

# The Million Dollar Mystery

By HAROLD MAC GRATH

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

(Copyright, 1914, by Harold MacGrath)

## CHAPTER VII.

When all three finally met at the Hargreave home Florence suddenly took Jones by the shoulders and kissed him lightly on the cheek. Jones started back, pale and disturbed.

Norton laughed. He did not feel the slightest twinge of jealousy, but he was eaten up with envy, as the old wives say.

"You are wondering if I suspect the Princess Perigoff?" said Jones.

"I am." This man Jones was developing into a very remarkable character. The reporter found himself side-glancing at the thin, keen face of this resourceful butler. The lobe of the man's left ear came within range. Norton reached for a cigarette, but his hands shook as he lit it. There was a peculiar little scar in the center of the lobe.

"Well," said Jones, "I can find no evidence that she has been concerned in any of these affairs."

"You are suspicious?"

"Of everybody," looking boldly into the reporter's eyes.

"Of me?" smiling.

"Even of myself sometimes."

Conversation dropped entirely after this declaration.

"You're a taciturn sort of chap."

"Am I?"

"You are. But an agreement is an agreement, and while I'd like to print this story, I'll not. We newspaper men seldom break our word."

Jones held out his hand.

"Sometimes I wish I'd started life right," said the reporter gloomily. "A newspaper man is generally imprudent. He never looks ahead for tomorrow. What with my special articles to the magazines, I earn between four and five thousand the year; and I've never been able to save a cent."

"Perhaps you've never really tried," replied Jones, with a glance at his companion. It was a good face, strong in outline; a little careworn, perhaps, but free from any indications of dissipation. "If I had begun life as you did, I'd have made real and solid use

of the organization stood facing actual peril; and its one possible chance of salvation lay in the fact that no one's face was known to his neighbor. He, Vroom, and the boss alone knew who and what each man was. But the plans, the ramifications of the organization might become public property; and that would mean an end to an exceedingly profitable business.

The daughter of Hargreave rode horseback early every morning. She sought the country road. She was invariably attended by the riding master of a school near by.

"You four will make your own plans."

"If she should be injured?"

"Avoid it if possible."

"We have a free hand?"

"Absolutely."

"We risk a bad fall from her horse if it's a spirited one."

"Pretend a breakdown in the road," interpolated Braine. "As they approach, draw and order them to dismount. That method will prevent any accident."

"We'll plan it somehow. It looks easy."

"Nothing is easy where that girl is concerned. A thousand eyes seem to be watching her slightest move."

"We shan't leave anything to chance. How many days will you give us?"

"Seven. A failure, mind you, will prove unhealthy to all concerned."

"With a menace which made the four stir uneasily."

The telephone rang. Braine reached for the receiver.

"A man just entered the Hargreave house at the rear. Come at once," was the message.

"Is your car outside?" Braine asked.

"We are never without it."

"Then let us be off. No one will

stop us for speeding on a side street."

Fourteen minutes by the clock brought the car to a stand at the curb a few houses below the Hargreave home. The men got out. The watch-er ran up.

"He is still inside," he whispered.

"Good! Spread out. If anyone leaves that house, catch him. If he runs too fast, shoot. We can beat the police."

The man obeyed, and the watch-er ran back to his post. He was desperately hoping the affair would terminate tonight. He was growing weary of this eternal vigilance; and it was only his fear of the man known as the boss that kept him at his post. He wanted a night to carouse in, to be with the boys.

The man for whom they were lying in wait was seen presently to creep cautiously round the side of the house. He hugged a corner and paused. They could see the dim outline of his body. The light in the street back of the grounds almost made a silhouette of him. By and by, as if assured that the coast was clear, he stole down to the street.

"Halt!" Instantly the prowler took to his heels. Two shots rang out. The man was seen to stop, stagger, and then go on desperately.

"He's hit!"

By the time the men reached the corner they heard the rumble of a motor. One dashed back to the car they had left standing at the curb. He made quick work of the job, but he was not quick enough. Still, they gave chase. They saw the car turn toward the city. But, unfortunately for the success of the chase, several automobiles passed, going into town and leaving it. Checkmate.

Braine was keen enough tonight.

"He is hit; whether badly or not remains to be seen. We can find that out. Drive to the nearest drug store and get a list of hospitals. It's a ten to one shot that we land him somewhere among the hospitals."

