBLE-CROSS ME!" FLASH GRABS THE IRATE OUTLAW! "WAIT! SHOOTING WILL SOLVE NOTHING! I'VE A BETTER IDEA..."



FLASH CONTINUES: "OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO SEND THE OFFICER AND HIS HORSE INTO THE DESERT TO LEAD BRAZOR AWAY FROM YOUR HIDEOUT!" GUNDAR WEIGHS THE SCHEME: "YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH... WE'LL TRY IT!"



GUNDAR'S ERSTWHILE MESSENGER FORCES THE COURTIER AND HIS MOUNT DOWN THE LONG SLOPE, LEADING TO THE FIERY DESERT.

AS FLASH, DESIRA AND THE RED-BEARDED CHIEFTAIN RIDE BACK TO THE OUTLAW'S HIDEOUT--



FLASH SAYS: "I BELIEVE BRAZOR, HIMSELF, WILL LEAD THE SEARCH. IF HE DOES, ARE YOU GAME TO HELP ME CAPTURE HIM?" GUNDAR CHUCKLES: "YOU'RE A MAN OF IDEAS, GORDON--I'M NOT SO SORRY BRAZOR DOUBLE-CROSSED ME!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Scripted by Alex Raymond

IN GUNDAR'S MOUNTAIN HIDEOUT DESIRA TELLS DALE THAT THEY ARE NOT TO BE RANSOMED TO THE KING:-



"AND WHAT'S MORE," CONTINUES DESIRA, "THAT BRAVE, WONDERFUL FOOL OF A MAN OF YOURS OFFERED TO HELP GUNDAR CAPTURE BRAZOR!" "NO!" GASPS DALE, "THEY HAVEN'T A CHANCE! THEY'LL BOTH BE KILLED!"

"FLASH DISCOVERED THAT BRAZOR'S AGENT HAD DOUBLE-CROSSED GUNDAR BY LEAVING A TRAIL, SO THEY FORCED THE AGENT INTO THE DESERT, HOPING THAT BRAZOR WOULD FOLLOW THEM THERE..."



MEANWHILE, GUNDAR WASTES NO TIME: "I WANT OUR BEST MEN AT EVERY SENTRY POST," HE SAYS TO ONE OF HIS LIEUTENANTS. "BRAZOR'S APPROACH IS TO BE SIGNALLED BY SONOBEAM. I'LL MAKE HIM RUE THE DAY HE DOUBLE-CROSSED ME!"



THEN, LOADED DOWN WITH REFRESHMENTS, GUNDAR PROCEEDS TO FLASH'S QUARTERS: "GENTLEMEN," HE BELLOW, "WHAT SAY YOU TO A LITTLE..." HE BREAKS OFF SUDDENLY AS A HIGH-PITCHED SQUEAL SOUNDS THROUGHOUT THE HALL. "THAT'S IT!" HE SAYS, "BRAZOR'S COMING!"



ON A DISTANT MOUNTAIN POST, A SENTRY BLOWS WARNING SIGNALS THROUGH HIS INAUDIBLE, DIRECTIONAL SONOBEAM SENDER. WHILE FAR BELOW, BRAZOR'S WELL-ARMED SEARCH PARTY FOLLOWS THE TREACHEROUS AGENT'S PHOSPHORESCENT TRAIL WITH FLUORESCO-BEAMS.

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FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Number 11 of the Series

KING BRAZOR IS LEADING AN ARMORED FORCE AGAINST GUNDAR AND HIS OUTLAW BAND TO CAPTURE FLASH. DALE, ZARKOV AND QUEEN DESIRA...



AS THE HALLS OF GUNDAR'S PALATIAL HIDEAWAY ECHO WITH SONOBEAM WARNINGS, SIGNALLING BRAZOR'S APPROACH, FLASH AND GUNDAR HASTEN TO BID THE GIRLS FAREWELL.



"DON'T WORRY, DARLING," FLASH SAYS. "YOU GIRLS WILL BE SAFE. BRAZOR WON'T FIND THIS HIDEOUT. IF WE CAN CAPTURE HIM, THE THRONE WILL BE DESIRA'S AGAIN, AND OUR TROUBLES WILL BE OVER." DALE CLINGS TO FLASH: "BE CAREFUL! COME BACK TO ME!"



