

The Million Dollar Mystery

By HAROLD MAG GRATH

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

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CHAPTER XVIII.

The Masked Ball. About this time—that is to say, about the time the Black Hundred was stretching out its powerful secret arms toward Norton—there arrived in New York city a personage. This personage was the Princess Parlova, a fabulously rich Polish Russian. She leased a fine house near Central park and set about to conquer social New York. This was not very difficult, for her title was perfectly genuine and she moved in the most exclusive diplomatic circles in Europe, which, as everybody knows, is the most brilliant in the world.

When she was completely decorated, she gave an elaborate dinner, and that attracted the newspapers. They began to talk about her highness, printed portraits of her, and devoted a page occasionally in the Sunday editions. She became something of a rage. One morning it was announced that the Princess Parlova would give a masked ball to formally open her home to society; and it was this notice that first brought the Princess Parlova under Braine's eyes. He was at the Perigoff apartment at the time.

"Well, well!" he mused aloud. "What is it?" asked Olga, turning away from the piano and ending one of Chopin's mazurkas brokenly. "Here is the Princess Parlova in town."

"And who is she?" "She is the real thing, Olga; a real princess with vast estates in Poland with which the greedy Slav next door has been very gentle."

"I haven't paid much attention to the social news lately. What about her?" "She is giving a masked ball to formally open her house on the West side. And it's going to cost a pretty penny."

"Well, you're not telling me this to make me want to know the princess," said Olga, petulantly. "No. But I'm going to give you a letter of introduction to her highness."

"And you are going to ask her to invite two particular friends of yours to this wonderful ball of hers?" "Indeed," ironically. "That sounds all very easy."

"Easier than you think, my child." "Will not have you call me child?" "Oh! then, Olga?" "That's better. Now, how will it be easier than I think?"

"Simply this, the Princess Parlova is an oath bound member, but has not been active for years."

"Oh!" Olga was all animation now. "You will go to her with a letter of introduction—no! Better than that, you will make a formal call and show her this ring. You know the ring, he said, passing the talisman to the countess. 'Show this to her and she will obey you in everything. She will have no alternative.'

"I have often thought that perhaps I just dreamed it." She turned again to the piano and began humming idly. "Stop that and listen to me," said Braine, not in quite the best of tempers. "I'm in no mood for whims."

"Music does not soothe your soul, then?" cynically. "If I had one it might. You will call on the Princess Parlova tomorrow afternoon. It depends upon you that my plans will be. I think you'll have little trouble in getting into the presence of her highness, and once there she will not be able to resist you."

"I'll go." "Oh, go she did. The footman in green liveries hesitated for a moment, but the title on the visiting card was quite sufficient. He bowed the countess into the reception room and went in search of his distinguished mistress."

The Princess Parlova was a handsome woman verging upon middle age. She was a patrician; Olga's keen eye discerned that instantly. She came into the reception room with that dignified serenity which could have impressed any one as genuine. She held the card in her fingers and smiled inquiringly toward her guest.

"I confess," she began, "that I recall neither your face nor your name. I am sorry. Where have I had the honor of meeting you before?" "You have never met me before, your highness," answered Olga sweetly. "You came on a charity errand, then?"

"That depends, your highness. Will you be so good as to glance at this?" Olga asked, holding out her palm upon which the talisman lay. The princess shrank back, paling. "Where did you get that?" she panted.

"From the head," was the answer. "And you have followed me from Russia?" whispered the princess, her terror growing. "Oh, no. The Black Hundred is as strongly organized here as in St. Petersburg. But we always keep track of our members, especially when they stand so high in the world as yourself."

"But I was deceived and betrayed!" exclaimed the princess. "They urged me to join on the ground that the organization was to attempt to bring about the freedom of Poland."

Olga shrugged. "You were rich, highness. The Black Hundred needed money."

"And you need it now?" eagerly, believing that she saw a loophole. "Oh, yes! Oh, yes! We need a hundred thousand rubles on your promise to leave me alone. Tell me!"

"I am sorry, your highness, but I have no authority to accept such an offer. Indeed, my errand is far from being expensive. All the Black Hundred desires is four invitations to this ball which you are soon to give. That should not cause you any alarm. We shall not interfere with your sojourn in America in any way whatsoever, provided these invitations are issued."

schemes, but was rebuffed on all sides. How the deuce did you chance to meet one?" "Search me," said the bewildered Norton. "If I were you I'd sit tight and take it all in," advised the editor. "It's going to be the biggest spurge of its kind we've had in years. We've been thinking every wire we know to get Miss Hayes inside, but it was no go. This princess is not onto the game. In this country you get into society or you don't through the Sundays."

"Hanged if I know who wished this thing on me." "Take it philosophically," said the editor sarcastically. "The princess won't bite you. She may even have seen your picture."

"Get out!" grumbled Norton, turning away. He would go out and see Florence. On the way out to Riverside he came to the conclusion that the list of the princess fell short and some friend of his who was helping the woman out suggested his name. It was the only way he could account for it.

But when he learned that Florence had an invitation exactly like his own and that she received it that morning he became suspicious. "Jones, what do you think of it?" he questioned.

"I think it is very kind of the Countess Perigoff suggesting your name and that of Florence," said the butler urbanely. "Olga!" cried Florence, disappointedly. "This is the only logical deduction I can make," declared Jones. "They are both practically Russians."

"And what would you advise?" asked Norton. "Why, go and enjoy yourselves. Forewarned is forearmed. The thing is, be very careful not to acquaint any one with the character of your disguise, least of all the Countess Perigoff. Besides, Jones added smiling, "perhaps I may go myself."

