

The MILLION DOLLAR MYSTERY

By HAROLD MAC GRATH



\$10,000 FOR ONE HUNDRED WORDS

"The Million Dollar Mystery" story will run for twenty-two consecutive weeks in this paper. By arrangement with the Thanhouser Film company it has been made possible not only to read the story in this paper but also to see it each week in the various moving picture theaters. For the solution of this mystery story \$10,000 will be given by the Thanhouser Film corporation.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE CONTEST.

The prize of \$10,000 will be won by the man, woman, or child who writes the most acceptable solution of the mystery, from which the last two reels of motion picture drama will be made and the last two chapters of the story written by Harold MacGrath.

Solutions may be sent to the Thanhouser Film corporation at 5 South Wabash avenue, Chicago, Ill., or Thanhouser Film corporation, 71 West Twenty-third street, New York City, N. Y., any time up to midnight, Jan. 14, 1915. This allows several weeks after the last chapter has been published.

A board of three judges will determine which of the many solutions received is the most acceptable. The judges are to be Harold MacGrath, Lloyd Lonergan, and Miss Mae Tinec. The judgment of this

board will be absolute and final. Nothing of a literary nature will be considered in the decision, nor given any preference in the selection of the winner of the \$10,000 prize. The last two reels, which will give the most acceptable solution to the mystery, will be presented in the theaters having this feature as soon as it is possible to produce the same. The story corresponding to these motion pictures will appear in the newspapers coincidentally, or as soon after the appearance of the pictures as practicable. With the last two reels will be shown the pictures of the winner, his or her home, and other interesting features. It is understood that the newspapers, so far as practicable, in printing the last two chapters of the story by Harold MacGrath, will also show a picture of the successful contestant.

Solution to the mystery must not be more than 100 words long. Here are some questions to be kept in mind in connection with the mystery as an aid to a solution:

- No. 1.—What becomes of the millionaire?
- No. 2.—What becomes of the \$1,000,000?
- No. 3.—Whom does Florence marry?
- No. 4.—What becomes of the Russian countess?

Nobody connected either directly or indirectly with "The Million Dollar Mystery" will be considered as a contestant.

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Stanley Hargreave, millionaire, after a miraculous escape from the den of the gang of brilliant thieves known as the Black Hundred, lives the life of a recluse for eighteen years. Hargreave accidentally meets Braine, leader of the Black Hundred. Knowing Braine will try to get him, he escapes from his own home by a balloon. Before escaping he writes a letter to the girls' school where eighteen years before he mysteriously left on the doorstep his baby daughter, Florence Gray. That day Hargreave also draws \$1,000,000 from the bank, but it is reported that this dropped into the sea when the balloon he escaped in was punctured.

