

The Million Dollar Mystery

By Harold MacGrath

\$10,000 FOR 100 WORDS.

The "Million Dollar Mystery" story will run for twenty-two consecutive weeks in this paper. By an arrangement with the Thanhouser Film Company it has been made possible not only to read the story in this paper but also to see it each week in People's moving picture theatre. For the solution of this mystery story \$10,000 will be given.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE CONTEST.

The prize of \$10,000 will be won by the man, woman or child who writes the most acceptable solution of the mystery from which the last two reels of motion picture drama will be made and the last two chapters of the story written by Harold MacGrath.

Solutions may be sent to the Thanhouser Film Corporation, either at Chicago or New York, any time up to midnight, Dec. 14. They must bear postoffice mark not later than that date. This allows four weeks after the first appearance of the last film releases and three weeks after the last chapter is published in this paper in which to submit solutions.

A board of three judges will determine which of the many solutions received is the most acceptable. The judgment of this board will be absolute and final. Nothing of a literary nature will be considered in the decision, nor given any preference in the selection of the winner of the \$10,000 prize.

The last two reels, which will give the most acceptable solution to the mystery will be presented in the theatres having this picture as soon as it is practicable to produce same. The story corresponding to these motion pictures will appear in the newspapers coincidentally, or as soon after the appearance of the pictures as practicable. With the last two reels will be shown the pictures of the winner, his or her home, and other interesting features. It is understood that the newspapers, so far as practical, in printing the last two chapters of the story by Harold MacGrath, will also show a picture of the successful contestant.

Solutions to the mystery must not be more than 100 words long. Here are some questions to be kept in mind in connection with the mystery as an aid to a solution:

- No. 1—What becomes of the million?
- No. 2—What becomes of the \$1,000,000?
- No. 3—Whom does Florence marry?
- No. 4—What becomes of the Russian countess?

SYNOPSIS OF THE FIRST CHAPTER

Stanley Hargreave, millionaire, after a miraculous escape from the den of the gang of brilliant thieves, known as the Black Hundred, lives the life of a recluse for eighteen years. Hargreave one night enters a Broadway restaurant and there comes face to face with the gang leader, Braine. After the meeting, during which neither man apparently recognizes the other, Hargreave hurries to his magnificent Riverside home and lays plans for making his escape from country. He writes a letter to the girls' school in New Jersey where eighteen years before he had mysteriously left on the doorstep his baby daughter, Florence Gray. He also pays a visit to the hangar of a daredevil aviator.

Braine and members of his band surround Hargreave's home at night, but as they enter the house the watchers outside see a balloon leave the roof. The safe is found empty—the million which Hargreave was known to have drawn that day was gone.

CHAPTER V. THE PROBLEM OF THE SEALED BOX.

"Gone!" Jones kept saying to himself that he must strive to be calm, to think, think. Despite all his warnings, the warnings of Norton, she had tricked them and run away. It was maddening. He wanted to rave, tear his hair, break things. He tramped the hall, it would be wasting time to send for the police. They would only putter about fruitlessly. The Black Hundred knew how to arrange these abductions.

without his being present. There had been no telephone call he had not heard the gist of, nor any letters he had not first glanced over. How had they done it? Suddenly into his brain flashed the remembrance of the candle-light under Florence's door the night before. In a dozen bounds he was in her room, searching drawers, paper boxes, baskets. He found nothing. He returned in despair to Susan, who, during all this turmoil, had sat as if frozen in her chair.

"Speak!" he cried. "For God's sake, say something, think something! Those devils are likely to torture her, hurt her!" He leaned against the wall, his head on his arm.

When he turned again he was calm. He walked with bent head towards the door, opened it and stood upon the threshold for a space. Across the street a shadow stirred, but Jones did not see it. His gaze was attracted by something which shone dimly white on the walk just beyond the steps.

He ran to it, a crumpled letter unaddressed. He carried it back to the house, smoothed it out and read its contents. Florence in her haste had dropped the letter.

He clutched at his hat, put it on and ran to Susan.

"Here!" he cried, holding out an automatic. "If anyone comes in you don't shoot! Don't ask questions, shoot!"

"I'm afraid!" she breathed with difficulty.

"Afraid!" he roared at her. He put the weapon in her hand, it slipped and thudded to the floor. He stooped for it and slammed it into her lap. "You love your life and honor. You'll know how to shoot when the time comes. Now, attend to me. If I'm not back here by ten o'clock, turn this note over to the police. If you can't do that then God help us all!" And with that he ran from the house.

