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.

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SYNOPSIS.

La Belle Le Sieur, 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 perilous straits. In the preceding episode Peg has been shot by the Hindu while performing in the circus ring. During the excitement the elephants stampede. One of them picks up Peg with its trunk and escapes from the tent with her, carrying her until he throws her upon the ground in a lumber yard. Here she is discovered by two sailors from a steamer at a nearby dock. They carry her to the boat and make her a captive in the cabin. Young Lund, in a motor boat, follows the steamer, climbs on board and rescues Peg. When Lund and Peg reach the deck they find their motor boat has gone adrift. The episode ends with Lund and Peg, holding at bay, with belaying pins, the drunken sailors.

TWELFTH EPISODE

Peg and young Dr. Lund were in perilous straights, marooned at the stern of the anchored steamer, with only two iron belaying pins to defend themselves against the onrushing river pirates, drunk and half-crazed because their plans had been frustrated by the timely arrival of Lund and Jerry, the jockey, to the defense of Peg.

When the sailors had knocked Jerry down, at the time they made their rush from the bow of the steamer, they had in their eagerness to assail Lund and Peg neglected to dispose of Jerry's revolver. This oversight temporarily saved the situation. Jerry soon gained his feet, once the mob of sailors had swept over him, and recovering his revolver from the scuppers, made a quick dash aft.

"Hands up, everyone of you!" was Jerry's triumphant command when he reached the stern of the boat.

"Up with them, and line yourselves against the rail," was the second order. And the drunken sailors obeyed with alacrity, as they caught the gleam of Jerry's gun.

"We'll march them back to the bow of the boat," said Jerry to Lund. And suiting the action to the word the three captives were now masters of the situation as they drove the sailors forward.

The motor boat which had brought Lund and Jerry to Peg's rescue was drifting farther away every moment, their only hope was in subduing the ruffians, and retaining the mastery. Jerry made the sailors climb one by one to the half-deck at the very bows, and then while Lund and Peg followed them, the jockey held the balance of command with the revolver. This advantage was an asset until the sailors discovered, by strategy, that the pistol was no longer a weapon to be feared.

The capstan and chains occupied the greater part of the half-deck on which the drunken sailors were held under temporary control. One of the crafty pirates crept along the maze of chains and ropes, using the capstan as a shield to hide his movements. There were too many of the ruffians for Jerry to watch all their movements and this man consequently succeeded in his purpose.

When he had gained the edge of the overhanging deck, the sailor jumped. Jerry's attention was attracted by this action, and taking hasty aim the

Suddenly the Earth Gave Way Beneath Her Feet.

jockey pulled the trigger of his revolver. It missed fire, again and again. There was a shout of joy from the drunken sailors when they observed that Jerry's gun was useless, and the jockey realized that the odds had quickly shifted and were now heavily on the sailors' side.

Without waiting to clinch with the man who had jumped to the main deck, Jerry quickly climbed to the side of Peg and young Lund to assist them in the close fighting that had broken loose. The two men protected Peg by keeping her behind them as they exchanged blow for blow with the sailors. But the odds were too great, and this Lund and Jerry soon realized.

"We can only jump and swim for it," Lund shouted as instructions to Jerry and Peg. "You jump first," Lund called to Peg, "and we will go over the side after you."

With only their heads above water Lund, Peg and Jerry could not observe how their good fortune was working out. They had not had opportunity, during the excitement of the fight on deck to look about them. But the strange proceedings on the deck of the steamer had attracted the attention of two men who were cruising around the harbor in a motor boat.

"What in the world is all that rumpus on the deck of that steamer at anchor over yonder," said the man who was steering the motor boat to his companion.

"Certainly looks as though there was something peculiar about it," replied the other man.

"I'm just curious enough to want to find out," said the wheelman.

The three swimmers were going strong when the motor boat came to their relief.

At Lund's request the motor boat made directly for the pier from which Peg had been kidnaped. As they approached their destination, the three bedraggled unfortunates could see on the dock a group of people, evidently watching the little craft as it fairly flew over the surface of the harbor.

