

# PEG O' THE RING

by WALTER K. HILL  
and JO BRANDT



Novelized from the Motion Picture  
Play of the Same Name by the  
Universal Film Manufacturing Co.

### SYNOPSIS.

La Belle Le Slour, animal queen, dies after giving birth to a baby. Doctor Lund, owner of circus, La Belle's husband, refuses to recognize child. La Belle entrusts baby to Flip, a clown, who rears Peg as circus rider. Later Doctor Lund's second wife determines Peg shall not share Lund's millions and sends Hindu servant to follow circus and dispose of girl. Doctor Lund sends thugs to get from Flip letter that proves Peg's parentage. Mrs. Lund also wants this letter. Many exciting and hazardous attacks and events transpire. Doctor Lund's son who is following Peg to induce her to become his wife, rescues girl from many perils. Incidents during pursuit of Peg result in circus destroyed by fire. Doctor Lund decides to again equip show for travel and gives party to celebrate reopening of circus. At this party, under her spell, Peg and young Lund, who is being held of counterfeiters. Later she induces Flip to explain to Secret Service men her strange affliction and young Lund is freed of suspicion. Young Lund and Peg go to circus show car to examine injury to Peg's favorite pony. Mrs. Lund's thugs shut door of car, release couple and shove car into main line, where it is wrecked by a passenger train just after Lund and Peg have jumped from top of car into water under trestle.

### EIGHTH EPISODE

"Where is my girl? Who has seen Peg?" cried Flip, the clown, when he came back to the woman's dressing tent after another search in his trunk for the priceless letter.

"She left here a few moments ago," said one of the girls. "She went away with young Doctor Lund," said another. And it was only after diligent inquiry that Flip discovered that his "little girl" had gone to the show train to find out how badly her pet pony had been injured.

When Flip reached the railroad, he found men running down the tracks toward the trestle. His heart stood still when he looked at the place on the side-tracks where the circus train was standing. One of the cars was missing, and he was apprehensive of disaster when he began to inquire about the cause of the wild rush of men, down the tracks.

"One of those circus cars got loose, and ran onto the main line. It has been wrecked down on the trestle," was the distressing reply that came to his excited questioning.

Flip made his way with the others to the trestle where, piled in a heap, the splintered and shattered car obstructed the tracks. Under a pile of debris Flip saw the legs of a pony kicking about, and his fears were thus confirmed. This was the car Peg had started for when she left the show grounds.

"Oh, my poor little girl; she's killed, I know she is," wailed the old clown, his body shaking with grief while tears streamed down his face. Some of the show folks had, by this time, arrived at the wreck, and two of them gently urged him away from the scene.

"You can do no good here, Flip. The wreckers will clear the track and some of the boys will stay here and see about Peg. You go back to the show. Just because she started for this car is no sign she got inside of it. Cheer up, and don't grieve until you know more than we do now."

But Flip was inconsolable. His companions walked with him back to the show lot, and the performers tried to cheer the clown while he sat on his trunk and wept. The news of the wrecked car had spread rapidly among the show people, and there were many to give Flip a kind word and to comfort him with the fact that it was not certain Peg had even been in danger.

Mrs. Lund was among the number who visited Flip in the men's tent. She had come to the show grounds for her own sinister purposes, and learned of the wreck from the performers. No one save her Hindu servant knew why she was really there; nobody with the show even suspected Mrs. Lund's heartless duplicity.

It seemed natural that she, as the wife of the owner of the show, should visit the lot, and only human that she should interest herself in Flip, by trying to comfort the old clown in his grief. She was tenderness itself in her efforts to soothe him.

"We do not know that Peg was in the car," she said. "The show folks are searching for her, and if my boy is with her you may be sure he will find a way to protect her from harm." But Flip, nervous and distressed, found little comfort in anything she said.

Truth to tell the incident of the car being wrecked was all news to the designing Mrs. Lund and she was hopeful that the Hindu had at last accomplished the purpose of the mission upon which she had originally sent him—to dispose of Peg and keep her from sharing the Lund millions.

