

The Million Dollar Mystery

By HAROLD MAC GRATH

Illustrated from Scenes in the Photo Drama of the Same Name by the Thanhouser Film Company

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"Nonsense! Leave it to me. We shan't stick our heads inside the Hargreave house till we are dead certain that it is absolutely empty. Olga, you're a gem. I don't think Russia will bother us for awhile. Eh? Parol will not dare tell how he was flim-flammed. The least he can do to save his own skin is to say that we are fully capable of taking care of ourselves."

Olga laughed. "To think of his writing a note like that! Florence would have recognized—and no doubt did—a palpable attempt to play an old game twice."

"How does she act towards you?"
"Cordial as ever; and yet..."
"Yet what?"

"I thought her an ordinary school girl, and yet every once in a while she makes what you billiard players call a professional shot. What matter? So long as they do not shut the door in my face, I ask nothing more. But do you want my opinion? I feel it in my bones that something will go wrong tomorrow."

"Good lord, are you losing your nerve?" cried Braine impatiently. "The secret service has the warning; they find the green stuff, and Jones & Co. will mope off to the police station. And there'll be a week of red tape before they are turned loose again. They'll dig into Hargreave's finances and all that. We'll have all the security in the world to find out if the money is in the house or not. Why worry?"

"It's only the way I feel. There is something uncanny in the regularity of that girl's good luck."

"Ah, but we're not after her this time; it's the whole family."

"The servants too?"
"Everybody in the house will be under suspicion."

"And can you trust Beggs?"
"His life is in the hollow of my hand. You can always trust a man when you hold the rope that's around his neck."

Still the frown did not leave Olga's brow. With all her soul she longed to be out of this tangle. It had all looked so easy at the start; yet here they were, weeks later, no further forward than at the beginning, and added to this they had paid much in



The Dictagraph Registered Every Word.

lives and money. Well, if she would be fool enough to love this man she must abide with the consequences. She wanted him all by herself, out of danger, in a far country. He might tire, but she knew in her heart that she never would. This was her one great passion, and while her mode of living was not as honest as might be, her love was honest enough and unswerving, though it was not gilded by the pleasant fancies of youth.

"Of what are you thinking?" he asked when he concluded that the pause had been long enough.

"You."

"H'm. Complimentary?"
"No; just ordinary everyday love."

"Ah, Olga, why the deuce must you go and fall in love with a bundle of ashes like myself? Ashes and bitter ashes, too. Sometimes I regret. But the regretting only seems to make me all the more savage. What opium and dope are to other men, danger and excitement are to me. It is not written that I shall die in bed. I have told you that already. There is no other woman—now. And I do love you after a fashion, as a man loves a comrade. Wait till this dancing bout is over and I may talk otherwise. And now I am going to shake hands and hobnob with the elite—beautiful word! And while I bow and smirk and crack witticisms, I and the devil will be chuckling in our sleeves. But this I'll tell you, while there's a drop of blood in my veins, a breath in my body, I'll stick to this fight if only to prove that I'm not a quitter."

He caught her suddenly in his arms, kissed her, ran lightly to the door, and was gone before she could react from her astonishment.

"The affair went smoothly, without a hitch. Norton and his men gained the house through the tunnel without attracting the least attention. The Black Hundred, watching the front and rear of the house, never dreamed that there existed another mode of entrance or that there was a secret cabinet room."

Half an hour later the head of the secret service, accompanied by his men, together with "Spider" Beggs, who was in high feather over his success, arrived, demanded admittance, and went at the front of the business at once.

"Your name is Jones," began the chief.
The butler nodded, though his face evinced no little bewilderment at the appearance of these men.

"What is it you wish, sir?"
"I am from the secret service and I have it from a pretty good source that there is counterfeit money hidden in this house. More than that, I can put my hand on the very place it is hidden."

"That is impossible, sir," declared Jones indignantly.
"I'm an old hand, Mr. Jones. It will not do you a bit of good to put on that bold front."

Beggs smiled. How was he to know that this was a comedy set especially for his benefit?

"I should like to see that money," said Jones, not quite so bravely.

"Come with me," said the secret service man. "Where's the library?"
"Beyond that door, sir."

The chief beckoning to his men entered the library, went directly to a certain shelf, extracted three volumes, and there lay the money in three neat packages.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jones.



