

The Million Dollar Mystery.

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

"What were you doing outside my door?"

The man did not answer. He was trying to collect his thoughts.

"A spy of some sort, eh?"

"I'm a detective," said the man finally, thinking he saw his way clear.

"And what did you expect to learn by looking through the keyhole of my door?"

Servan laughed. "Show me your badge of authority."

The man fumbled in his upper pocket, hoping against hope that the muzzle of the revolver would waver.

"You're an ordinary thief," declared the Russian; "and as such I shall instantly hand you over to the hotel authorities unless you tell me exactly who and what you are."

The man remained dumb. He hung between the devil and the deep sea. If he told the truth the organization would soon learn the truth; if he kept still he would be lodged in jail, perhaps indefinitely, for he hadn't a savory police record. Presently his nerve gave way in face of the steady eye and hand, and he confessed the why and wherefore he had sought the keyhole of Servan's room.

"We are after this butler. Wherever he goes we follow."

"Well, you've wasted four times, my man. All I am here for is to take over some property Mr. Hargreave left in France for sale. I know nothing about your private feuds. Now, get out. But keep out of my way; I am not a peaceful man."

The spy tumbled out as he had tumbled in, by an act of gravity; and Servan was alone. He spent two days in comparative idleness. Then things began to wake up.

For a long time the leather box across which was inscribed "Stanley Hargreave" lay in peace undisturbed. A busy spider had woven a trap across the handle to the quiet. Further immersion in the salt water. At a certain time it was quietly withdrawn from his hiding place. It was stealthily opened. A hand reached in and when a withdrawn packet of papers was also withdrawn.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 quiet. Further information could be given over the telephone. Servan seemed well satisfied. He dressed carefully that evening, called up the office clerk and inquired if his 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. Further, Jim 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 have 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

where; 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?"

"Oh, 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 sturdily 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 stone. 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. Beat the opera at eight-thirty. Pay no attention to any one; wait for me. Remember, I shan't write or send for me by 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 follow 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 around the corner where it could be conveniently parked. Then Servan entered the opera.

Braine hurried around 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.

"Goody."

"Goody, 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 groomed 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 eas-

ily. "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 automaton, 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

taken the servants from the house. From whence was the danger to come this time? Where was Jones? Why did he not return as he had promised? It was long past the hour when he said he would be back.

She went into the library and picked up the telephone. She was told that Mr. Norton was out on an assignment, but that he would be notified the moment he returned. She touched the automatic, but did not take it up. She left the drawer open, however.

Earlier, at the newspaper office that night, Jim went into the managing editor's office and laid a bulky manuscript on that gentleman's desk.

"Is this it?"

"You have captured them?"

"No; but there is a net about them from which not one shall escape. There's the story of my adventures, of the adventures of Miss Hargreave and the butler, Jones. You'll find it exciting enough. You might just as well send it up to the composing room. At midnight I'll telephone the introduction. It's a scoop. Don't worry about that."

The editor rifled the pages.

"A hundred and twelve pages. 300 words to the page; man it's a novel!"

"I'll read like one."

"Sit down for a moment and let me skim through the first story."

At the end of ten minutes the editor laid down the copy. He opened a drawer and took out two envelopes. The blue one he tore up and dropped into the waste basket. Norton understood and smiled. They had meant to discharge him if he fell down. The other envelope was a fat one.

"Open it," said the editor, smiling a little to himself.

This envelope contained a check for \$2,500, two round-trip first-class tickets to Liverpool, together with innumerable continental tickets such as are issued to tourists.

"Why two?" asked Jim, innocently.

"Forget it, my boy, forget it. You ought to know that in this office we don't employ blind men. The whole staff is on. There you are, a fat check and three months' vacation. Go and get married; and if you return before the three months are up I'll fire you myself on general principles."

Jim laughed happily and the two men shook hands. Then Jim went forth to complete the big assignment. Five minutes later Florence called him up to learn that he had gone.

"What should I do?" Jones had told her to stay in the house and not to leave it. But where was he? Why did he not come? What was the meaning of this desertion by the servant?

She wandered about aimlessly, looking out of windows, imagining forms in the shadows. Her imagination had not deceived her; she had heard doors close softly.

"Susan, Susan!" she murmured; but Susan was in the hospital.

"Oliver Twist!" What had possessed her to start reading that old tale again? She should have read something of a light and joyous character. After half an hour's wandering about the lonely house she returned to the library, feeling that she would be safer where both telephone and revolver were.

