

The Million Dollar Mystery!

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK—LOOK FOR NEXT ISSUE.)

have been so successful all these years that you have grown overconfident. I tell you that there is a desperately clever man somewhere back of all this. Mark me, I do not believe Hargrave is dead. He is in hiding. It may be near by. He may have dropped from the balloon before it left land. The man they picked up may be Orta, the aviator. The five thousand might have been his fee for rescuing Hargrave. Here is the greatest thing we've ever been up against; and you start in with every day methods!

"Little woman, don't let your tongue run away with you too far."

"I'm not the least bit afraid of you, Leo. You need me, and it has never been more apparent than at this moment."

"All right. I tell by the way side this trip. Truthfully, I realized it five minutes after the men were gone. The only clever thing I did was to keep the mask on my face. They could not come back at me. But the thing looked so easy; and it would have worked but for Norton's appearance."

"You all but compromised me. That better worries me a little." Her expression lost its anger and grew thoughtful. "He's always about, somewhere. Do you think Hargrave took him into his confidence?"

"Can't tell. He's been watched straight for 40 hours. He hasn't mailed a letter or telephoned to any place but the grocery. There have been no telegrams. Some one in that house knows where the money is, and it's up to one that will be the girl."

"She looks enough like Katrina to be her ghost."

Braine went over to the window and stared up at the stars.

"You have made a good impression on the girl" with his back still toward her.

"I had her in my arms."

"Olga, my hat is off to you," turning now that his face was again in repose. "Your very frankness regarding your relationship will pull the wool over their eyes. Of course they'll make inquiries and they'll find out that you haven't lied. It's perfect. Not even that newspaper wessol will see anything wrong. Toward you they will eventually ease up and you can act without their even dreaming your part in the business. We must not be seen in public any more. This may mean knowing where I stand even though he cannot prove it. Now, am I going to tell you something. Perhaps you're long since guessed it. Katrina was mine till Hargrave—never mind what his name was then—till Hargrave came into the fold. So sure of her was I that I used her as a lure to bring him to us. She fell in love with him, but too late to warn him. I had the satisfaction of seeing him cast her aside, curse her, and leave her. In one thing she fooled us all. I never knew of the child till you told me."

He paused to light a cigarette.

"Hargrave was madly in love with her. He cursed her, but he came back to the house to forgive her, to find that she had been seized by the secret police and confined in the fortress. I had my revenge. It was I who sent in the information, practically bogus. But in Russia they never question; they act and forget. So he had a daughter!"

He began pacing the floor, his hands behind his back; and the woman watched him, oscillating between love and fear. He came to a halt abruptly and looked down at her.

"Don't worry. You have no rival. I'll leave the daughter to your tender mercies."

"The butler," she said, "has full powers of attorney to act for Hargrave while absent, up to the day the girl becomes of legal age."

"I'll keep an eye on our friend Jones. From now on, day and night, there will be a cat at the kitchen, and 'ware mouse! Could you make up anything like this?" suddenly.

"A fair Hissamen."

"Do it. Go to the ship which picked up the man at sea and quit the captain. Either the aviator or Hargrave is alive. It is important to learn which at once. Be very careful; play the game only as you know how to play it. And if Hargrave is alive, we win. Tomorrow morning, early. Tears of anguish, and all that. Sailors are easy when a woman weeps. No color, remember; just the yellow wig and the salient features. Now, by-by!"

"Aren't you going to kiss me, Leo?"

He caught her hands. "There is a species of Delilah about you, Olga. A kiss tonight from your lips would snip my locks; and I need a clear head. Whether we fall or win, when this game is played you shall be my wife." He kissed the hands and strode out into the hall.

The woman gazed down at her small white hands and smiled tenderly. (The fingers has her tender moments!) He meant it!

She went into her dressing room and for an hour or more worked over her face and hair, till she was certain that if the captain of the ship described her to anyone else he could not fail to give a fair description of Florence Hargrave.