"They're the folks from the show, I'll bet," cried Peg "and I know daddy is anxious to see who's in this boat." And Peg was right.

There was a scene of great rejoicing among the crowd on the wharf when the boat came sufficiently near to permit Peg to be recognized. The motely group, most of them still dressed in their circus costumes, shouted with joy and danced about the wharf in expression of their delight.

Strong arms assisted Peg from the boat, and lifted her bodily to the wharf. But when Lund and Jerry scrambled to the pier, the rejoicing reached a climax in cheers and tears —Peg was overwhelmed by her girl companions, and Flip wept for joy.

The men who had effected the rescue were heroes of the moment, and when Peg and the others had profusely thanked the boatmen, they were given three cheers by the circus crowd as the party started back toward the show ground.

Flip's injured foot made it impossible for him to walk without assistance. Placing his arms over the shoulders of Peg and young Lund the old clown finally accomplished the journey.

"We are back in time for the show," said Peg. "But I guess the principal clown will not be among those present."

"Feels that way just now," said Flip. "And it will be the first show I've missed in many moons, I can tell you that."

With Flip made as comfortable as possible in the men's dressing tent, Lund and Peg gave the old clown an outline of their adventure. During the conversation the thought occurred to Lund that the letter Peg had entrusted to him for delivery, had not been given to Flip, and taking the precious document from his pocket Lund handed it to the old clown.

Water soaked and crumpled though it was, Flip eagerly grasped the letter and stowed it away in his pocket.

The prying eyes of Chockro, peering eagerly through the entrance to the dressing tent saw the letter pass into the hands of its rightful owner. The Hindu chuckled to himself, in the thought that he would have something of value to report to Mrs. Lund, his "boss."

When the other clowns had dressed for the performance, the pain in Flip's sprained ankle was so severe that he decided for once to miss a show. His companions derived considerable sport from the old man's misfortune, but Flip took their raillery in good part.

And just at that moment the manager of the show entered the dressing tent. He was plainly out of sorts, and addressing himself angrily to Flip fairly shouted:

"Say, old man, if you think you own this show because you've traveled with it for years, you're mistaken. What's the matter with you? Why did you miss the show tonight?" Flip met the lowering glance of the manager with steady gaze and responded:

"My ankle is sprained, and I can hardly hobble. It's a funny thing if I can't miss a show after all these years without you hollering." The other clowns listened in amazement, as Flip thus curtly answered the manager.

"Well, old man, you'll never miss another show while you are with this trick. The next time I'll throw you and your trunk off the train."

Flip was downcast when Peg came to help him down to the sleeper a few moments later. The girl presumed that the pain in his ankle was the cause of the old clown's unusual mood. But when he told her about the decree of the manager, she tried to cheer him up. Suddenly she turned and said:

"I'll do your act. Then he can't fire you. If your foot is not well tomorrow afternoon, I'll make up like you and wear your togs," said the girl.

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When the Hindu reported to Mrs. Lund, at her hotel that evening, the woman was immensely pleased with the information that the letter was in Flip's possession. And to secure the important document, Mrs. Lund and the Hindu perfected a bold plan. Giving Chockro the necessary instructions, Mrs. Lund directed him to work out the preliminary details before show-time the next afternoon.

Chockro and one of his men, accordingly, drove to the circus grounds the next day in a rented automobile. The driver had been bribed and instructed, and leaving the machine in a somewhat secluded spot near the tents, Chockro and his men proceeded to put the woman's plan into execution.

Mrs. Lund was on hand to give her hirelings final instructions. Sneaking up to the entrance of the dressing tent, Mrs. Lund and Chockro saw Flip sitting on his trunk, evidently waiting to begin preparations for the afternoon show.

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Flip was in despair when Peg entered his dressing room.