And while she sat waiting for she knew not what, her swiftly beating heart sending the blood into her throat so that it almost saturated her, a man turned into the street and walked noiselessly toward the Hargreave place. He passed a man leaning against a lamppost, but he never turned to look at him.

This man, however, threw away his cigar and footed it to the nearest pay station. He knew in his soul that he had just seen the man for whom they had been hunting all these weary but strenuous weeks—Stanley Hargreave in the flesh! Half an hour after his telephone message the chief of the Black Hundred and many lesser lights were on their way to the house of mystery. Had they but known!

Now, the man who had created this tremendous agitation went serenely on. He proceeded directly and fearlessly to the front door, produced a latchkey and entered. He passed through the hall and reception room to the library and paused on the threshold dramatically. Florence stepped back with a sharp cry of alarm. She had heard the hall door open and close and had taken it for granted that Jones had entered.

There was a tableau of short duration.

"Don't you know me?" asked the stranger in a singularly pleasant voice. Florence had been imposed upon too many times. She shook her head defiantly, though her knees shook so that she was certain that the least touch would send her over.

"I am your father, child!"

Florence slipped unsteadily behind the desk and seized the revolver which lay in the drawer. The man by the curtains smiled sadly. It was a smile that caused Florence to waver a bit. Still she extended her arm.

"You do not believe me?" said the man, advancing slowly.

"No. I have been deceived too many times, sir. Stay where you are. You will wait here till my butler returns. Oh, if I were only sure!" she burst out suddenly and passionately. "What proof have you that you are what you say?"

He came toward her, holding out his hands. "This, that you cannot shoot me. Ah, what a damnable wretch! What have they done to you, my child, to make you suspicious of every one? How I have watched over you in the street! I will tell you what only Jones and the reporter know, that the aviator died, that I alone was rescued, that I gave Norton the five thousand; that I watched the windows of the Rus-

san woman, and overheard nearly every plot that was hatched in the council chamber of the Black Hundred; that I was shot in the arm while crossing the lawn one night. And now we have the scoundrels just where we want them. They will be in this house for me within half an hour, and not one of them will leave it in freedom. I am your father, Florence. I am the lonely father who has spent the best years of his life away from you in order to secure your safety. Can't you feel the truth of all this?"

"No, no! Please do not approach any nearer; stay where you are!"

At that moment the telephone rang. With the revolver still leveled she picked up the receiver.

"Hello, hello! Who is it? . . . Oh, Jim, Jim, come at once! I am holding at bay a man who says he is my father. Hold him where he is, you say? All right, I will. Come quick!"

"Jim!" murmured the man, still advancing. He must have that revolver. The poor child might spoil the whole affair. "So what Jones tells me is true: that you are going to marry this reporter chap?"

She did not answer.

"With or without my consent?"

"If only he would drop that fearless smile! she thought. "With or without anybody's consent," she said.

"What in the world can I say to you to convince you?" he cried. "The trap is set; but if Braine and his men come and find us like this, good heaven, child, we are both lost! Come, come!"

"Stay where you are!"

At that moment she heard a sound at the door. Her gaze roved; and it was enough for the man. He reached out and caught her arm. She tried to tear herself loose.

"My child, in God's name, listen to reason! They are entering the hall and they will have us both."

Suddenly Florence knew. She could not have told you why; but there was an appeal in the man's voice that went to her heart.

"You are my father!"

"Yes, but you've found it out just a trifle too late, my dear. Quick; this side of the desk!"

Braine and his men dashed into the library. Olga entered leisurely.

"Both of them!" yelled Braine excitedly. "Both of them together; what luck!"

There was a sharp, fierce struggle; and when it came to an end Hargreave was trussed to a chair.

"Ah, so we meet again, Hargreave!" said Braine.

Hargreave shrugged. What he wanted was time.

"A million! We have you. Where is it, or I'll twist your heart before your eyes."

"Father, forgive me!"

"I understand, my child."

"Where is it?" Braine seized Florence by the wrist and swung her toward him.

"Don't tell him, father; don't mind me," said the girl bravely.

Braine, smiling his old evil smile, drew the girl close. It was the last time he ever touched her.

"Look!" screamed Olga.

Every one turned, to see Jones' face peering between the curtains. There was an ironic smile on the butler's lips. The face vanished.