But Norton reached the captain first. Other reporters had besieged him, but they had succeeded in gathering the vaguest kind of information. They had no description of Hargrave, while Norton had. Before going down to the boat, however, he had delved into the past of the Princess Olga Perigoff. It cost him a pocketful of money, but the end justified the means. The princess had no past worth mentioning. By placing this and that together he became assured that she had told the simple truth regarding the relationship to Florence's mother. A cablegram had given him all the facts in her history; there were no gaps or discre-

pancies. It read clear and frank. Trust a Russian secret agent to know what he was talking about.

So Norton's suspicions—and he had entertained some—were completely lulled to sleep. And he wouldn't have doubted her at all except for the fact that Braine had been with her when he had introduced Hargrave. Hargrave had feared Braine; that much the reporter had elicited from the butler. But there wasn't the slightest evidence. Braine had been in New York for nearly six years. The princess had arrived in the city but a year gone. And Braine was a member of several fashionable clubs, never touched cards, and seldom drank. He was an expert chess player and a wonderful amateur billiardist. Perhaps Jones, the tactful and inscrutable, had not told him all he knew regarding his master's past. Well, well; he had in his time untangled worse snarls. The office had turned him loose, a free lance, to handle the case as he saw fit, to turn in the story when it was complete.

But what a story it was going to be when he cleared it up! The more mystifying it was, the greater the zest and sport for him. Norton was like a



"I Am Not Afraid of You, Leo."

gambler who played for big stakes, and only big stakes stirred his cravings.

The captain of the tramp steamer Orient told him the same tale he had told the other reporters; he had picked up a man at sea. The man had been brought aboard totally exhausted.

"Was there another body any where?"

"No."

"What became of him?"

"I sent a wireless and that seemed to bother him. It looked so that he did not want anybody to learn that he had been rescued. The moment the boat touched the pier he lost himself in the crowd. Fifty reporters came aboard, but he was gone. And I could not tell them just what I'm telling you."

"He had money."

"About five thousand."

"Please describe him."

The captain did so. It was the same description he had given to all the reporters. Norton looked over the rail at the big warehouse.

"Was it an ordinary balloon?"

"There you've got me. My Marconi man says the balloon part was like any other balloon; but the passenger car was a new business to him. It could be driven against the wind."

"Driven against the wind. Did you tell this to the other chaps?"

"Don't think I did. Just remember it. Probably some new invention; and now it's at the bottom of the sea. Two men, as I understand it, went off in this contraption. One is gone for good."

"For good," echoed the reporter gravely. Gone for good, indeed, poor devil! Norton took out a roll of bills.

"There's two hundred in this roll."

"Well," said the captain, vastly astonished.

"It's yours if you will do me a small favor."

"If it doesn't get me mixed up with the police, I'm only captain of a tramp; and some of the harbor police have taken a dislike to me. What do you want me to do?"

"The police will not bother you. This man Hargrave had some enemies; they want either his life or his money; maybe both. It is a peculiar case, with Russia in the background. He might have laid the whole business before the police, but he chose to fight it out himself. And to tell the truth, I don't believe the police would have done any good."

"Heave her over; what do you want me to do for that handsome roll of money?"

"If any man or woman who is not a reporter comes to pump you tell them the man went ashore with a packet under his arm."

"Is a knot in that?"

"Say that the man was gray haired, clean shaven, straight, with a scar right up on his forehead, generally covered up by his hair."

"That's battened down, my lad. So say that you saw him enter yonder

warehouse, and later depart without his packet."

"Easy as dropping my mudhook."

"That's all," Norton gave the captain the money. "Good-by and many thanks."

"Don't mention it."

Norton left the slip and proceeded to the office of the warehouse. He approached the manager's desk.

"Hello, Grannis, old top!"

The man looked up from his work surlily. "Then his face brightened.

"Norton? What's brought you here? O, yes; that balloon business. Sit down."

"What kind of a man is the captain of that old hooker in the slip?"

"Shifty in gun running, but otherwise as square as a die. Looks funny to see an old tub like that fixed up with wireless; but that saved his neck a dozen times when he was running into a noose. Not going to interview me, are you?"

"No. I'm going to ask you to do me a little favor."

"They always say that. But spin her out. If it doesn't cost me my job, it's yours."