But they searched the hospitals in vain. None of them had that night received a shooting case, nor had they heard one reported. The man had been unmistakably hit. He would not have dared risk the loss of time for a bit of play-acting. Evidently he had kept his head and sought his lodgings. To call up doctors would be utterly futile; for it would take a week for a thorough combing. This was the second time the man had got away.

"Perhaps I'm to blame," admitted Braine. "I should have advised Miles to stalk him and put him if he got the chance. There's a master mind working somewhere back of all this, and it's time I woke up to the fact. But you," turning to the auto bandits, "you men have your instructions. More than that, you have been given a free rein. See that you make good, or by the Lord Harry! I'll break the four of you like piestems."

"We haven't had a failure yet," spoke up one of the men, more courageous than his companions.

"You are not holding up a bank messenger this trip. Remember that. Drive me as far as Columbus circle. Leave me on the side street, between the lights, so I can take off this mask."

Later Braine sauntered into Pabst and ordered a light supper. This night's work, more than anything else, brought home to him the fact that his luck was changing. For years he had proceeded with his shady occupations without encountering any memorable failure. He moved in the high world, quite unsuspected. He had written books, given lectures, been made a lion of, all the while laughing in his sleeve at the gullibility of human nature. But within the last two weeks he had received serious checks. From now on he must move with the utmost caution. Some one was playing his own game, waging warfare unseen. A battle of wits? So be it; but Braine intended to play with rough wits, and he wasn't going to care which way the sword cut.

He hated Stanley Hargreave with all the hatred of his soul; the hatred of a man balked in love. And the man was alive, defying him; alive somewhere in this city this very night, with a bullet under his skin.

"Is everything satisfactory, sir?" he heard the head waiter say.

"Satisfactory?" Braine repeated blankly.

"Yes, sir. You struck the table as though displeased."

"Oh! Then Braine laughed relievedly. "If I struck the table, it was done unconsciously. I was thinking."

"Beg pardon, sir! Anything else, sir?"

"No. Bring me the check."

.....

"Your master gives riding lessons?"

The groom who had led the horse back from Hargreave's eyed his questioner rather superciliously.

"Yes." The groom fondled the animal's legs.

"How much is it?"

"Twenty dollars for a ticket of five rides. The master is the fashion u here. He doesn't cater to any but the best families."

"Pretty steep. Who was that young lady riding this morning with you, master?"

"That's the girl all the newspapers have been talking about," answered the groom importantly.

"Actress?"

"Actress! I should say not. That young woman is the daughter of Stanley Hargreave, the millionaire who was lost at sea. And it won't be long before she puts her finger in a pie of four or five millions. If you want any rides, you'll have to talk it over with the boss. He may or may not take any more rides. You'd probably have

to ride in the afternoon, anyhow, as every nag is out in the morning."

"Where's the most popular road?"

"Toward the park; but Miss Hargreave always goes along the river-side road. She doesn't like strangers about."

"O, I see. Well, I'll drop in this afternoon and see your master. They say that riding is good for a torpid liver. Have a cigar?"

"Thank."

The groom proceeded into the stables and the affable stranger took himself off.

A free rein; they could work it to suit themselves. There wasn't the least obstacle in the way. On the face of it, it appeared to be the simplest job they had yet undertaken. To get rid of the riding master in some natural way after he and the girl had started. It was like falling off a log.

"Susan," said Florence as she came into breakfast after her exhilarating ride, "did you hear pistol shots last night?"

"I heard some noise, but I was so sleepy I didn't try to figure out what it was."

"Did you, Jones?"

"Yes, Miss Florence. The shots came from the street. A policeman came running up later and said he saw two automobiles on the run. But evidently there wasn't anybody hurt. One has to be careful at night nowadays. There are pretty bad men abroad. Did you enjoy the ride?"

"Very much. But there were spots of blood on the walk near the corner."

"Blood?" Jones caught the back of a chair to steady himself.

"Yes. So some one was hurt. Oh, let's leave this place!" impulsively. "Let us go back to Miss Farrow's. You could find a place in the village, Jones. But if I stay here much longer in this state of unrest I shall lose faith in everything and everybody. Whoever my father's enemies are, they do not lack persistence. They have made two attempts against my liberty, and sooner or later they will succeed. I keep looking over my shoulder all the time. If I hear a noise I jump."