"After him!" cried Braine, releasing Florence.

"After him!" mimicked a voice from the hall.

The curtains were thrown back suddenly. Jones appeared, and Jim and the Russian agent and a dozen policemen. Tableau!

Braine was the only man who kept his head. He floored Norton, smashed

"And mine have begun," murmured the countess. "But I have still one shot."

The police stood encircling her. Calmly she opened her handbag and took out her handkerchief. It was a thick and heavy silk one. Swiftly she unscrewed the top of her walking stick (it will be seen now that the carrying of it was not an affectation!), extracted a vial and threw it violently to the floor. An overpowering sweet odor filled the room. Jones, knowing how deeply versed Braine was in oriental poisons and narcotics, made a desperate but futile effort to tear down a curtain to throw over the liquid; but even in the effort he felt his senses going. The last he was conscious of was a mocking laugh.

But the entrance of Jim, dragging Braine after him, shocked all the banner out of the countess. She turned and rushed madly for the stairs, without having the least idea how she was



Braine and His Accomplice Plan Capture of Servan.



The Escape of Countess Olga.

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 Partagas 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; 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 restaurant 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?

CHAPTER XXII.

A Night of Adventure.

The federal government agreed to say nothing, to put no obstacles in the way of the Russian agent, provided he could abduct his trio without seriously clashing with the New York police authorities. It was a recognized fact that the local police force wanted the newspaper glory which would attend the crushing of the Black Hundred. It would be an exploit. But their glory was nil; nor did Servan take his trio back with him to Russia.

Many strange things happened that night, the night of the final adventure.

Florence sat in her room reading. The book was "Oliver Twist," not the pleasant sort of book to read under the existing circumstances. Several times—she had reached the place where Fagin overheard Nancy's confession—she fancied she heard doors closing softly, but credited it to her imagination. Poor Nancy, who wanted to be good but did not find time to be! Florence possessed a habit familiar to most of us; the need of apples or candy when we are reading. So she rang the bell for her maid, intending to ask her to bring up some apples. She turned to her reading, presently to break off and strike the bell again. Where was that maid? She waited perhaps five minutes, then laid down the book and began to investigate.

There was not a servant to be found in the entire house! What in the world could that mean? Used as she was to heartrending suspense, she was none the less terrified. Something had

to manage an escape from the upper stories. She had thought Braine free. As she flew up the steps all the past returned, all her warnings to that stubborn man. This was the end of Russia! The horrors of the cold and the deadly damps of the mines . . . forever!

Jim, still holding the battered conspirator, watched her flight in amazement. He could not understand—till he pushed Braine into the library and the vanishing odor assailed his nostrils. What these fumes were he never knew, but they proved to be transitory. Five minutes sufficed to bring all back to their senses. For the while they forgot Olga.

"This man is mine," said Servan, nodding toward Braine.

"He's yours without charge," said Jim.

"I'm an American citizen," said Braine, who, realizing what the future held, readily preferred a long prison term in America to the horrors of Russian exile.

"Your certificate has been destroyed," said Servan, "and the state department considers your papers void because you obtained them under false oaths. You are an undesirable citizen; and the republic is happy to learn that you will be taken off its hands."

"And because," added Norton, "you have laid too many mines in the black-mailing business, and the government does not propose to have them made known to the public through a long and useless trial. It was a long run, old top; but right is right. And by the way, I want you to meet Mr. Jeddson, formerly of Scotland Yard."

He indicated Jones, who started.

"Yes," went on the reporter, "I recognized him long ago."

"It is true," said Hargreave, taking Jones' hand in his own. "Fifteen years ago I employed him to watch my affairs, and very well has he done so. And to you, you wretch," turning upon the haggard Braine, "listen; there is a million, and you have been within a foot of it a dozen times. It has been under your very nose. Do you remember Poe's 'Purloined Letter'?"

Under your very nose, within touch of your hand! Now, take him away, Mr. Servan. The police will be satisfied with the prisoners they have."

So, presently, Hargreave, Jones, Florence and Jim were alone. That smile which had revealed to Florence her father's identity stole over his face again. He put his hand on Jim's shoulder and beckoned to Florence.

"Are you really anxious to marry this young man?"

Florence nodded.

"Well, then, do so. And go to Europe with him on your honeymoon; and as a wedding present to you both, for every dollar that he has I will add a hundred; and when you get tired of travel you will both come back here to live. The Black Hundred has ceased to exist."