"Well, there will be a person making inquiries about the mysterious aeronaut. All I want you to say is, that he left a packet with you, that you've put it in that safe till he calls to claim it."

Grannis nibbled the end of his pen. "Suppose some one should come and demand that I open the safe and deliver?"

"All you've got to do is to tell them to show the receipt signed by you."

The warehouse manager laughed. "Got a lot of sense in that ivory dome of yours. All right. But if anything happens you've got to come around and back me up. What's it about?"

"That I dare not tell you. This much, I'm laying a trap and I want some one I don't know to fall into it."

"On your way, James. But if you don't send me some prize fight tickets next week for this, I'll never do you another favor."

In reply Norton took from his pocket two bits of pasteboard and laid them on the desk. "I knew you'd be wanting something like this."

"Ringside!" cried Grannis. "You reporters are lucky devils!"

"I'd go myself if there was any earthly chance of a real scrap. You make me laugh, Grant. You're always going, always hoping the next one will be a real one. But it's all bunk. The pugs are the biggest fakers on top the sod. They've got us newspaper men done to a tizzel."

"I guess you're right. Well, count on me regarding that mysterious bundle in the safe."

"At three o'clock this afternoon I want you to call me up. If no one has called, why the game is up. But if some one does come around and make inquiries, don't fall to let me know."

"I'll be here till five. I'd better call you up then."

Then Norton returned home and filed about till afternoon. He went over to Riverside. Five times he walked up and down the front of the Hargrave place, finally plucked up his courage and walked to the door. After all, he was a lucky mortal. He had a good excuse to visit this house every day in the week. And there was something tantalizing in the risk he took. Besides, he wanted to prove to himself whether it was a passing fancy or something deeper. That's the way with humans; we never see a sign "Fresh Paint" that we don't have to prove it.

He chatted with Florence for a while and found that, for all she might be guileless to the world, she was a good linguist, a fine musician, and talked with remarkable looseness about books and arts. But unless he roused her, the sadness of her position always lay written in her face. It was not difficult for him to conjure up her dreams in coming to the city and the blow which, like a bolt of lightning from a clear sky, had shattered them ruthlessly.

"You must come every day and tell me how you have progressed," she said.

"I'll obey that order gladly, whenever I am possibly do so. My visits will always be short."

"That is not necessary."

"No," said Norton in his heart, "but it is wise."

Always he found Jones waiting for him at the door, always in the shadow. "Well," the butler whispered.

"I have laid a neat trap. Whether this balloon was the one that left the top of this house I don't know. But if there were two men in it, one of them lies at the bottom of the sea."

"And the man found?" The butler's voice was tense.

"It was not Hargrave. I met Orta but once, and as he wore a beard then, the captain's description did not tally with your recollection."

"Thank God! But what is this trap?"

"I propose to find out by it who is back of all this, who Hargrave's real enemies are."

Norton returned to his rooms, there to await the call from Grannis. He was sorry, but if Jones would not take him into his fullest confidence, he must hold himself to blame for any blunder he (Norton) made. Of course, he could readily understand Jones' angle of vision. He knew nothing of the general run of reporters; he had heard of them by rumor and distrusted them. He was not aware of the fact that the average reporter carries more secrets in his head than a prime minister. It was, then, up to him to tell about to ally this distrust and gain the trust of the average reporter.

Meanwhile that same morning a pretty young woman boarded the Orient and asked to be led to the captain. Her eyes were red; she had

evidently been weeping. When the captain, susceptible like all sailors, saw her his promises to Norton took wings.

"This is Captain Hagan?" she asked, balling the handkerchief she held in her hand.

"Yes, miss. What can I do for you?" He put his hands embarrassedly into his pockets—and felt the crisp bills. But for that magic touch he would have forgotten his lines. He squared his shoulders.

"I have every assurance that the man you picked up at sea is my father. I am Florence Hargrave. Tell me everything."

The captain's very blundering deceived her. "And then he hustled down the gang-plank and headed for that warehouse. He had a package which he was as tender of as if it had been dynamite."

"Thank you!" impulsively.

"A man has to do his duty, miss. A sailor's always glad to rescue a man at sea," awkwardly.