When the car sped down the tracks and came into collision with the on-rushing locomotive, Chockro and his gang were the first to investigate the result of the impact. One of the thugs was sure he had seen Peg and young Lund jump from the roof of the car, and this point was a subject of much discussion when the thugs arrived at the wreck. Chockro made a hurried search of the scene, and then led his men to investigate in another direction.

Young Lund and Peg, safe from

their experience in the water, recovered their breath and composure within a few moments after they had landed on the beach. Lund helped Peg to her feet, and started along the shore to reach a place of comfort and safety. Over the jagged rock, which rose above the sandy beach upon which they had landed, Lund helped the girl he loved.

They climbed along until they reached the shore end of a pier that extended far out into the water. By moving among the rocks until they found a place within reach of the planking on the pier, Lund was able to first scramble up himself, and then help Peg to a place beside him. The pier extended so far from the shore that Lund presumed they were on the trestle from which they had just leaped into the water.

They started to walk rapidly away from the shore end of the pier, but had not gone far until Lund noticed the Hindu and his gang clambering over the rocks beneath them. At the same time Chockro saw his fleeing prey, and leading his gang to the rocks where Lund and Peg had climbed to the pier, followed them with all possible speed.

"We'll run across the trestle, and distance them with the start we have," Lund called to Peg as he took her hand and helped her along. But before they had gone far, Lund noticed his mistake, discovering that they were running toward the end of a pier and not upon a trestle. Ahead of them a few hundred feet was the pier head.

The footfalls of Chockro and his gang were plainly to be heard as the pursuers of young Lund and Peg sped across the planks. To go back meant facing the thugs on the narrow pier. The nearest shelter was behind a pile of shipping boxes on the edge of the pier, while a little further beyond was a roughly-built house that stood near the end of the dock.

Lund quickly decided to go in the chance of finding protection from Chockro and his thugs, or at least, to have a fighting chance to defend Peg and himself from the expected assault. The fleeing couple had time to jerk open the door to what proved to be a small, empty storehouse and find shelter, within before the Hindu and his gang could overtake them.

When the door resisted Chockro's efforts to open it, the gang brought a heavy plank and used it as a weapon to beat down the barricade. It needed but a few blows, backed by the strength of Chockro and his crew, to smash through the panels and in a twinkling, the thugs had rushed into battle with the athletic young Lund and the agile and muscular circus girl.

With the odds greatly against them, Lund and Peg gave a good account of their energies, but in the end they were overpowered. Chockro and his gang regained their breath, while Lund and the circus girl were held safe under the revolver of one of the gang. The Hindu gave his instructions, for a close watch to be maintained upon the wily and athletic young couple.

"Hold them here," said Chockro to his gang, while I deliver this letter to the boss." Then the Hindu departed from the storehouse, leaving young Lund and Peg in charge of his gunmen, and proceeded to the circus lot, where he had been instructed to meet Mrs. Lund and deliver to her the letter that proved Peg's birthright.

When Chockro reached the show grounds it was necessary for him to adopt extremely cautious methods to avoid discovery. He directed his steps from tent to tent, keeping a keen watch for Mrs. Lund, and finally caught sight of her as she was leaving the tent where Flip was grieving for his lost little girl.

The Hindu passed into the baggage tent, where wardrobe cases were piled high, intending to make a short cut to intercept Mrs. Lund. He failed to observe that he was being followed, having in his eagerness to reach his "boss" relaxed caution to his ultimate regret.

Jack Boygne, sent by Doctor Lund to make further attempts to secure the fateful letter, saw the Hindu sneak into the baggage tent, and moved stealthily behind him. At an instant when the high piles of wardrobe chests promised suitable privacy for the execution of his plans, Jack dealt the Hindu a stunning blow from behind and felled him to the ground.

In a twinkling Boygne had planned his victim under his heavy weight and sending home a few more vigorous blows, subdued the luckless Chockro completely. Then Boygne made a hasty search of the Hindu's pockets, and extracted from what Chockro had designed as a place of security, the letter that Doctor Lund had commissioned Boygne, at all hazards to secure.

His purpose accomplished, Boygne pocketed the letter and made good his departure, leaving Chockro to recover from the assault as best he could. It was several moments before the Hindu was able to collect his senses and rise to his feet. Then he made the discov-

ery that the letter he had come to deliver into the hands of Mrs. Lund, his "boss," had disappeared.