Susan eyed the revolver with growing terror. For what had she left the peace and quiet of Miss Farlow's; assassination, robbers and kidnapers? She wanted to shriek, but her throat was as dry as paper. Gingerly she touched the pistol. The cold steel sent a thrill of fear over her. He hadn't told her how to shoot it!

Two blocks down the street, up an alley, was the garage wherein Hargreave had been wont to keep his car. Towards this Jones ran with the speed of a track athlete. There might be half a dozen taxicabs about, but he would not run the risk of engaging any one of them. The Black Hundred was capable of anticipating his every movement.

The shadow across the street stood undecided. At length he decided to give Jones ten minutes in which to return. If he did not return within that time, the watcher would go up to the drugstore and telephone for instructions.

But Jones did not come back. "Whom's Howard?" he demanded. "Hello, Jones; what's up?" "Howard, get that car out at once!" "Out she comes. Wait till I give her radiator a bucket of water. Gee!" whispered Howard, whom Hargreave often used as his chauffeur, "get on to his ribs! First time I ever saw him awake. I wonder what's doing? You never know what's back of those mummy-faced headwaiters. . . . All right, Jones!"

The chauffeur jumped into the car and Jones took the seat beside him. "Where to?" "Number 78. . . . and the rest of it trailed away, smothered in the violent thunder of the big six's engines.

During the car's flight, several policemen hailed it without success. Down this street, up that, round this corner, fifty miles an hour, and all the while Jones shouted faster, faster! Within twelve minutes from the time it left the garage, the car stopped opposite to No. 78 Grove street, and Jones got out.

"Wait here, Howard. If several men come rushing out, or I don't appear within ten minutes, fire your gun a couple of times for the police. I don't want them if we can manage without. They'd only bungle."

All right, Mr. Jones," said the chauffeur. He had, in the past quarter of an hour, acquired a deep and lasting respect for the butler chap. He was a regular fellow, for all his brass buttons.

never let anyone escape? Presently she would become normal and then she would tell him.

"I found the lying note. You dropped it." "Horrible, horrible!" she said almost inaudibly.

"What did they do to you?" "He said he was my father. . . . He put his arms around me. . . . And I knew!" "Knew what?" "That he lied. I can't explain."

"Don't try!" "Suddenly to hear youth weep in Sudden!" she laid her head against the butler's shoulder and cried. "It is this fashion. Jones put his arm about her, patted her, and tried to console her.

"Horrible!" she murmured between the violent hiccoughs. "I was wrong, wrong! Forgive me!" "Unconsciously the arm sustaining her drew her closer.

"Never mind," he consoled. "Tell me one thing that has happened. Go about as usual. Don't let even Susan know. Whatever your poor father did was for your sake. He wanted you to be happy, without a care in the world."

"I promise." And gradually the sobs ceased. "But I feel so old, Jones, so very old. I threw over the lamp. I threw a chair through the window. They thought that it was I who had jumped out. They gave me the necessary. I don't understand how I did it. I wasn't frightened at all till I gained the street."

They found Susan still seated in the chair, the automatic in her lap. She had not moved in all this time.

Braine paced the apartment of the Princess Perigoff. From the living room to the boudoir and back, only twenty times. From the divan Olga

watched him nervously. He was like a tiger, fresh in captivity. All at once he passed in front of her.

"Do you realize what that mere chit did?" "I do." "Planned to the minute. We had her; seven of us; doors locked, and all that. No weeping, no wailing; I could not understand then, but I do now. It's in the blood. Hargreave was as peaceful as a St. Bernard dog, till you cornered him, and then he was a lion. O' the devil! Slipped out of my fingers like an eel. And across the street, Jones in a racer. I never paid any particular attention to Jones, but from now on I shall. The girl may or may not know where the money is; but Jones does. Jones does! Two men shall watch. Felton on the street and Orloff from the windows of the deserted house. With opera glasses he will be able to take note of all that happens in the day. He will be able to see the girl's room. And that's the important thing. It was a good plan, little woman; and it would have been plain sailing if only we had remembered that the girl was Hargreave's daughter. Be very careful hereafter when you call on her. A night like this will have made her suspicious of everyone. Our hope lies with you. Anything on your mind?"