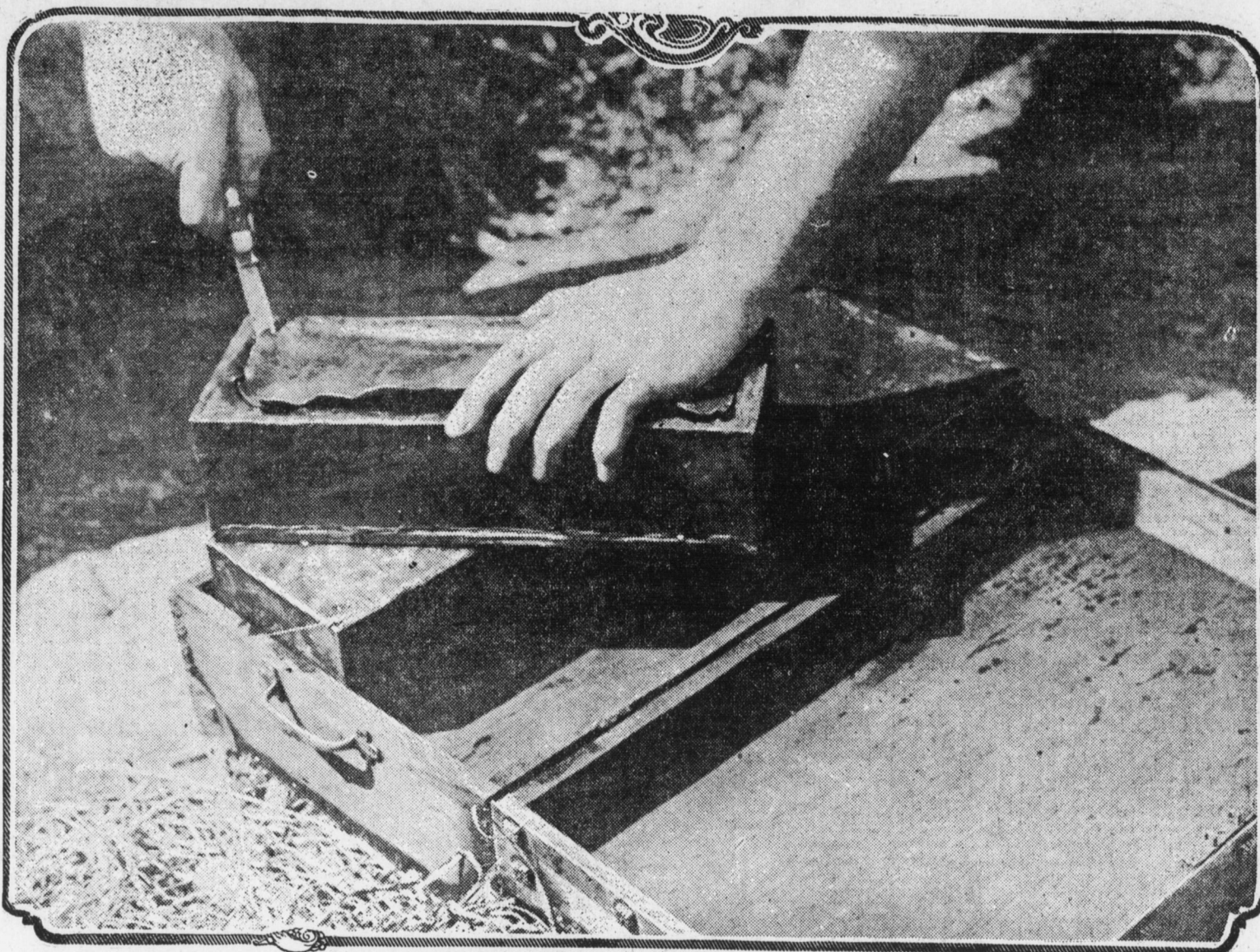
Florence arrives from the girls' school, Countess Olga, Braine's companion, visits her and claims her as a relative. The Black Hundred then see a means of making Florence a target for their attacks. They are after the \$1,000,000, and Braine, their leader, sets traps for Florence. The Black Hundred, after a number of attempts, fail, due to the wisdom of Jones, the Hargreave butler, and Norton, a newspaper man.

Concealed at the rendezvous of the Black Hundred, a man learns of the recovery of the box from the sea by a sailor and of its subsequent return to the bottom of the sea, and he quickly communicates the fact to Jones. A duplicate box is planted and later secured by the hand, but before its contents are examined the box mysteriously disappears.

Finding himself checkmated at every turn, Braine endeavors to entice the Hargreave household in the law in order to gain free access to the house. The timely discovery of the plot by Norton sets the police at the heels of the pack and results in a raid on the gang's rendezvous, which, however, proves to be barren of results.

The Black Hundred begin to fear Norton and plan to dispose of him. Again the unnoticed butler shows his hand by rescuing Norton and defeating Braine.

Florence secures a mysterious paper which is of vital importance to her father's safety. Braine loses hope of securing the \$1,000,000 and turns to revenge.



WHOSE HANDS ARE THESE?

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CHAPTER XXI.
A PACKET OF PAPERS.

JIM said nothing at first about his adventure to Jones, whom he met half an hour later.

"Was it necessary to keep that invisible letter?" he asked.

"No," said Jones.

"Would it have given our affairs a serious turn if it had fallen into alien hands?"

"Decidedly," answered Jones. "It would mean flight for the Black Hundred or a long time under cover, if our friend Braine learned that Russia was now taking an active interest in the doings of the Black Hundred. And eventually all our work would have to be done over again."

"Ah!"

"You look a bit mused up. Anything happened?" asked the keen-eyed butler.

"Nothing much. I made a cigarette out of the letter and smoked it."

Jones chuckled. "I see that you have had an adventure of some sort; but it can wait."

"It can."

"Because I want you to pack off to Washington."

"Washington?"

"Yes. I want you to interview those officials who are most familiar with the extradition laws."

"A new kink?"

"What I wish to learn is this: Can a man, formerly undesirable, take out naturalization papers and hold to the protection of the United States government? That is to say, a poisoner, menaced by Siberia, becomes an American citizen. He is abducted and carried back to Russia. Could he look to this government for protection? That is what I want you to find out."

"That will be easy. When shall I start?"

"As soon as you can pack your grip."

"That's always packed," replied the reporter. "You see, I'm eternally shunted hither and yon, at a moment's notice, so I always have an extra grip packed for quick travel."

"The Russian agent wants Braine, Vron, and the countess; and tonight I'm going to try to point them out to him. It would satisfy me more than anything I know to eliminate this precious trio in Russian fashion. It's thorough; and once accomplished, good-bye to the Black Hundred in America. The organization in Russia has still some political significance, but on this side of the water it is merely an aggregation of mercenary thugs."

"I'll take the first train out. But you will tell Florence?"