When she finally went down the gangplank the sigh the captain heaved was almost as loud as the exhaust from the donkey engines which were working out the crates of lemons from the hold.

"Maybe she is his daughter; but two hundred is two hundred, and I'm a poor sailor man."

Then Grannis came in for his troubles. What was a chap to do when a pretty girl appealed to him?

"I am sorry, miss, but I can't give you that package. I gave the man a receipt and till it is presented to me the package must remain in yonder safe. You understand enough about the business to realize that. I did not solicit the job. It was thrust upon me. I'd give a hundred dollars if the blame thing was out of my safe. You say it is your fortune. That hasn't been proved. It may be gunpowder, dynamite. I'm sorry, but you will have to find your father and bring the receipt."

The young woman left the warehouse, dabbing her eyes with the soiled handkerchief.

"I wonder," mused Grannis, as he watched her from the window, "I wonder what the deuce that chap Norton is up to. The girl might have been the man's daughter. . . . Good Lord, what an ass I am! I don't want any man!" And so he reached over to the telephone.

Immediately upon receipt of the message the reporter set his machinery in motion. Some time before dawn he would know who the arch-conspirator was. He questioned Grannis thoroughly, and Grannis' description tallied amazingly with that of Florence Hargrave. But a call over the wire proved to him conclusively that Florence had not been out of the house that morning.

On the morning the newspapers had scare-heads about an attempt to rob the Duffy warehouse. It appeared that the police had been tipped beforehand and were on the grounds in time to gather in several notorious gamblers, who, under pressure of the third degree, vowed that they had been hired and paid by a man in a mask and had not the slightest idea what he wanted them to raid. Nothing further could be gotten out of the gamblers. That they were lying the police had no doubt, but they were up against a stout wall and all

ing him all the time. More than this, Hargrave and the meddling reporter were in collusion. In the flare of lights at the end of the gun-play he had caught the profile of the reporter. Here was a dangerous man, who must be watched with the utmost care.

He, Braine, had been lured to commit an overt act, and by the rarest good luck had escaped with nothing more serious than a cold chill and a galling disappointment.

He crawled along the top of the pier, listening, sending his dark-acustomed glance hither and thither. The sky in the east was growing paler and paler. In and out among the bales of wool, bags of coffee and lemon crates he slowly and cautiously wormed his way. A watchman patrolled the office side of the warehouse, and Braine found it possible to creep around the other way, thence into the street. After that he straightened up, sought a second-hand shop and purchased a soft hat, which he pulled down over his eyes.

He had half a dozen rooms which he always kept in readiness for such adventures as this. He relected them furnished in small hotels which never asked questions of their patrons. To one of these he went as fast as his weary legs could carry him. He always carried the key. Once in his room he donned fresh wearing apparel, linen, shoes, and shaved. Then he proceeded downstairs, the second-hand hat shading his eyes and the upper part of his face.

At half past twelve Norton entered the Knickerbocker cafe-restaurant, and the first person he noticed was Braine, reading the morning's paper, propped up against the water carafe. Evidently he had just ordered, for there was nothing on his plate. Norton walked over and laid his hand upon Braine's shoulder. The man looked up with mild curiosity.

"Why, Norton, sit down, sit down! Have you had lunch? No? Joja me."

"Thanks. Came in for my breakfast," said Norton, drawing out his chair. Braine was sitting with his back to the wall on the lounge-seat.

"I wonder if you newspaper men ever eat a real, true enough breakfast. I should think the hours you lead would kill you off. Anything new on the Hargrave story?"

"I'm not handling that," the reporter lied cheerfully. "I've never known him rather intimately. I've a horror of dead people, and don't want to be called upon to identify the body when they find it."

"Then you think they will find it?"

"I don't know. It's a strange mixup. I'm not on the story, mind you; but I was in the locality of Duffy's warehouse late last night and fell into a gunnman rumpus."

"You read about that. What were they after?"

"You've got me there. No one seems to know. Some cock and bull story about there being something valuable. There was."

"What was it? The report in this paper does not say."

"Ten thousand bags of coffee."

Braine lay back in his chair and laughed.