GUNDAR TURNS FROM FLASH AND DALE WITH A SNORT: "LOVE/BAH! IT TURNS ROBUST WARRIORS INTO WEAK-KNEED WORRIERS!" "YOU IGNORANT LOW-BORN THIEF!" FLARES DESIRA. "HOW DARE YOU SPEAK OF LOVE! YOU WHO KNOW, OR CARE, FOR NOTHING BUT YOUR POCKETBOOK!"

GUNDAR SWEEPS DESIRA INTO HIS ARMS: "I KNOW THAT THIEVES TAKE WHAT THEY WANT, AND I WANT A KISS!"



DESPITE DESIRA'S STRUGGLES THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN KISSES HER AND AS SHE LEANS, BREATHLESS, AGAINST HIS SHOULDER, HER EXPRESSION IS HARDLY THAT OF OUTRAGED ROYALTY!



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AFTER LEAVING ZARKOV IN CHARGE OF A SMALL DETAIL, GUARDING THE GIRLS, FLASH AND GUNDAR SET OUT AT THE HEAD OF AN OUTLAW COLUMN TO BATTLE BRAZOR. "YOU'RE A SURPRISING FELLOW, GUNDAR," SAYS FLASH, "WHO WERE YOU BEFORE YOU BECAME A BANDIT?" "MY PAST IS MY SECRET. REMEMBER THAT, IF YOU WOULD BE MY FRIEND!" RETORTS GUNDAR.

FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Story by Alex Raymond



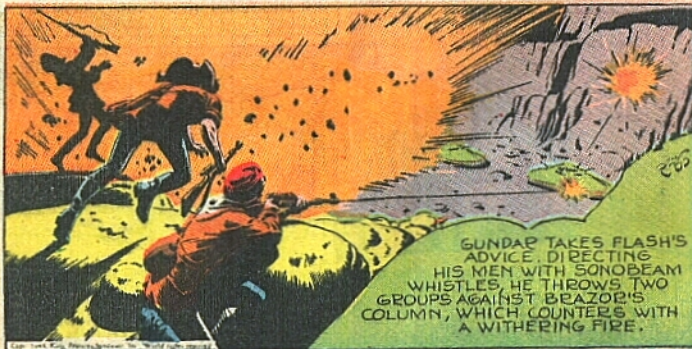
BEAZOR'S ARMORED COLUMN DRIVES CAUTIOUSLY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS UNAWARE THAT THE HUNTED OUTLAWS ARE WATCHING EVERY MOVE AND SIGNALLING WITH THEIR SONOBEAM HORNS, INAUDIBLE EXCEPT TO ONE ANOTHER.

BEAZOR IS NO FOOL. WHEN HIS FLUORESCO-RAY SEARCH-LIGHT SHOWS HIS COURTIER'S TRAIL RUNNING DEEP INTO THE FIRE DESERT,--

HE SMELLS A TRICK-- "NOBODY COULD LIVE IN THAT DESERT, I'LL GO BACK WHERE THE TRACKS INDICATE A MEETING-PLACE."



"BY MY BEARD, HE IS HEADING BACK TOWARD MY HIDEOUT! I'LL HAVE TO ATTACK!" SAYS GUNDAR. FLASH SHAKES HIS HEAD: "THAT'S SUICIDE. MAKE AN ATTACK, HAVE YOUR MEN SPLIT UP AND RUN. WE WILL SCATTER BEAZOR'S MEN IN THE MOUNTAINS!"



GUNDAR TAKES FLASH'S ADVICE, DIRECTING HIS MEN WITH SONOBEAM WHISTLES. HE THROWS TWO GROUPS AGAINST BEAZOR'S COLUMN, WHICH COUNTERS WITH A WITHERING FIRE.

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FLASH GORDON

BY
ALEX
RAYMOND

Published by F. P. P. Co.

FLASH AND GUNDAR HAVE INTERCEPTED BRAZOR AND HURLED TWO GROUPS OF MEN AT THE HEAD OF HIS ARMORED COLUMN, THEIR OBJECT BEING TO SCATTER HIS FORCES...



AFTER THE FIRST FEINT, THE OUTLAWS RETREAT, DRAWING PURSUING UNITS AWAY FROM THE MAIN FORCES...