Leaving the tent the crestfallen Hindu continued his search for Mrs. Lund. When he finally discovered her, the loss of the letter was the first thing he reported. And then, as an offset to his misfortune, he made haste to explain that he had the girl safely under guard in the storehouse on the pier—but he was careful to say nothing about young Lund being also his prisoner.

The Hindu had his own grudge to settle with young Lund and he was, furthermore, careful not to let the boy's mother know that her son was again in danger. Chockro had a lively fear of Mrs. Lund and had no desire to awaken her displeasure.

"Well, it's too bad that the letter was so nearly in my grasp and then to lose it," said Mrs. Lund to her henchman, "but the case is not hopeless by any means."

"If I could get my gang, we might overtake Boygne before he gets the letter to Doctor Lund," Chockro ventured to suggest.

"That's a good idea. Take my car, that is standing out by the road, get your men, and I'll return home and head this man off. Come with your men to my house as quickly as you can," and Mrs. Lund departed for her home while Chockro sneaked cautiously away to find the automobile.

"Mrs. Lund says for you to go back to the house on foot and let me have the machine," said Chockro to the chauffeur as he hurried up to the motor, standing near the circus grounds.

Then taking the wheel, the Hindu sped away in the direction of the pier. With a view to a quick departure Chockro turned the auto around when he had arrived on the pier, backed it down to the storehouse, and left it headed toward the mainland. Then he dashed into the old shack and found his men and their prisoners, just as he left them.

Peg and young Lund were seated on a box in the corner, while Chockro's thugs stood guard, one of them still holding the revolver in threatening readiness for use. The Hindu's hurried entrance awakened new interest in the possible developments.

"Did you deliver the letter?" was the question hurled at Chockro by a chorus of voices, when the Hindu had entered and slammed the door behind him.

"No, I didn't," said Chockro, "and worse luck, Jack Boygne gave me a good licking and took the letter away from me. The 'boss' says he was sent by her husband to get the letter, and she has gone home to head him off."

Peg and Lund listened with breathless interest to what Chockro had to say. Lund was in ignorance of the letter, but Peg knew that Flip was vitally concerned in recovering a link that had been stolen from his trunk. And this, the girl concluded was the identical document.

"We must go to the house and get the letter away from Boygne. The boss' motor is outside and I want two of you to stay here and watch these people while the rest of us take the machine," Chockro, while giving these orders, had drawn his gang, momentarily, away from the door.

Young Lund and Peg had been on the alert for any opportunity, and in the brief second that the door was unguarded, they leaped down from their perch on the box, and Peg made a dash for liberty. This was in accord with the plans they had formed—Peg to escape at the first chance and depend upon young Lund to interfere with any attempt to follow her.

Peg reached the door in a twinkling, with Frank close at her heels. There was a shout from Chockro when the movement started, but before anyone could interfere, the girl had opened the door and escaped. Frank stood ready to battle with the thugs, and by lively work kept the gang from immediately following.

The struggle in the storehouse vigorously maintained by young Lund in battling with Chockro and his thugs, gave Peg opportunity to race to Mrs. Lund's automobile, where Chockro had left it, with the engine running. In feverish haste the girl vaulted into the driver's seat and started the machine.

She was well under way before Chockro's gang had subdued young Lund and made it possible for anyone to pursue her. With Lund temporarily conquered, the Hindu left two men to guard their prisoner and calling to the others to follow, dashed out of the shack and ran along the pier.

Far ahead of them Peg was speeding in the motor. She had left the pier and was running swiftly along the road that led toward the town. Chockro and his men followed as fast as they could run, but they soon realized the fruitlessness of pursuit on foot.

"We'll hurry up town, as fast as we can, and rent a machine," said the Hindu when the gang had stopped, breathless for consultation. "We'll get there in time to help some, and show the boss that we mean to obey orders."

Meanwhile Peg was indulging in the exciting game of beating the speed limit. She knew every road by heart, having ridden over the country on horseback in the years she had lived, between circus seasons, in the old town. It was an easy matter for her to follow the best and quickest routes to the Lund home.