"If you want my opinion," said Norton, "I believe the gamblers were out to shoot up another gang, and the police got wind of it."

"Don't you think it about time the police called a halt in this gunnman matter?"

"Oh, so long as they got each other the police look the other way. I suppose a long trial and passage up the river. Besides, whenever they are nabbed some big politician manages to open the door for them. Great is the American voter."

"Take Mr. Norton's order, Luigi," said Braine.

"A German pancake, buttered toast and coffee," ordered the reporter.

"Man, eat something!"

"It's enough for me."

"And you'll go all the rest of the day on tobacco. I know something of you chaps. I don't see how you manage to do it."

"Food is the least of our troubles. By the way, may I ask you a few questions? Nothing for print, unless you've got a new book coming."

"Fire away."

"What do you know about the Princess Perigoff?"

"Let me see. H'm. Met her first about a year ago at a reception given to Nasimova. A very attractive woman. I see quite a lot of her. Why?"

"Well, she claims to be a sort of aunt to Hargrave's daughter."

"She said something to me about that the other night. You never know where you're at in this world, do you?"

The German pancake, the toast, the coffee disappeared, and the reporter passed his cigars.

"The president visits town today and I'm off to watch the show. I suppose I'll have to interview him about the tariff and all that rot. When you start on a new book let me know and I'll be your press agent."

"That's a bargain."

"Thanks for the breakfast."

Braine picked up his newspaper, smoked and read. He smoked, yes, but he only pretended to read. The young fool was clever, but no man is infallible. He had not the least suspicion; he saw only the newspaper story. Still, in some moments he might stumble upon the truth, and it would be just as well to tie the reporter's hands effectually.

The rancor of early morning had been subdued; anger and quick temper never paid in the long run, and no one appreciated this fact better than Braine. To put Norton out of the way temporarily was only a wise precaution; it was not a matter of spite or reprisal.



"You Must Come Every Day and Tell Me How You Have Progressed."

they could do was to hold the men for the grand jury.

Norton was in a fine temper. After all his careful planning he had gained nothing—absolutely nothing. But wait; he had gained something—the bitter enmity of a cunning and desperate man, who had been forced to remain hidden under the pier till almost dawn.

CHAPTER IV.

The Flat on the Top Floor.

Braine crawled from his uncomfortable hiding place. His clothes were soiled and damp, his hat gone. By a hair's breadth he had escaped the clever trap laid for him. Hargrave was alive, he had escaped; Braine was as certain of this fact as he was of his own breathing. He now knew how to account for the flickering light in the upper story of the warehouse. His ancient enemy had been watch-

ing him all the time. More than this, Hargrave and the meddling reporter were in collusion. In the flare of lights at the end of the gun-play he had caught the profile of the reporter. Here was a dangerous man, who must be watched with the utmost care.

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He paid the reckoning, left the restaurant, and dropped into one of the clubs for a game of billiards. He drew quite a gallery about the table. He won easily, racked his cue and sought the apartments of the princess. What a piece of luck it was that Olga had really married that old dotard, Perigoff! He had left her a titled widow six months after her marriage. But she had had hardly a kopeck to call her own.

"Olga, Hargrave is alive. He was there last night. But somehow he anticipated the raid and had the police in waiting. The question is, has he fooled us? Did he take that million or did he hide it? There is one thing left—to get that girl. No matter where Hargrave is hidden, the knowledge that she is in my hands will bring him out into the open."

"No more blind alleys."

"What's on your mind?"

"She has never seen her father. She confessed to me that she has not even seen a photograph of him."

There was a long pause.

"Do you understand me?" she asked.

"By the Lord Harry, I do! You've a head on you worth two of mine. The very simplicity of the idea will

Attempt to Rob the Duffy Warehouse.

who out for us. Some one to pose as her father; a message handed to her in secret; dire misfortune if she whispers a word to anyone; that her father's life hangs upon the secrecy; she must confide in no one, least of all Jones, the butler. It all depends upon how the letter gets to her. Bred in the country, she probably sleeps with her window open. A pebble attached to a note, tossed into the window. I'll trust this to no one; I'll do it myself. With the girl in our control the rest will be easy. If she really does not know where the money is Hargrave will tell us. Great head, little woman, great head. She does not know her father's handwriting?"