"Miss Florence, if I thought it wise, you should be packed off to Miss Farrow's this minute. But not an hour of the day or night passes without this house being watched. I seldom see anybody about. I can only sense the presence of a watcher. At Miss Farrow's you would be far more like a prisoner than here. I could not accompany you. I am forbidden to desert this house."

"My father's orders?"

Jones signified neither one way nor the other. He merely gazed stolidly at the rug.

"That blood!" She sprang from her chair, horrified. "It was his! He was here last night, and they shot him! O!"

"There, there, Miss Florence! The man was only slightly wounded. He's where they never will look for him." Then Jones continued, as with an effort: "Trust me, Miss Florence. It would not pay to run away. The whole affair would be repeated elsewhere. We might go to the other end of the world, but it would not serve us in the least. It is not a question of escape, but of who shall vanquish the other. There is nothing to do but remain here and fight, fight, fight. To say nothing of the gunmen. That is what we must do—put them in a safe place, one by one, till we reach the master. Then only may we breathe in safety. But if they watch, so do we. There is never a moment when help is not within reach no matter where you go. So long as you do not deceive me, no real harm shall befall you. Don't cry. Be your father's daughter, as I am his servant."

"I am very unhappy!" And Florence threw her arms around Susan and laid her head upon her friend's shoulder.

"Poor child!" Susan, however, recognized the wisdom of Jones' statements. They were safest here.

The morning rides continued. To the girl, who loved the open, it was glorious fun. Those mad gallops along the roads, the smell of earth and sea, the tingle in the blood, were the second best moments of her day. The first? She invariably blushed when she considered what these first best moments were. He was a brave young

man, good to look at, witty, and always cheerful. Why shouldn't she like him? Even Jones liked him—Jones, who didn't seem to like anybody. It did not matter whether he was wise or not; a worldly point of view was farthest from her youthful thoughts. It was her own affair; her own heart.

Five days later, as she and the riding master were cantering along the road, enjoying every bit of it, they heard the beat of hoofs behind. They drew up and turned. A rider was ap-

proaching them at a run. It was the head groom. The man stopped his horse in a cloud of dust.

"Where's the most popular road?"

"Toward the park; but Miss Hargreave always goes along the river-side road. She doesn't like strangers about."

"O, I see. Well, I'll drop in this afternoon and see your master. They say that riding is good for a torpid liver. Have a cigar?"

"Thank."

The groom proceeded into the stables and the affable stranger took himself off.

A free rein; they could work it to suit themselves. There wasn't the least obstacle in the way. On the face of it, it appeared to be the simplest job they had yet undertaken. To get rid of the riding master in some natural way after he and the girl had started. It was like falling off a log.

"Susan," said Florence as she came into breakfast after her exhilarating ride, "did you hear pistol shots last night?"

"I heard some noise, but I was so sleepy I didn't try to figure out what it was."

"Did you, Jones?"

"Yes, Miss Florence. The shots came from the street. A policeman came running up later and said he saw two automobiles on the run. But evidently there wasn't anybody hurt. One has to be careful at night nowadays. There are pretty bad men abroad. Did you enjoy the ride?"

"Very much. But there were spots of blood on the walk near the corner."

"Blood?" Jones caught the back of a chair to steady himself.

"Yes. So some one was hurt. Oh, let's leave this place!" impulsively. "Let us go back to Miss Farrow's. You could find a place in the village, Jones. But if I stay here much longer in this state of unrest I shall lose faith in everything and everybody. Whoever my father's enemies are, they do not lack persistence. They have made two attempts against my liberty, and sooner or later they will succeed. I keep looking over my shoulder all the time. If I hear a noise I jump."

"Miss Florence, if I thought it wise, you should be packed off to Miss Farrow's this minute. But not an hour of the day or night passes without this house being watched. I seldom see anybody about. I can only sense the presence of a watcher. At Miss Farrow's you would be far more like a prisoner than here. I could not accompany you. I am forbidden to desert this house."

"My father's orders?"

Jones signified neither one way nor the other. He merely gazed stolidly at the rug.

"That blood!" She sprang from her chair, horrified. "It was his! He was here last night, and they shot him! O!"

"There, there, Miss Florence! The man was only slightly wounded. He's where they never will look for him." Then Jones continued, as with an effort: "Trust me, Miss Florence. It would not pay to run away. The whole affair would be repeated elsewhere. We might go to the other end of the world, but it would not serve us in the least. It is not a question of escape, but of who shall vanquish the other. There is nothing to do but remain here and fight, fight, fight. To say nothing of the gunmen. That is what we must do—put them in a safe place, one by one, till we reach the master. Then only may we breathe in safety. But if they watch, so do we. There is never a moment when help is not within reach no matter where you go. So long as you do not deceive me, no real harm shall befall you. Don't cry. Be your father's daughter, as I am his servant."