"Yes. Why not insert a personal in the Herald?" She drew some writing paper towards her and scribbled a few words.

He read: "Florence—the hiding place is discovered. Remove it to a more secret spot at once. S. H." He laughed and shook his head. "I'm afraid that will never do."

"If she reads it, Jones will. The man with the opera glasses may see something. There's a chance Jones might become worried."

"Well, we'll give it a chance." It was midnight when he made his departure. As he stepped into the street, he glanced about cautiously.

On the corner he saw a policeman swinging his night stick. Otherwise the street was deserted. Braine proceeded jauntily down the street.

And yet, from the darkened doors had won what she herself, with all her cleverness, was not sure of—Braine's figure of a man emerged and stood contemplating the window of the Perigoff apartment. Suddenly the lights went out. The watcher made no effort to follow Braine. The knowledge he was after did not necessitate any such procedure.

Of course, Florence read the "personal." She took the newspaper at once to Jones, who smiled grimly.

"You see, I trust you." "And so long as you continue to trust me, no harm will befall you. You were left in my care by your father. I am to guard you at the expense of my life. Last night's affair was a miracle. The next time you will not find it so easy to escape."

"Nor did she." "There will be no next time," a direct question. "Is my father alive?" "The butler's brow puckered. 'I have promised to say nothing, one way or the other.'"

She laughed. "Why do you laugh?" "I laugh, because if he were dead, there would be no earthly reason for you not saying so at once. But I hate money, the name of it, the sound of it, the sight of it. It is at the bottom of all wars and crimes. I despise it!"

"The root of all evil. Yet it performs many noble deeds. But never mind the money. Let us give our attention to this personal. Doubtless it originated in the same mind which conceived the

ing woman's mind. She realized that she must play her cards more carefully than ever. Not the least distrust must be permitted to enter the child's head. Once that happened good-by to the wonderful emeralds. Was it that she really craved the stone? Was it not rather a venom acquired from the knowledge that this child's mother had won what she herself, with all her cleverness, was not sure of—Braine's love? Did he really care for her or was she only the cat's paw to pluck his hot chestnuts from the fire?

When Florence showed her the "personal," her vague doubts became instantly dissipated. The child would not have shown her the newspaper had there been any distrust on her part.

"My child, your father is alive then?" animatedly. "We don't know," sadly. "Why, I should say that this proves it."

"On the contrary, it proves nothing of the sort, since I have yet to discover a treasure in this house. I have hunted in every nook, drawer; I've searched for panels, looked in trunks for false bottoms. Nothing, nothing! Ah, if I could only find it!"

"Take it at once to some bank and offer the whole of it for the safe return of my father. Every penny of it. I don't know what to do, which way to turn," tears gathering in her eyes, and they were genuine tears, too. "There are millions in stocks and bonds and I cannot touch a penny of it because the legal documents have not been found. I can't even prove that I am his daughter, except for half an old bracelet, and my father's lawyers say that would not hold in any court."

"You were born in St. Petersburg, my dear. Have the embassy there look up birth registers." "That would not put me into possession. Nothing but the return of my father will avail me. And there is a horrible thought always of my not being his real daughter."

"There is no doubt in my mind. I have only to recall Katrina's face to know whose child you are. But what greater mixup than she had calculated upon. Supposing after all it was only a resemblance, that the child was not Hargreave's, a substitute just to blind the Black Hundred? To keep them away from the true daughter? Her mind grew bewildered over such possibilities. The single and only way to settle all doubts was to make this child a prisoner. If she was Hargreave's true daughter he would come out of his hiding."

She heard Florence answering her question: "There is a sum of ten or twenty thousand in the Riverside bank, under the control of my father's butler. After that is gone I don't know what will happen to us, Susan and me."

"The door of Miss Farlow's will always be open to you, Florence," replied Susan, with love in her eyes.

This interesting conversation was interrupted by the advent of Norton. He was always dropping in during the late afternoon hours. Florence liked him for two reasons. One was that Jones trusted him to a certain extent and the other was that . . . that she liked him. She finished this sentence in her heart defiantly.

Today he brought her a box of beautiful roses, and at the sight of them the princess smiled faintly. Set the wind in that quarter? She could have laughed. Here was her revenge against this meddling who took no particular notice of her while Florence was in the room. She would encourage him, poor grubbing newspaper writer, with his beggarly pittance! What chance had he of marrying this girl with millions within reach of her hand?