"She has never seen a scrap of it. All that Miss Farlow ever received was money. The original note left on the doorstep with Florence has been lost. Trust me to make all these inquiries."

"Tomorrow night, then, immediately after dinner, a taxicab will await her just around the corner. Grange is the best man I can think of. He's an artist when it comes to playing the old-man part."

"Not too old, remember. Hargrave isn't over forty-five."

"Another good point. I'm going to stretch out here on the divan and snooze for a while. Had a devil of a time last night."

"When shall I wake you?"

"At six. We'll have an early dinner sent in. I want to keep out of everybody's way. By-by!"

In less than three minutes he was sound asleep. The woman gazed down at him in wonder and envy. If only she could drop to sleep like that. Very softly she pressed her lips to his hair.

At eleven o'clock the following night the hall light in the Hargrave house was turned off and the whole interior became dark. A shadow crept through the lilac bushes without any more sound than a cat would have made. Florence's window was open, as the arch-conspirator had expected it would be. With a small string and stone as a sling he sent the letter whirling skillfully through the air. It sailed into the girl's room. The man below heard no sound of the stone hitting anything and concluded that it had struck the bed.

He waited patiently. Presently a wavering light could be distinguished over the sill of the window. The girl was awake and had lit the candle. This knowledge was sufficient for his need. The tragic letter would do the rest, that is, if the girl came from the same pattern as her father and mother—strong willed and adventurous.

He tiptoed back to the lilacs, when a noise sent him close to the ground. Half a dozen feet away he saw a shadow creeping along toward the front door. Presently the shadow stood up as if listening. He stooped again and ran lightly to the steps, up these to the door, which he hugged.

Who was this? wondered Braine. Patiently he waited, arranging his posture so that he could keep a lookout at the door. By and by the door opened cautiously. A man holding a candle appeared. Braine vaguely recognized Olga's description of the butler. The man on the veranda suddenly blew out the light.

Braine could hear the low murmur of voices, but nothing more. The conversation lasted scarcely a minute. The door closed and the man ran

ing him all the time. More than this, Hargrave and the meddling reporter were in collusion. In the flare of lights at the end of the gun-play he had caught the profile of the reporter. Here was a dangerous man, who must be watched with the utmost care.

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He crawled along the top of the pier, listening, sending his dark-acustomed glance hither and thither. The sky in the east was growing paler and paler. In and out among the bales of wool, bags of coffee and lemon crates he slowly and cautiously wormed his way. A watchman patrolled the office side of the warehouse, and Braine found it possible to creep around the other way, thence into the street. After that he straightened up, sought a second-hand shop and purchased a soft hat, which he pulled down over his eyes.

He had half a dozen rooms which he always kept in readiness for such adventures as this. He relected them furnished in small hotels which never asked questions of their patrons. To one of these he went as fast as his weary legs could carry him. He always carried the key. Once in his room he donned fresh wearing apparel, linen, shoes, and shaved. Then he proceeded downstairs, the second-hand hat shading his eyes and the upper part of his face.

At half past twelve Norton entered the Knickerbocker cafe-restaurant, and the first person he noticed was Braine, reading the morning's paper, propped up against the water carafe. Evidently he had just ordered, for there was nothing on his plate. Norton walked over and laid his hand upon Braine's shoulder. The man looked up with mild curiosity.

"Why, Norton, sit down, sit down! Have you had lunch? No? Joja me."

"Thanks. Came in for my breakfast," said Norton, drawing out his chair. Braine was sitting with his back to the wall on the lounge-seat.

"I wonder if you newspaper men ever eat a real, true enough breakfast. I should think the hours you lead would kill you off. Anything new on the Hargrave story?"

"I'm not handling that," the reporter lied cheerfully. "I've never known him rather intimately. I've a horror of dead people, and don't want to be called upon to identify the body when they find it."

"Then you think they will find it?"

"I don't know. It's a strange mixup. I'm not on the story, mind you; but I was in the locality of Duffy's warehouse late last night and fell into a gunnman rumpus."

