

THE BUDDHA'S EYES

By Frank Filson

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"Yes, old Col. Hartley had quarreled with his son, but I am not satisfied that the will was his. He was not the sort of man to leave everything to his Indian butler."

"Ram Gus had been with him for years. The signature has been verified by all who knew the colonel."

"I shall run down to Haverham with your permission and make an investigation."

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders. James Pyne was an old Indian acquaintance of the late colonel, and his friend's shocking death had depressed him greatly. The circumstances were as follows:

Col. Hartley, living in retirement near Haverham, with his Indian butler, Ram Gus, had quarreled violently with his only son, Arthur, over the girl whom Arthur had subsequently married. He had cut him out of his will. The will seemed to be genuine. Even Pyne, after examining the signature, was compelled to accept the general opinion to this effect.

But he believed the colonel had made another will, that Ram Gus had murdered him and stolen it. The colonel had dropped dead in front of his great bronze Buddha, eleven feet high, which occupied one end of his library. The Buddha was supposed to bring sudden death to any one who owned it. The colonel had taken it from its shrine in Amritsar.

Pyne, arriving at the house, found Ram Gus in full possession. He explained briefly that he had come to investigate the circumstances of his master's death. Ram Gus, a surly fellow in a turban and frock coat, sneered maliciously.

"The doctor's certificate was apoplexy," he said. "Am I under suspicion?"

"Yes," answered Pyne frankly.

The butler shrugged his shoulders. "Stay as long as you like," he said.

The investigation meant everything to Arthur Hartley and his wife, a pretty, brown-eyed girl, who, as Pyne's request, had taken up their abode in the village. Pyne spent days investigating, with the following result:

The Buddha was set back against the wall. There was no mechanism



He Stood Alone in the Library

by which a person, concealed there, could discharge a bullet. And the examining physicians had satisfied themselves that there were no marks of violence.

The room next to the library, used as a pantry by the butler, had been recently repapered and painted, and at the time of the colonel's death had been empty. Ram Gus having moved his pantry to a little, unused chamber across the hall.

Dr. Gumidge, who, with his son,