"I am very unhappy!" And Florence threw her arms around Susan and laid her head upon her friend's shoulder.

"Poor child!" Susan, however, recognized the wisdom of Jones' statements. They were safest here.

The morning rides continued. To the girl, who loved the open, it was glorious fun. Those mad gallops along the roads, the smell of earth and sea, the tingle in the blood, were the second best moments of her day. The first? She invariably blushed when she considered what these first best moments were. He was a brave young

man, good to look at, witty, and always cheerful. Why shouldn't she like him? Even Jones liked him—Jones, who didn't seem to like anybody. It did not matter whether he was wise or not; a worldly point of view was farthest from her youthful thoughts. It was her own affair; her own heart.

Five days later, as she and the riding master were cantering along the road, enjoying every bit of it, they heard the beat of hoofs behind. They drew up and turned. A rider was ap-

## L. C. TAUL

Insurance Office

Cloverport, Kentucky

Fire, Lightning, Tor-nado and Windstorm, Life, Accident, Health Insurance.

Old Reliable Companies

## Walls & Trent

Livery, Feed and Sale Stable

Bus Meets all Trains

Hardinsburg, Ky.

## We Pay Postage

Both Ways

Anywhere in the U. S. A.

The ORIGINAL PARCEL POST LAUNDRY LOUISVILLE, KY.

## Superior Sanitary LAUNDERING

30 YEARS IN BUSINESS

We pay the postage both ways on all packages, etc., or over. Work guaranteed first-class. Prompt deliveries in sanitary packages. Will credit you upon reference. Write for information. Better, still, send trial bundle.

Offices: 625 W. Jefferson St. LOUISVILLE, KY.

## HARNED

Sam Carden, of Basin Spring, was here last week on business.

Mrs. Wilbur Pile visited her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Black, of near Ephesus.

Mr. Stewart, of Webster, was here Wednesday on business.

E. H. Moorman, V. G. Goodman, S. E. Tucker and Lee Pile were in Louisville last week.

Miss Maude Smith, of Hardinsburg, was the guest of friends here Wednesday.

Rev. Leslie DeHart has accepted the call of the Baptist church, and will preach here the first Sunday.

Victor Pile was here Monday.

Rev. R. L. Laslie is teaching a normal here.

Chintz Royalty has returned to Louisville.

Miss Myrtle Majtingly, of McQuady, attended school at West View last week, preparing for the graduation examination, which was held there Saturday.

Mr. Percell, of Duff, was the guest of Miss Emma Gray Saturday and Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Guy Butler were visitors of Mr. and Mrs. John Kennedy, of Kingswood, a few days of last week.

H. C. Long and family, of Kingswood, have moved on a farm near Louisville.

Mr. Minor Compton and son, Paul, of Hardinsburg, attended the funeral of Mrs. Scott Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Baker, who left in the fall to make their home in Oklahoma, have returned to Kentucky and will move here to live.

Will Skillman and Hunter Henninger, of West View, were in Hardinsburg Friday on business.

Miss Gennie Glasscock visited relatives last week.

Mrs. Lum Eskridge is right sick with pneumonia.

Mrs. J. E. Matthews and Mrs. S. H. Davis were in Hardinsburg Thursday shopping.

Little Zodie Alexander, who has been real sick with pneumonia, is much better.

Miss Mattie Kennedy and sisters gave a party Wednesday night. All reported a good time.

The stork visited the home of Mr. and Mrs. Phinis Smiley last week, and left with them a 12 pound boy.

The Misses Carden, of Basin Spring, are visiting their aunt, Miss Virginia Payne.

The Quinine That Does Not Affect The Head Because of its tonic and laxative effect, L.A.K.A.T.I.V.E. Quinine is better than ordinary Quinine and does not cause nervousness or ringing in head. Remember the full name and look for the signature of E. W. GROVE, Inc.



"Do Not Speak or Make the Least Noise."



The Daughter of Hargreave Rode Horseback Every Morning.



"Better Be Sensible," He Said.

(To be Continued)

...The...

## 'Million Dollar Mystery'

Is Now Being Shown at the

American Theater

Try a Want Ad Today.