"You read about that. What were they after?"

"You've got me there. No one seems to know. Some cock and bull story about there being something valuable. There was."

"What was it? The report in this paper does not say."

"Ten thousand bags of coffee."

Braine lay back in his chair and laughed.

"If you want my opinion," said Norton, "I believe the gamblers were out to shoot up another gang, and the police got wind of it."

"Don't you think it about time the police called a halt in this gunnman matter?"

"Oh, so long as they got each other the police look the other way. I suppose a long trial and passage up the river. Besides, whenever they are nabbed some big politician manages to open the door for them. Great is the American voter."

"Take Mr. Norton's order, Luigi," said Braine.

"A German pancake, buttered toast and coffee," ordered the reporter.

"Man, eat something!"

"It's enough for me."

"And you'll go all the rest of the day on tobacco. I know something of you chaps. I don't see how you manage to do it."

"Food is the least of our troubles. By the way, may I ask you a few questions? Nothing for print, unless you've got a new book coming."

"Fire away."

"What do you know about the Princess Perigoff?"

"Let me see. H'm. Met her first about a year ago at a reception given to Nasimova. A very attractive woman. I see quite a lot of her. Why?"

"Well, she claims to be a sort of aunt to Hargrave's daughter."

"She said something to me about that the other night. You never know where you're at in this world, do you?"

The German pancake, the toast, the coffee disappeared, and the reporter passed his cigars.

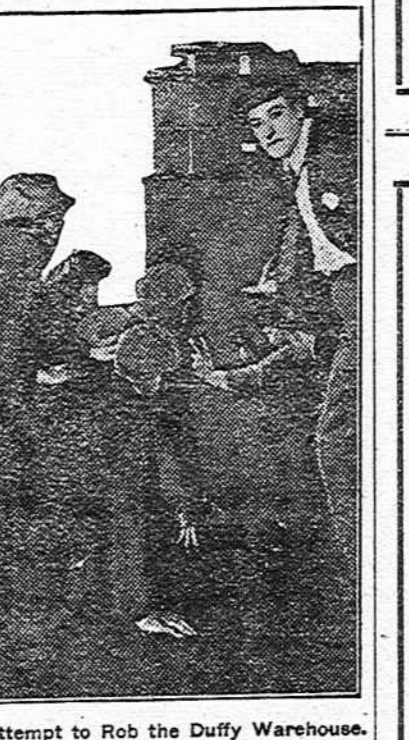
"The president visits town today and I'm off to watch the show. I suppose I'll have to interview him about the tariff and all that rot. When you start on a new book let me know and I'll be your press agent."

"That's a bargain."

"Thanks for the breakfast."

Braine picked up his newspaper, smoked and read. He smoked, yes, but he only pretended to read. The young fool was clever, but no man is infallible. He had not the least suspicion; he saw only the newspaper story. Still, in some moments he might stumble upon the truth, and it would be just as well to tie the reporter's hands effectually.

The rancor of early morning had been subdued; anger and quick temper never paid in the long run, and no one appreciated this fact better than Braine. To put Norton out of the way temporarily was only a wise precaution; it was not a matter of spite or reprisal.



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Housekeepers!
You Need No Longer Guess,
There's a Way to Know!

From now on we shall operate a strictly dependable delivery service, observing a schedule with railroad punctuality. The careful housekeeper can know just when to order her things for any specific delivery. In keeping our schedule right up to the notch in efficiency, we shall not be able to make any in between or "right away" deliveries except in cases of illness, as such deliveries would disarrange our schedule and throw our whole business into disrepute with systematic housekeepers.

HERE'S THE SCHEDULE.

- Orders Received by 7 A. M. go out on 1st Delivery.
- Orders Received by 9 A. M. go out on 2nd Delivery.
- Orders Received by 11 A. M. go out on 3rd Delivery.
- Orders Received by 6 P. M. go out on 4th Delivery.

Pin Your Faith to Our Dependable Delivery Service and Save The Worry.

The Manning Grocery Co.

Purveyors to Particular People

Watch For The Big
FALL OPENING!

This will be the BIGGEST Season in Sumter's Business Circles.