"I Shall Have to Request You and the Family to Accompany Me to the Station."

"I shall have to request you and the family to accompany me to the station."

"But it is all utterly impossible, sir! I know nothing of that money, nor how it got there. It's a plot. I declare on my oath, sir, that I am innocent, that Miss Florence and her companion know nothing about it."

"You will have to tell that to the federal judge, sir. My duty is to take you all to the station. It would be just as well not to say anything more, sir."

"Very well; but some one shall smart for this outrage."

"That remains to be seen," was the terse comment of the secret service man.

He led his prisoners away directly. Norton and his men had to wait far into the night. The Black Hundred did not intend to make any mistake this time by a hasty move. At quarter after ten they descended. Braine was not with them. This was due to the urgent request of Olga, who still had her doubts. The men rioted about the house, searching nooks and corners, examining floors and walls, opening books, pulling out drawers, but they found nothing. They talked freely, however, and the dictagraph registered every word. The printing plant, which had so long defied discovery, was in the cellar of the house occupied by the Black Hundred. Norton and his men determined to follow and raid the building. And the reporter promised himself a good front page story without in any way conflicting with his promises to Jones.

Events came to pass as they expected. The trailing was not the easiest thing. Norton knew about where the building was, but he could not go to it directly. He was quite confident that

its entrance was identical with that which had the trap door through which he had been flung that memorable day when he had been shanghaied.

When they reached the building he warned the men to hug the wall to the stairs. The trap yawned, but no one was hurt. They scampered up the stairs like a lot of eager boys; broke the door in—to find the weird executive chamber dark and empty and an acrid smoke in their nostrils. This latter grew stifling as they blundered about in the dark. By luck Norton found the exit and called to the men to follow. They saw Beggs at the top of the stairway and called out to him to surrender. He held up his hands and the stairs collapsed. Real fire burst out and Norton and his companion had a desperate battle with flame and smoke to gain the street.

The fire was put out finally, but there was nothing in the ruins to prove that there had been a counterfeiting den there. There was, however, at least one consoling feature: in the future the Black Hundred would have to hold their star-chamber elsewhere.

It was checkmate; or, rather, it was a draw.

CHAPTER XV.

Another Trap Set.

If the truth is to be told, Jones was as deeply chagrined over the outcome of the counterfeit deal as was Braine. They had both failed signally to reach the goal sought. But this time the organization had broken even with Jones, and this fact disturbed the butler. It might signify that the turning point had been reached, and that in the future the good luck might swing over to the side of the Black Hundred. Jones redoubled his cautions, reiterated his warnings, and slept less than ever. Indeed, as he went over the ground he conceded a point to the Black Hundred. He would no longer be able to keep tab on the organization. They had deserted their former quarters absolutely. The agent of whom they had leased the building knew nothing except that he would have to repair the place. The rent had been paid a year in advance, as it had been these last eight years. He had dealt through an attorney who knew no more of his clients than the agent. So it will be seen that Jones had in reality received a check.

More than all this, it would give his anxieties renewed confidence; and this

was a deeper menace than he cared to face. But he went about his affairs as usual, giving no hint to any one of the mental turmoil which had possession of him.

It is needless to state Norton did not scotch his rivals on the counterfeit story. But he set to work exploring the cellar of the gutted building, and in one corner he found a battered die. He turned this over to the secret service men. There was one man he wanted to find—Vroon. This man, could he find him, should be made to lead him, Norton, to the new stronghold. He saw the futility of trying to trap Braine by shadowing him. He desired Braine to believe that his escape from the freighter had been a bit of wild luck and not a pre-conceived plan. Braine was out of reach for the present, so he began the search for the man Vroon. He haunted the water front saloons for a week without success.

He did not know that it was the policy of the Black Hundred to lay low for a month after a raid of such a serious character. So the Hargreave menage had thirty days of peace; always watched, however. For Braine never relaxed his vigilance in that part of the game. He did not care to lose sight of Jones, who he was positive was ready for flight if the slightest opportunity offered itself.

Norton went back to the primrose paths of love; and sometimes he would forget all about such a thing as the Black Hundred. So the summer days went by, with the lilacs and the roses embowering the Hargreave home. But Norton took note of the fact that Florence was no longer the light-hearted schoolgirl he had first met.