But in her own anxiety to reach her destination she had not considered those watchful guardians of the highway—the "motor cops." Two of them were resting at ease, watching the highway, when Peg's machine dashed madly past them. The "cops" had

mounted their motorcycles in a twinkling and were as quickly in hot pursuit of the reckless girl.

Peg found exhilaration in the wild ride, and moving the gear to the top notch careened madly along the smooth roadway. Unmindful of consequences, she continued her flight until she reached the Lund home and, slowing down, turned into the driveway that led through the beautiful ground. She stopped the machine before an entrance that led through a glass door, into Doctor Lund's library.

When she vaulted out of the driver's seat, and ran toward the door, she was able to see, through the glass, that Doctor Lund was in spirited conversation with a man whom Peg had noticed around the circus lot in various towns. Ignoring ceremony Peg entered the house, closed the door behind her and stood for a moment listening to the excited conversation between Doctor Lund and Jack Boygne.

The two men stood at the farther side of the room and were so interested in their own affairs that they had not noticed the girl come in. Peg had formed no definite plan of procedure, but what she heard, brought her to a quick decision.

"You told me that when I put the letter in your hands you would pay over the coin," Jack Boygne was saying to Doctor Lund as Peg quietly closed the door behind her. "Well, I've got the letter. Now show me the greenbacks."

"You better show me the letter, first," was Doctor Lund's reply. "I'm good for the money if you have the goods."

Boygne reached into his pocket and pulled out an envelope. Holding it before him, he extended his other hand and said, "Lay the bills in there and I'll give you the letter."

Then two very unexpected interruptions transpired. Peg bounded forward from her place by the door, just as Mrs. Lund entered the library.

Quick as flash, Peg grabbed the letter from the dumfounded Boygne's outstretched hand, and with the agility of a cat made for the door through which she had just entered.

And before either man could make a move to follow her, Mrs. Lund's voice was heard in icy tones saying: "Doctor Lund, what are you doing with that girl in here?"

Lund halted Boygne by placing a firm hand upon his arm, and then tried to explain. The interruption gave Peg opportunity to pass from the room, and run to the automobile. But there she found the two "motor cops" waiting to receive her.

"You were going 70 miles an hour, young lady, and here is a summons for you," said one of the officers politely raising his cap.

"Seventy miles in that car? It can't be done," was Peg's laughing retort. "But I'll tell you what I'll do. You be a good fellow and do something for me and I'll take your summons and pay my fine willingly."

"Well, if there is anything I can do," said the officer, "that will oblige you, I'm willing enough to do it."

"You're a dear man," the girl coyly remarked, "just put this letter in your pocket and keep it safe until I call for it. Will you do that?"

"Surest thing you know—anything to oblige a lady is my motto," said the officer as he took the letter from Peg's hand and slipped it into his pocket.

"When I see you in police court, you'll know more about why I want you to keep the letter," said the girl, as she bestowed one of her sweetest smiles upon the "motor cops." And as they wheeled away she waved her hand in a friendly salute.

Peg stood for a moment beside the automobile, trying to figure out her next move.

Just then Mrs. Lund came out of the library and greeted Peg with a most gracious smile. The girl was mystified beyond comprehension.

The woman was in the sweetest possible frame of mind, apparently, and Peg's childlike nature made her an easy victim to Mrs. Lund's friendly advances. The girl was quickly reassured when Mrs. Lund remarked: "Don't think of that incident, just now. It's all right and Doctor Lund has fully explained everything to me. That letter you took is of no importance, and you are welcome to keep it. Of course I don't know why you were so interested in getting it, but it doesn't concern me in any event."

plan she had devised for the circus girl's undoing. Leaving Peg standing beside an urn of beautiful flowers, near the drive, Mrs. Lund proceeded toward the garage, telling the girl she would send the chauffeur to pick her up.

But the woman's first purpose was to make sure that the automobile she had just seen enter the grounds contained, as she presumed, Chockro and his gang. When she reached the spot where the machine stood by the roadway it was deserted, but instantly the Hindu and his henchmen appeared from the place they had been hiding in among the trees.

