

A Hand of FATE Mystery

#9

THERE ARE STILL ADVENTUROUS YOUNG MEN WHO TRAVEL THE AMERICAN WEST, SEARCHING FOR THE EVER-ELUSIVE SHINING YELLOW METAL CALLED GOLD! SOME HAVE SUFFERED HARDSHIP... SOME HAVE DIED... IN THEIR VAIN SEARCH FOR QUICK WEALTH! THE INCIDENT NARRATED BELOW TOOK PLACE IN THE 1920'S TO A YOUNG PROSPECTOR NAMED TOM WILLOW. LOSING HIS BEARINGS, TOM COULD NOT FIND HIS WAY BACK TO TOWN. AS DAYS WENT BY, HIS WATER SUPPLY BECAME EXHAUSTED. HE WAS DYING OF THIRST. . .

AS TOM WILLOW LAY ON THE PARCHED EARTH, A PRETTY INDIAN MAIDEN APPROACHED HIM, APPEARING AS IF OUT OF NOWHERE. . .

WHAT! I MUST BE DELIRIOUS... SEEING THINGS!



THE INDIAN GIRL HELPED TOM TO A NEARBY HILL AND THEN LED HIM TO A CAVERN, STRANGELY ASLOW WITH A PHOSPHORESCENT LIGHT. . .

THERE IS FRESH WATER! DRINK!



HOURS LATER, WHEN TOM HAD DRUNK HIS FILL AND SLEPT FOR A WHILE, HE WAS GIVEN EXACT DIRECTIONS BY THE INDIAN MAIDEN BACK TO THE SMALL TOWN FROM WHICH HE HAD WANDERED SO MANY MILES AWAY. . .

I OWE YOU MY THANKS FOR SAVING MY LIFE! WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

I AM CALLED "LITTLE BLUE BIRD"... MORE THAN THIS I CANNOT TELL YOU!



ARRIVING AT LAST BACK IN TOWN, TOM SOUGHT OUT SHERIFF WADE AND TOLD HIM OF HIS STRANGE ADVENTURE. . .

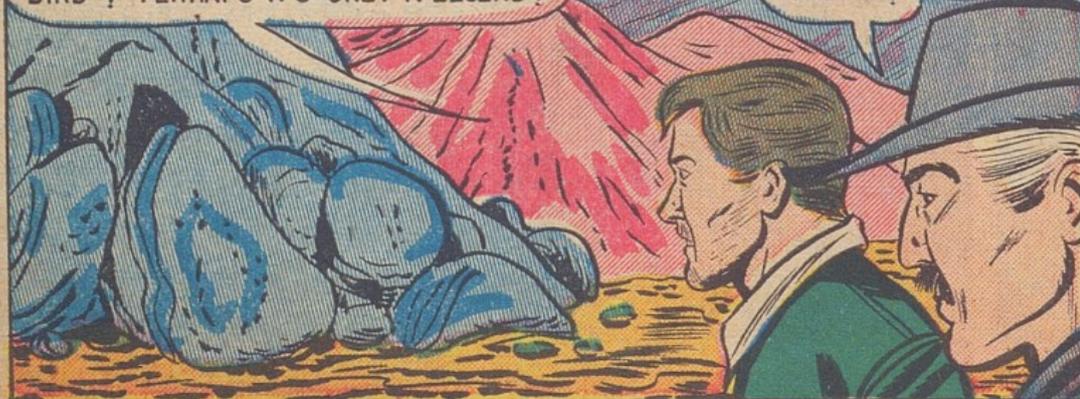
HER NAME WAS "LITTLE BLUE BIRD"? BUT IT CAN'T BE! THAT'S THE NAME OF AN INDIAN GIRL WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH A WHITE SETTLER 40 YEARS AGO! HER PEOPLE FORBADE THE MARRIAGE AND SHUT HER UP IN A CAVERN AND SEALED IT UP WITH TONS OF STONE! COME ON... TAKE ME TO THAT CAVE RIGHT NOW!



ARRIVING AT THE SITE OF TOM'S STRANGE ADVENTURE, THE TWO MEN WERE SHOCKED TO FIND. . .

SEALED UP BY ROCKS! I-I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! COULD I HAVE DREAMED ABOUT THAT GIRL... THE CAVERN... AND THE WATER? TELL ME, SHERIFF, ARE YOU SURE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO "LITTLE BLUE BIRD"? PERHAPS IT'S ONLY A LEGEND?

IT'S NO LEGEND! I WAS THE YOUNG WHITE SETTLER "LITTLE BLUE BIRD" LOVED AND WANTED TO MARRY!



HAD THE PHANTOM OF "LITTLE BLUE BIRD" EMERGED FROM HER CAVERN PRISON TO HELP TOM WILLOW, IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT RETURN TO SHERIFF WADE AND ASSURE HIM THAT HIS BELOVED INDIAN MAIDEN STILL AWAITED HIM IN THE BEYOND? WHAT DO YOU THINK, READERS?

THE END

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#10

TO SOME OF US IS GIVEN THE RARE POWER TO FORESEE FUTURE OCCURENCES, PERHAPS IN A SUDDEN VISION, OR IN A DREAM. THE FOLLOWING INCIDENT TOOK PLACE IN THE SWISS ALPS, IN 1912. ROBERT AKRON, AN AMERICAN WRITER TOURING EUROPE, WAS STAYING OVERNIGHT IN A SMALL INN NESTLED ON THE SIDE OF A SNOW-COVERED MOUNTAIN. HE HAD A STRANGE DREAM THAT NIGHT...

YOUNG AKRON DREAMED THAT TONS OF SNOW SUDDENLY LOOSENEED ON THE NEARBY MOUNTAINS AND TUMBLED DOWN ON THE LITTLE VILLAGE...



IN THE MORNING, THE AMERICAN TOLD THE INN-KEEPER OF HIS DREAM...

AND IT WAS SO VIVID, AS THOUGH IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!

BUT, SIR, IN THE LONG HISTORY OF THIS VILLAGE, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A SNOWSLIDE! IT WAS, AFTER ALL, ONLY A DREAM!



ROBERT AKRON COULD NOT GET RID OF A WEIRD FEELING OF FOREBODING. HE PACKED HIS BAGS AND PREPARED TO LEAVE THE VILLAGE BY THE AFTERNOON TRAIN...

PERHAPS THE INNKEEPER WAS RIGHT, AND I AM FOOLISH TO WORRY ABOUT THAT DREAM! AND YET, I CAN'T HELP FEELING THAT I MUST HURRY AWAY FROM HERE!



BUT THEN, AS THE TRAIN PULLED OUT OF THE SMALL VILLAGE'S STATION...

RUMBLE



WHAT! THAT NOISE...!



TONS OF SNOW SUDDENLY FELL ON THE HELPLESS VILLAGERS, BURYING MOST OF THEM ALIVE!

GREAT HEAVENS! MY DREAM... THEN IT WAS A PROPHECY! I GOT AWAY JUST IN TIME!



WHO CAN EXPLAIN WHAT MYSTERIOUS POWER GRANTED ROBERT AKRON THAT DREADFUL NIGHT VISION WHICH WARNED HIM OF AN IMPENDING TRAGEDY AND SAVED HIS LIFE? JUST ANOTHER INEXPLICABLE MYSTERY TO BE FOUND RECORDED IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

THE END