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(Continued on page 5)

A Ford Car Did It

THE article published below was printed in this paper last week as a matter of important news. The paper neglected to mention that each and every one of these miles were made in a Ford car and the same car made them all. What greater or more forceful example of the stability and all around greatness of this popular car could be given. We leave it to the reader to decide.

AROUND THE WORLD

Around the world and two thousand one hundred and seventy miles more is the distance traveled by George Sawyer, the popular auto liveryman, who operates his line between Glasgow and Opheim. And this great total of 27,170 miles has been covered between April first and December fourteenth of this year.

Mr. Sawyer has made regular trips from Glasgow to Opheim and Glentana every day rain or shine, snow or mud, without having missed one trip during the period of the last eight and one-half months, excepting for a few days during the first of April when heavy snows held him in Opheim. The snow which covered the ground 12 inches deep on a level made travel impossible for two days.

Beginning April 10th and continuing up to December sixth, Mr. Sawyer made regular round trips for 281 consecutive days. Not only a regular trip each day being made but on some days two round trips were made, on others the route was covered two and one half times, a total distance of 275 miles without stopping except to load and unload passengers. It was simply going, going, gone for Sawyer from early morn until the wee sma' hours of the next morn. A few hours sleep and then off again with usually heavily loaded car.

Mr. Sawyer made one record during the summer which will stand without fear of being equalled for many a day when three complete road trips were made. This means a distance of 330 miles with but a short stop between trips. An unexpected call for a doctor made the third trip necessary and Sawyer was as usual equal to the occasion. On this memorable occasion two regular trips had been made the previous day, and Mr. Sawyer had stopped at his ranch near Opheim for the night. At a quarter to six the next morning a call was made upon him to get out his car and make a run to Glasgow for a physician. It was a matter of life or death for a sick woman at Opheim and without a moments hesitation Sawyer jumped to meet the situation. Taking only time to see that the gas tank was full and all parts plentifully supplied with oil he was off with one man in the car besides himself.

Into Glasgow the car rushed in the record time of one hour and 44 minutes. Arriving at Glasgow, twelve minutes were consumed picking up a doctor and nurse, they they were off again, the return being made in one hour and 53 minutes, with four people in the car. The trip covering a distance of 110 miles and the stop at Glasgow was covered in three hours and 27 minutes. Not a mishap occurred to hinder the rush from Opheim to Glasgow and return. The

doctor arrived in time to alleviate the situation and a life was saved. Sawyer made two more round trips that day, attending to his regular business in the same careful manner as though nothing unusual had occurred. His ever present modesty keeping the knowledge of his great race against death from becoming generally known about Glasgow for several days.

This was not the attitude, however, of his many friends in and about Opheim, Sawyer had become a hero and as such he was greeted by them, and given such an ovation as would have turned the head of many a man who is not so ably provided with that perquisite commonly called "horse sense." To Mr. Sawyer it was a case of his services being needed and he rendered that service as best he could.

In this season of continued service covering a little over eight months, Mr. Sawyer has worn out 17 tire casings. The route over which he has traveled comprises the ordinary country roads, some places inas fine condition as can be desired while portions of it is rocky, full of deep embayments and by no means pleasant to travel over. Two streams must be forded, each at times running quite a volume of water with steep banks to surmount in crossing.

The average life of the tires has been 6,500 miles quite a record in itself. One other record worthy of comment in this continued list of remarkable showings is the fact that Mr. Sawyer made 24½ round trips during the month of August without a single blow-out or punctures of a tire, and during the entire time he did not use a pump. Not a tire required any attention whatsoever, while traveling a distance of 2695 miles. This is some showing, for the extreme wear put to the tires, tried them to their limit.

During all this time Mr. Sawyer has not had an accident either to himself or any passengers, has always reached his destination and never disappointed a traveler.

The car has always been right side-up and going although many, many times as Mr. Sawyer has pulled into Glasgow one or more flat tires have been in evidence and upon some occasions one wheel would be without any tire at all and traveling on the rim. "Get there" has been Mr. Sawyer's motto and he has faithfully lived up to it.

This season of extremely hard usage seemed almost impossible for one car yet this is the showing made by it. Mr. Sam Grossman of the Glasgow Garage claims credit for this showing as Mr. Sawyer stables his car with him when at Glasgow. Sam says he waters and feeds the car very carefully.—From Glasgow Courier, December 25, 1914.

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