"We had to rent this machine to get here, boss," said the Hindu without ceremony, as he approached Mrs. Lund.

"Well you have made a bad mess of things so far, but there is a chance now to redeem yourself," said the woman. "The girl is here and I want you to get her back to the pier. I will follow in another machine as quickly as I can. You are to hide in the tonneau and when I get her to enter the machine, you men silence her, pull down the shades and the chauffeur will take you to the pier. Don't bungie this job, if you value your own welfare."

Mrs. Lund then ordered her chauffeur to run the limousine out of the garage, get the gang inside and then come to where she would be standing with Peg by the driveway. Having added her final instructions to Chockro the woman proceeded to where she had left Peg standing by the urn of flowers, and again engaged her pleasantly in conversation until the limousine drove up.

"Take the young lady right to the circus grounds," was Mrs. Lund's order to the chauffeur. And then she held Peg's hands, keeping the girl's back to the open door of the limousine, while bidding her an agreeable adieu. The unsuspecting girl lifted her foot to the step, and was in the act of entering the tonneau when Chockro suddenly reached out, clapped his hand across Peg's mouth and dragged the struggling girl into the car.

The chauffeur started the car, and Mrs. Lund, with a sinister smile, watched the limousine speed away from the grounds, through the side gate, and out of view. Then the woman beckoned to another one of her lackeys who approached her for orders. Soon the car which Chockro had rented pulled up to the spot where Mrs. Lund was standing. Telling the driver to proceed with all speed to the pier, Mrs. Lund entered the auto and was rapidly driven away.

Doctor Lund and Jack Boygne soon emerged from the library, and the two men sauntered down the path that led from the library door. Arriving at the gate Doctor Lund halted and ended the topic they had been discussing by issuing to Jack his final orders.

"Go back to the show. Watch for your chance to get to Peg and secure that letter. It should be easy for you to get the letter from her," said Lund.

"All right, boss," Jack replied. "I'll do my best, but when I get it again, you have the money ready to exchange for it. Business is business and I'll take no promises. I want the cash." And with that Jack walked away, while Doctor Lund returned to the door and entered his library.

Meanwhile young Lund, a prisoner under guard in the storehouse on the pier, had been trying to devise some method of outwitting his keepers. One of Chockro's gang stood guard with a revolver held constantly and menacingly in view, while the other thug devoted himself to the task of keeping double watch on the athletic young physician.

But as the time went by the thugs relaxed considerably the strictness of their guard. Lund regaled them with pleasantries, making light of his predicament. The man with the "gun" stood with his back to the closed door; the other one guarded the window that opened directly over the water at the extreme edge of the pier. Young Lund figured his chances and decided best to try for liberty by diving through the window.

Having decided this much, Lund schemed for the chance to make the leap. Finally he decided the most likely move would be to try the "cigarette lighting" trick he had worked so successfully on Chockro in the cellar of "The House of Mystery." Placing a cigarette in his mouth, Lund began to search his pockets as if to find a match.

"Give us a light, old top," was Lund's cheery request, when he had braced himself for the move. The thug standing by the open window, struck a match and held it out for Lund to take.

With lightning quickness Lund grabbed the outstretched hand, twisting the thug's wrist with the same motion, and swung his guardian away from the window. Then before the guard at the door could realize his purpose, Lund vaulted through the window, in one wild leap.

"Crack!" went the thug's revolver. The bullet whistled out of the open window, leaving the flying body of Lund unscathed. But when Lund rose from his plunge under the water he was not so fortunate. The thug had gained the open window, and sent three shots in the direction of the man in the water. Lund used his knowledge of swimming to conceal his body under water, and only the top of his head floated as a target for the thug's shots. In this way Lund managed to avoid most of the bullets that were sent in his direction as he swam and floated out of range. But the thug was certain that at least one of his shots had regis-

tered, although he did not know how badly Lund was wounded.

Diving, swimming and drifting Lund managed to reach the surf before he was utterly exhausted; and then the waves rolled his body over and over, casting the helpless man, each time, higher on the beach. Finally, washed high and dry, young Lund lay exhausted on the sands, without a tremor in his body and to all appearances as good as dead.