"I guess we'll be forced to try your scheme," said Flip, in response to the girl's inquiries. "My foot is still in such a bad shape that I can't stand on it, and I've had to send one of the boys downtown to buy me a crutch."

"Well, I've seen your act so many times, daddy, dear," said Peg, "that I know every trick, and if you'll show me how to make up my face, I'll go on in your place, and I'll bet the manager won't know the difference."

The girl went through with every trick Flip was accustomed to do and to every outward appearance it was the old clown himself who was convulsing the audience with laughter by his drolleries and comical antics. Even the few members of the company who were informed of the substitution could not detect any discrepancies in the girl's performance.

The program required that the clowns should appear several different times during the performance, and between acts Peg went to Flip's dressing room to get careful instructions from him as to what were the tricks that were next to be performed.

Peg had made several calls on Flip for these instructions and was back again for another "rehearsal" when she discovered the old clown was not in his dressing tent to meet her. Thinking that he had been momentarily delayed, Peg started to leave the tent in search of her daddy, when, to her dismay, she was confronted by Chockro and one of his men.

Without uttering a word and acting as with one impulse, the two ruffians quickly lifted the supposed clown bodily in their strong grasp and carried "him" to the opposite end of the dressing tent, where they had previously slit the canvas to permit them to make a speedy exit. Chockro had placed a gag in Peg's mouth, effectually preventing her outcries.

Their automobile was standing near, with its engine running, and into the waiting machine Peg was thrown. But despite the fact that they were off in a twinkling, the ruffians had not made a 'clean getaway."

One of Peg's girl companions had entered the dressing tent just as the Hindu and his man were disappearing with their captive. This girl sounded an alarm that roused the circus people to action.

Young Doctor Lund heard the commotion, and learning the cause, made haste to follow. The Hindu had gained a good start, meanwhile, and by the time young Lund had secured a machine in which to pursue the kidnapers, Chockro had covered considerable ground.

Promising the driver of the automobile he had rented a rich reward if he would overtake the Hindu, Lund urged his man to top speed. The chase led straight to the edge of town, and out upon a country road, with young Lund managing to keep Chockro's motor well in sight.

During the chase Chockro and his man had discovered that their job had been bungled. They were likewise treated to a surprise in realizing that instead of the old clown, whom they were ordered by Mrs. Lund to kidnap and search for the much-desired letter, they had brought along the circus girl.

"Right ahead, in that clump of trees, is the house," called Chockro. "Stop there and let us out."

Arriving at the designated spot, Chockro opened the door and ran into the yard. There he met the gardener, who was in charge.

"I heard your house was empty. Do you want to rent it for a short time?" said the Hindu. This remark was the signal Mrs. Lund had previously arranged, and in response the gardener, liberally bribed for knowing and seeing nothing, assured Chockro that the coast was clear.

They carried Peg into the house, an entirely empty place, with two rooms on the ground floor. The girl costumed in Flip's clown suit was thrown into the corner of one of the rooms and momentarily left there by her captors. When Chockro and his man looked from the window in the next room their fears were realized, for they saw young Lund run through the gate and come toward the house.

"We must get away with the girl right now," said Chockro to his confederate. "Then we can fix Lund, now that we have him out here, away from any help." And suiting the action to the word, the men again entered the room where Peg had been thrown.

"We'll get you this time, young lady," said the Hindu, as he made a dive for the girl. By a quick move Peg eluded him, and screaming at the top of her voice, made an attempt to reach a window, hoping to thus escape. But the Hindu and his man were prepared for the move, and headed her off.

Just at that instant a crash of glass in the next room warned the conspirators of trouble in another direction.

(Continued on page Seven.)

Do we understand that Secretary Redfield takes the ground that Director Durand doesn't know how he was fired?

Hughes on the stump in 1916 is the same Hughes who did such good work for Taft on the stump in 1908—plus the advantage which the intervening years have given to him in an enrichment of his judgment and force of expression. His speeches have poise, yet are full of punch. It is no wonder that Mr. McCormick is now planning to open the democratic campaign immediately.

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