"Surely."

"And take care of your own heels. You were watched at the hotel."

"I know it; but the watcher could learn nothing. Henri Servan as a name will suggest nothing to the fool who followed me. Besides, we both knew that he was trying to peck through the keyhole. That hotel, you know, still retains the old-fashioned keyholes."

"To keep the maids in good humor, I sup-

pose," laughed Jim. "Well, I must be on my way to make that flyer."

The two shook hands and Jim hurried off. The butler watched him till he disappeared down the subway.

"He's a good lad," he murmured, "and a brave lad; and money is only an incident in human affairs after all. I'll be a good angel and let the two be happy, since they love each other and have proved it in a thousand ways."

For a long time the leather box across which was inscribed "Stanley Hargreave"

box tickets for the opera had arrived. He was informed that they had. Instantly the spy, who had dared to linger about the hotel, overhearing this conversation, determined to notify Braine at once. And at the same time, Norton, in disguise, determined not to lose sight of this man whom he had set himself to watch.

The spy left by one entrance and Jim by another. Jim had learned what he desired: that the Russian agent would be followed to the opera and that it was going to be difficult to hand the documents to him. The

or his agents. That these papers concern us vitally I am certain. That is why I am going to get them if there has to be a murder at the opera tonight. Norton has been to Washington. He was seen coming out of the Russian embassy, from the secretaries of state and war and a dozen other offices. I've got to find out just what all this means."

"It means that the time has come for us to fly," said Olga. "We have failed. I have warned you. We have still plenty of money left. It is time we folded our tents and stole away quietly. I tell you I feel it in my bones that there is a pit before us somewhere; and if you force issues we shall all fall into it."

"The white feather, my dear?"

"There is altogether some difference between the white feather and common sense caution."

"I shall never give up. You are free to pack up and go if you wish. As for me, I'm going to fight this out to the bitter end."

"And take my word for it, the end will be bitter."

"Well?"

"O, I shall stay. You know that my future is bound up in yours. In the old days my advice generally appealed to you as sound; and when you followed it you were successful. From the first I advised you not to pursue Hargreave. See what has happened!"

"Enough of this chatter. I've got to die some time; it will be with my face toward this man I hate with all my soul. You trust to me; I'll pull out of this all right. You just fix yourself up stunningly for the opera tonight and leave the rest to me."

Olga shrugged. She was something of a fatalist. This man of hers had suddenly gone mad; and one did not reason with mad people.

"What shall I wear?" she asked calmly. "Emeralds; they're your good luck stones. You will go to the box before I do. I've got to spend some time at the curb to be sure that this Servan chap arrives. And it is quite possible that our friend Jones will come later. If not Jones, then Norton. I was a fool not to shoot him when I had the chance. We could have covered it up, without the least difficulty. But I needed the information about that paper. With Norton going to Washington and Jones conferring with this Servan, I've got to strike quick. It concerns us, that I'm certain. Perk up; we've lots of cards in our sleeves yet. Be at the opera at 8:30. Pay no attention to any one; wait for me. Remember, I shan't write notes or send any phone messages. Be wary of any trap like that to get you outside. Now, I'm off."

Jones approached Florence immediately after dinner.

"I have important business in the city tonight. Under no circumstances leave the house. I shall probably be followed. And our enemies will have need of you far more tonight than at any previous time. I shall not send you phone or written message. You have your revolver. Shoot any strange man who enters. We'll make inquiries after."

"We are near the end?" whispered Florence.

"Very near the end."

"And I shall see my father?"

Jones bent his head. "If we succeed."

"There is danger?" thinking of her lover.

"There is always danger when I leave this house. So be good," the butler added with a smile.

"And Jim?"

"He has proved that he can take care of himself."

"Tell him to be very careful."

"I'll do so, but it will not be necessary; and with this Jones set forth upon what he considered the culminating adventure.

The usual brilliant crowd began to pour into the opera. Braine took his stand by the entrance. He waited a long time, but his patience was rewarded. A limousine drove up and out of the door came his man, who looked about with casual interest. He dismissed the limousine, which wheeled slowly round the corner where it could be conveniently parked. Then Servan entered the opera.

Braine hurried round to the limousine. The lights, save those demanded by traffic regulations, were out. The chauffeur was huddled in his seat.

"My man," said Braine, "would you like to make some money?"

"How much?" listlessly. The voice was muffled.

"Twenty."

"Good night, sir."

"Fifty."

"Good night and good morning!"

"A hundred!"

"Now you've got me interested. What kind of a joy ride do you want?"

"No joy ride. Listen."

Briefly the conspirator outlined his needs, and finally the chauffeur nodded. Five twenties were pressed into his hand and he curled up in his seat again.