Chockro heard the revolver shots as he dashed onto the pier in Mrs. Lund's limousine, with Peg his prisoner, safe in the bottom of the tonneau. He urged the driver to make all speed toward the deserted storehouse and, when he arrived, the Hindu was prepared for serious trouble. Peg was carried bodily from the machine, and the gang burst into the house.

The two thugs left on guard, made their own explanation to their angry superior.

"Well, you're two fine guys and one with a gun to let him get away," said Chockro. "But it's up to us now to keep the girl safe until the boss comes. So throw her into the corner and see that she don't jump, like her sweetheart did."

Shortly after Chockro and his gang had reached the pier, Mrs. Lund arrived upon the scene and when she entered the storehouse, Peg's anger and indignation burst forth anew.

"Let me loose," she begged, "let me have one chance to settle with that old cat," cried Peg as she struggled and fought for her release.

"Now, dearie, don't be peevish," said the hypocritical Mrs. Lund. "You know I wouldn't harm you for the world, you dear sweet thing."

"Oh, no you wouldn't," Peg cried in derision and anger. "You are just as gentle and harmless as a rattlesnake."

"Well I'm not here to bandy words with you," said the woman, "I came to get that letter you have, and I'm going to get it. Then I'll let my men take care of you."

Ordering Chockro to have his men hold Peg securely, Mrs. Lund reached into the bodice of the struggling, screaming and kicking circus girl. The search was fruitless—for, of course, the letter was not there.

When the men released Peg, and she had rearranged her waist, the girl seated herself on a box in the corner and began to laugh hysterically.

"Fooled you, didn't I, you old cat?" cried Peg, between spasms of laughter. "And when I get out of here I'm going to do more. I'm going to tell the police that you are the leader of the counterfeiting gang. I refused to tell them before, on account of your son."

"Don't worry, dearie," said Mrs. Lund, with disdainful sarcasm. "You are not going to get out of here. So give me that letter and save yourself further trouble."

"Couldn't give it to you if I wanted to. I gave it to the police today after I had grabbed it out of that man's hand."

Peg's reply seemed to arouse Mrs. Lund's hatred more than ever. She started toward the girl, as if on the purpose of doing her bodily harm, but instantly recovered her composure.

"Then Chockro and most of his gang departed, leaving two men to watch the helpless Peg. And there they stayed, guarding their prisoner for some time. With nothing to do, their vigil became tiresome after a while.

"Oh, lets beat it up town," one of them finally said. "The girl is good and safe. We'll leave her here and come after a while." And after a little more persuasion the other thug consented to the plan.

Peg was helpless and alone. She could hear the water lapping against the piles that held the pier. The sound made the place even more desolate. The wind rattled a loose board and the sudden noise made her start with fear. There was a rustling among some old paper on the floor, in the corner of the room. Peg screamed with fright.

The girl looked in dread toward the pile of paper. She noticed long coils of rope hung down from a shelf, and where the rope touched the floor there was a pile of refuse and old paper. She was horrified to see two great rats, moving along the floor. Her gaze followed their movements, the girl transfixed with terror.

As she watched them they crawled one by one up the coils of rope that hung from the shelf.

The rats scurried along the shelf, upsetting things and making nerve-racking noises, their little "squeaks" sounding more terrifying to Peg than the roar of any lion she had ever heard. And finally her great dread of misfortune was realized, when the rats knocked from the shelf an open box of matches.

There was a fall of several feet for the box to drop and when they hit the floor, by some means, the matches were ignited.

Peg screamed and struggled at the ropes that so cruelly held her. Far out on the pier, away from any chance passers to hear her cries, the girl realized the position she was in. And as the fire increased and the flames found new material to devour, Peg closed her eyes against the terrifying sight and waited for death to mercifully relieve her.

(END OF EIGHTH EPISODE.)

More About Sweet Clover. That sweet clover will not grow plowed land is the claim made by farmers in some parts of Iowa. Iowa experiment station men do not agree with this, however. A flourishing crop in Ringgold county that was sown on plowed ground has been called to their attention. The field alongside the road from Mt. Ayr to Elston.

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