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ON A HIGH VANTAGE POINT, FLASH GRIPS THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN'S SHOULDER: "IT'S WORKING! THERE ARE ONLY TWO CARS LEFT TO GUARD THE KING'S! THROW YOUR MAIN FORCE AGAINST HIM NOW!" GUNDAR GRINS, AS HE RAISES HIS SONOBEAM HORN TO HIS LIPS: "BY MY BEARD, FLASH, YOU'RE A BORN MILITARY MAN!"



FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, GUNDAR'S HORDES CONVERGE ON BRAZOR'S FORCES, SHOWERING GRENADES AND RAY-FIRE ON THE LUMBERING, METALITE MONSTERS IN THE NARROW MOUNTAIN DEFILÉ. THE KING IS AT A DISADVANTAGE...



WITH HIS TWO PROTECTING ARMORED CARS BLASTED OUT OF ACTION AND HIS OWN ARMOR BECOMING UNCOMFORTABLY HOT, BRAZOR WHIRLS HIS CAR ABOUT AND MAKES A DASH FOR FREEDOM!



"HE'S BROKEN OUT OF THE TRAP!" SHOUTS HIM! "FLASH, I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!" "DON'T BE A FOOL!" ROARS GUNDAR. "YOU CAN'T DO IT BY YOURSELF!"

FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

Scripted by Alex Raymond

BY FOLLOWING FLASH'S
PLAN OF STRATEGY,
GUNDAR AND HIS
OUTLAWS HAVE

SCATTERED BRAZOR'S ARMORED UNITS
IN THE MOUNTAINS OF TROPICA. WHEN
BRAZOR SEEKS TO SMASH OUT OF THE
TRAP, FLASH RACES TO INTERCEPT HIM
IN A NARROW DEFILE, AND AS THE KING'S
CAR BOARS INTO RANGE, FLASH HURLS
HIS ENTIRE KIT OF GRENADES AT THE TURRET.



THE
BADLY DAMAGED
CAR SWERVES CRAZILY
AND PLUNGES OVER A
LEDGE ---



GUN IN
HAND, FLASH
APPROACHES
THE WRECK-
AGE -- BUT ALL
THE FIGHT HAS LEFT
THE CAR AND ITS CREW--
ONLY THE DAZED KING
BRAZOR EMERGES TO
FACE HIS NEMESIS.



FLASH HELPS BRAZOR FROM
THE COCKPIT THEN, PLACING HIS
SONOBEAM HORN TO HIS LIPS,
SIGNALS TO GUNDAR THAT THE
KING IS THEIR PRISONER.



"GREAT!" EXCLAIMS
GUNDAR. "GORDON HAS
BRAZOR! SOUND THE RETREAT--
WE MUST RETURN TO THE HIDEOUT
BEFORE THOSE OTHER CARS
GET BACK INTO ACTION!"

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FLASH GORDON

BY
**ALEX
RAYMOND**

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WITH THE CAPTIVE KING BRAZOR BETWEEN THEM, FLASH AND GUNDAR STRIVE TO BEAT THE PURSUING ARMORED UNITS OF THE OUTLAWS. GUNDAR SIGNALS AHEAD WITH HIS SONO-BEAM HORN, WARNING HIS MEN OF THEIR COMING.



AFRAID TO FIRE AT THEIR PREY FOR FEAR OF KILLING THE KING, ONE CAR SWINGS TO A HEIGHT COMMANDING THE FUGITIVES' TRAIL, AND FIRES AT THE FLEEING FIGURES--



FLASH JERKS HIS MOUNT TO A HALT, YELLING: "THE DEVILS! THEY'VE BLASTED THE TRAIL AWAY! WE'LL HAVE TO GO THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT!"



FLASH AND THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN DISMOUNT, UNBIND THE KING AND DRIVE HIM AHEAD OF THEM: "KEEP MOVING BRAZOR!" GROWLS FLASH, "DON'T STALL OR TRY ANY TRICKS, IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE! YOU'D BE LESS TROUBLE TO US DEAD, YOU KNOW!"



THEY GAIN THE TOP OF THE LEDGE, SKIRT THE BLASTED-OUT SECTION, THEN RESUME AGAIN NEAR THE HIDEOUT. THE GREAT SECRET PORTAL SWINGS OPEN TO MEET THEM.