Servan entered his box. In the box next to his sat a handsomely gowned young woman. He threw her an idle glance, which was repaid in kind. Later, Braine came in and sat down beside Olga.

"Everything looks like plain sailing," he whispered.

Olga shrugged slightly.

During the intermission between the first and second acts, Servan took the rear chair of his box, near the curtains. Braine, watching with the eyes of a lynx, suddenly observed the curtains stirring. A hand was thrust through. In that hand was a packet of papers. With seeming indifference Servan reached back and took the papers, stowing them away in a pocket.

Braine rose at the beginning of the second act.

"Where are you going?" asked Olga nervously.

"To see Otto."

"A bold attempt was made to rob Servan while in the box, but the timely arrival of Jim frustrated this plan. So Braine was forced to rely on the chauffeur of the limousine.

As Farrar's last thrilling note died away Braine and Olga rose.

"Be careful. And come to the apartments just as soon as you can."

"I'll be careful," Braine declared easily. "You can watch the play if you wish."

When Servan entered the limousine he was quietly but forcibly seized by two men who had been lying in wait for him, due to the apparent treachery of the chauffeur. Servan fought valiantly, for all that he knew what the end of this exploit was going to be. One of the men succeeded in getting the documents from Servan's pocket.

"Done, my boy!" cried the victor. "Give him a crack on the coco and we'll beat it."

"Just a minute, gentlemen!" said a voice from the seat at the side of the chauffeur. "I'll take those papers!" And the owner of the voice, backed by a cold, sinister-looking automatic, reached in and confiscated the spoils of war. "And I shouldn't make any attempt to slip out by the side door."

"Thanks, my friend," said Servan, shaking himself free from his captors.

"Don't mention it," said Norton amiably. "We thought something like this would happen. Keep perfectly quiet, you chaps. Drive on, chauffeur; drive on!"

"Yes, my lord! To what particular police station shall I head this omnibus?"

"The nearest, Jones; the very nearest you can think of! Some day, when I'm rich, I'll hire you for my chauffeur. But for the present I shall expect at least a box of Partegas out of that hundred."

Jones chuckled. "I'll buy you a box out of my own pocket. That hundred goes to charity."

"Here we are! Out with you," said Jim to his prisoners. He shouldered them into the police station, to the captain's desk.

"What's this?" demanded the captain.

"Holdup men," said Jim. "Entered this man's car and tried to rob him."

"Uh-huh! An' who're you?"

Jim showed his badge and card.

"Oh! Hey, there; I mean you!" said the captain, leveling a finger at Otto. "Lift up that hat; lift it up. Sure, it's Fountain Pen Otto! Well, well; an' we've been lookin' for you for ten months on the last forgery case. Mr. Norton, my thanks. Take 'em below, sergeant. You'll be here to make the complaint in th' mornin', sir," he added to Servan.

"If it is necessary."

"It may be against Otto's pal. I don't know him."

"Very well."

And Jones and Norton and Servan trooped out of the station.

At last Jones and the reporter entered a cheap lunchroom and ordered coffee and toast.

"You're a wonderful man, Jones, even if you are an Englishman," said Jim as he called for the check.

"English? What makes you think I am English?" asked Jones with a curious glitter in his eyes.

"I'll tell you on the night we put the rollers under Braine and company."

Jones stared long and intently at his young partner. What did he really know?
[TO BE CONTINUED.]



BRaine AND HIS ACCOMPlice PLAN THE CAPTURE OF HENRI SERVAN

lay in peace undisturbed. A busy spider had woven a trap across the handle to the quaint lock. The box was still badly stained from its immersion in the salt water. At a certain time it was quietly withdrawn from its hiding place. It was stealthily opened. A hand reached in and when it withdrew a packet of papers was also withdrawn. The box was again locked and lowered; and presently the spider returned to find that his cunning trap had been totally destroyed. With the infinite patience of his kind he began the weaving of another trap. Perhaps this would be more successful than its predecessor.

Later Henri Servan received a telephone call. He was informed that his purpose in America would be realized by his presence at such and such a box that night at the opera. Further information could not be given over the telephone. Servan seemed well satisfied. He dressed carefully that evening, called up the office clerk and inquired if his

spy entered a drug store and telephoned. Jim waited outside. When the man came out he strolled up the street and entered the nearest saloon. Jim's work was done.

It was Braine's lieutenant, however, who took the news to Braine.

"We've succeeded."

"Good!" said Braine.

"He will go to the opera. He will have a box. Doubtless they have arranged to deliver the papers there."

"And the next thing is to get the number of his box." This Braine had no difficulty in doing. "So that's all fixed. He calls himself Servan and registers from Paris. I'll show the fool that he has no Moujik to deal with this time."

"And what are these documents?" asked Olga.

"Ah, that's what we are so anxious to find out. Some papers are going to be exchanged between this Russian spy and Jones