The peculiar thing about this was that Norton was entertaining the same thought at the same time, what earthly chance had he?

In the second story window of the house over the way there was a worried man. But with his glasses brought in range the true contents of the box he laughed sardoniously.

"This watching is going my goat. I smell a rat every time I see a shadow." He wiped the lenses of his opera glasses and proceeded to roll a cigarette.

When the princess and Norton went away Jones sat quietly up to Florence's room and threw up the curtain. Two round points of light flashed from the watcher's window, but the soft, fine smile on Jones' lips was not obliterated. He went to the door, opened it cautiously, a hand to his ear. Then he closed the door, turned back the rug and removed a section of the floor-board. Out of this cavity he raised a box. There was lettering on the lid; in fact, the name of its owner, Stanley Hargreave. Jones replaced the floor-board and tucked the box under his arm and made his exit.

The man lounging in the shadow had agreed upon. It was the signal across the street and boldly rang the bell. It was only then that Florence missed the ever present butler. She hesitated, then sent Susan to the door.

"I must see Mr. Jones upon vitally important business." "He has gone out," said Susan, and very sensibly closed the door before Felton's foot succeeded in getting inside.

It was time to act. He ran around to the rear. The ladder convinced him that Jones had tricked him. He was wild with rage. He was over the wall in an instant. Away down the back street his eye discovered his man in full flight. He gave chase. As he came to the first corner he was nearly knocked over by a man coming the other way.

"Who are you bumping into?" growled Felton. "Not so fast, Felton!" "Who the devil are you?" "The stranger made a sign which Felton instantly recognized.

"Quick! What has happened?" "Jones has the million and is making his getaway. See him hiking toward the rear!"

The two men began to run. There followed a thrilling chase. Jones engaged a motor boat and it was speeding seaward when the two pursuers arrived. They were not lagging. There was another boat and they made for it.

"A hundred if you overtake that boat," said Felton's strange companion. Felton eyed him thoughtfully. There was something familiar about that voice.

Great plumes of water shot up into the air. It did not prove a short race by any means. It took half an hour for the pursuer to overhaul the pursued.

"Is that Jones?" "Yes," Felton fired his revolver into the air in hopes of terrifying Jones' engineer, but there was five hundred dangle before the individual's eyes. "Let them get a little nearer," shouted the butler.

The engineer let down the speed a notch. The other boat crept up within twenty yards. Jones sought a perfect range. He would have to find this spot again.

"Surrender!" yelled Felton. In reply Jones raised the precious box and deliberately dropped it into the sea. Then he turned his automatic upon his pursuers and succeeded in setting their boat afire.

All this within the space of an hour. During dinner that night (there was now a cook) Jones walked about the dining table, rubbing his hands together from time to time.

"Jones," said Florence "why do you rub your hands like that?" "Was I rubbing my hands, Miss Florence?" he asked innocently. (To be Continued next Saturday.)

LITTLE KINDNESS

You gave on the way a pleasant smile, And thought no more about it, I cheered a life that was sad and the while, That might have been wrecked without it.

You spoke one day a cheering word, And passed to other duties; it warmed a heart, new promise stirred; And paid a life with beauties, And so for the word and its silent prayer, You'll reap a palm sometime—some-where.

You lent a hand to a fallen one A life in kindness given; It saved a life when help was none, And now a hope for heaven. And so for the help you proffered these, You'll reap a joy sometime—some-where.

HOW TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION

One of our lady readers who found that her skin was becoming harsh and dry from the use of powders, rouge and creams, sends us the formula below. She states that the simple, harmless, and inexpensive lotion made therefrom softened her skin, and so greatly enhanced the beauty of her complexion that she has entirely done away with all other preparations which she has been accustomed to use. This lotion can easily be prepared at home or by any good druggist. It calls for two ounces of Rose Water, one drachm Tincture of Benzoin, and two ounces Flowers of Oxzoin. Mix together and apply night and morning with the hands or use a soft cloth or sponge. Always shake well before using. Our obliging correspondent asks that her name be withheld for personal reasons, but nevertheless gives us the permission to publish her letter for the benefit of other readers. She adds that this formula was given her by a woman 65 years old whose youthful complexion and almost total absence of wrinkles were a source of wonder and admiration to all who knew her.



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SEE THESE PICTURES AT THE PEOPLE'S THEATRE