"And now," said Jones, shaking his shoulders.

"Well!" said Hargreave.

"My business is done. Still—" Jones paused.

"Go on," said Hargreave soberly.

"Well, the truth is, sir, I've grown used to you. And if you'll let me play the butler till the end I shall be most happy."

"I was going to suggest it."

Norton took Florence by the hand and drew her away.

"Where are you taking me?" she asked.

"I'm going to take this pretty hand of yours and put it flat upon \$1,000,000. And if you don't believe it, follow me."

She followed.



The Clean Life of the Reporter Told.

THE END.

NOTICE.

A special examination for securing teachers' certificates will be conducted at the court house in Manning, Friday, January 15th, 1915, beginning at 9 o'clock. This is an opportunity that holders of second and third grade certificates have of properly renewing them, as well as those who have none. Let every teacher in the county who has not a valid certificate take due notice of this special examination.

E. J. BROWNE,
County Supt. of Education.

Delinquent Tax Sale.

By virtue of sundry executions issued by L. L. Wells, County Treasurer, and to me directed, I will offer for sale on Monday, the 4th, day of January, 1915, at the Court house in Manning, the following real estate taxes for 1913:

FULTON.
Susanah Carter, one lot.
Est of Reason Hampton, 2 lots.
John James, 3 lots and 2 buildings.
Thomas D. Johnson, 1 lot.
Est of Peter Lawrence, 4 lots, and 1 building.
S. J. McFaddin, 1 lot.

CALVERY.
Mattie R. Rice, 1 lot.
Rubin Rice, 1 lot.
Jeff Shannon, 12 1/2 acres.
Ally Thomas, 34 acres.

FRIENDSHIP.
Est of Nat Belsler, 24 acres.
Mattie Carter, 1 lot.
Amanda Gayman, 5 acres.
E. Kiston, 1 lot.
Sarah Ann McBride, 3 2/3 acres.
Guy L. Oliver, 3 2/3 acres.
John Parson, Sr., 4 acres and 3 buildings.
Daniel E. Richardson, 5 acres.
C. C. Washington, 2 lots.

SANTEE.
James Arthur Davis, 24 acres.
Hillard Diggle, 105 acres.
Caroline Diggle, 12 acres.
Est of Double Fielder, 26 acres.
Henr. Garner, 25 acres.
Rosanna Johnson, 23 acres.
Della McKinney, 23 acres.

E. B. GAMBLE,
Sheriff.

Clarendon County.

How To Give Quinine

FERRILINE is the trade-mark name of improved Quinine. It is a Tasteless, pure and does not disturb the stomach. Children take it and never know it. Also especially adapted to adults who take ordinary Quinine. Does not cause nervousness nor ringing in the head. At the next time you need Quinine for any case, ask for Ferriline original package. Name FERRILINE is blown in bottle. 25¢

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Your druggist will refund money if PAZO OINTMENT fails to cure any case of Itch, Ringworm, Sticking or Protruding Piles in 6 to 14 days. The first application gives Ease and Rest. 50¢

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Because of its tonic and laxative effect, LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE is better than ordinary Quinine and does not cause nervousness nor ringing in head. Remember the full name and look for the signature of E. W. GROVE, 25¢.

The State of South Carolina

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS.

Decree.

J. J. Bryant, Plaintiff,
against
Olin Oliver Bryant, Harmon L. Bryant, Lucius H. Bryant, Joseph Allen Bryant, Alice Vermelle Kelley, Idell Cartwright, and Charles Bryant, Defendants.

UNDER AND BY VIRTUE OF A Judgment Order of the Court of Common Pleas, in the above stated action, to me directed, bearing date of Nov. 20, 1914, I will sell at public auction, to the highest bidder, for cash, at Clarendon County House, in the town of Manning, in said county, within the legal hours for judicial sales, on Monday, the 4th day of January, A. D. 1915, being salesday, the following described real estate: All that certain piece, parcel or tract of land situated, lying and being in the County and State aforesaid, containing one hundred and eleven (111) acres, and bounded North by lands of estate of James E. Findal, deceased; East by lands of J. W. Miles, South by lands of formerly of Sarah West; now lands of Theodore Sheriff, and West by Sammy Swamp.

Purchaser to pay for papers.
E. B. GAMBLE,
Sheriff Clarendon County.

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