"Goody! I've read about masked balls and have always been crazy to go to one," said Florence with eagerness. "Suppose we go at once and pick out some costumes?" suggested Norton. "Just as soon as I can get my hat on," replied Florence, happy as a lark. "But mind," warned Jones, "be sure that you see the countess alone and that no one else is about."

"I'll take particular care," agreed Norton. "We've got to do something to find something suitable. For something vaguely familiar about the impassive face of the butler, as if he had seen it somewhere in the past but could not tell when or where. As he and Florence were leaving for the automobile which was to take them to the princess, the truth came home to him with the shock of a douche of ice cold water. Under his breath he murmured: 'You're a wonderful man, Jones; and I take my hat off to you with the deepest admiration. Hang me!'

"What are you mumbling about?" asked the happy girl at his side. "Was I mumbling? Perhaps I was going over my catechism. I haven't been out in society in so long that I've forgotten how to act."

"I believe that. We've been in here for five minutes and you haven't told me that you love me."

"Good heavens!" And his arms went around her so tightly that she begged for quarter. "How strong you are!"

The splendor of the rooms, the dazzling array of jewels, the kaleidoscopic colors, the perfume of the banked flowers and the music all combined to put Florence into a pleasurable kind of trance. And it was only when the first waltz began that she became herself and surrendered to the arms of the man she loved.

And they were waiting over a volcano. She knew and he knew it. From what direction would the blow come? Well, they were prepared for all manner of tricks.

In an alcove off the ballroom sat Braine and Olga, both dressed exactly like Newton and Florence. Another man and woman entered presently and Braine spoke to them for a moment, as if giving instructions, which was indeed the case.

The band crashed into another dance, and the masqueraders began swiveling hither and thither and yon. A gay cavalier suddenly stopped in front of Florence.

"Enchantress, may I have the pleasure of this dance?" Jim touched Florence's hand. But she turned laughingly toward the stranger. "What difference did it make?" The man would never know who she was nor would she know him. It was a lark, that was all; and despite Jim's warning touch she

made off. So Braine in his effort to scare everybody from the house had overreached himself once more. (To be continued)



They Agreed Upon Two Modest Ones.

one in the house! If I attend to that later. Now, the chauffeur!"

But the chauffeur swore on his oath that he had left Jim and Florence on the steps of the porte cochere. "Get in!" said Jones to Norton, now fully alive. He could not get it out of his head that some one in the house had drugged him.

The events which followed were to both Jones and Norton something like a series of nightmares. In the home of the Princess Parlova a bomb exploded and fire followed the explosion. From pleasure to terror is only a step. The wildest confusion imaginable ensued. Most of the guests were of the opinion that some archivist had attempted to blow up the house of the rich Pole. Jones and Norton arrived just as the smoke began to pour out from the windows. A crowd had already collected.

Then Jim overheard a woman masquerader say: "The fool made the bomb too strong. She is in the room on the second floor. The game is up if she suffocates." The voice trailed off and the woman became lost in the crowd. But it was enough for the reporter, who pushed his way roughly through the excited masqueraders and entered the house. The rescue was one of the most exciting to be found in the newspaper files of the day.

So Braine in his effort to scare everybody from the house had overreached himself once more. (To be continued)

MAKING MONEY WITH SHEEP Cost of Raising is Small Compared With High Prices They Bring—Increase Fertility of Soil.

The cost of raising sheep is small compared with the high prices they command or with the cost of production of any other farm animal. The Lincoln, Cotswold and Leicester are probably the three largest breeds of sheep—of any favor—in size the Lincoln probably has the edge. A practical breeder says: "If I want a large-growing lamb, to put on the market at six or eight weeks old, I will use a larger breed than the Southdown, which I might use if I was after a mutton chop. For such lambs I am partial to the Oxford, but the Hampshire might give as good satisfaction." Sheep are a good medium for increasing the fertility of the farm of the man of limited means. A dozen ewes, properly cared for, will soon raise lambs enough to stock your farm with sheep. The estimate is that five sheep can be kept on what one cow will consume. With good, bright, wheat straw and half a pound of corn daily, breeding ewes and store sheep will winter nicely. One of the difficulties in raising sheep consists in the great number of worthless dogs. The only remedy for this condition in those cases consists in a high dog-tax and enforcement of the laws now on the statute books. Owing to the scarcity of reliable help, the raising of market lambs will prove more remunerative than dairying. The farmer and one hand can easily feed and care for a small flock. Have a dog-proof exercise yard and a roomy pen with a hard earth floor. Commence with a small flock. Gradually increase as the business is found profitable.

PROPER TIME TO WEAN COLT Youngster Should Be Accustomed to Eat Hay and Grain Before Removal—Put Mare on Dry Feed.

The colt should be allowed to remain with the mare until it has become accustomed to eat grain and hay before it is weaned. In nearly all cases it will be best to feed the mare for at least several weeks before the colt is removed with ground oats and wheat bran.

Give the mare a roomy, well-bedded box stall, so the colt can eat beside her. This is one of the easiest and quickest ways of teaching the colt to eat. Give the colt good blue grass and white clover pasture, but put the mare on dry feed. This will help to dry up her milk without causing a swollen udder.

While it is not necessary to particularly push the growth of the colt, it is very essential that a steady growth be maintained and generally it will pay to feed a little grain, unless the pasture is unusually good. Ground oats and wheat bran, say one to two pints per day, fed dry will promote growth of bone and muscle and a well-developed healthy animal. Corn is not a suitable food for a young growing animal. A curiosity in the shape of a hand cannon has been placed in the Hall of History, Raleigh. It is of bronze and the barrel is about eighteen inches long. It has a rosewood handle. Above the barrel are two arched dragons side by side. It weighs about five pounds and is a relic of early times. It was loaned by Mr. James N. Keelin, of Raleigh. It reproduces in case No. 1.

NEED OF DYESTUFF BECOMES URGENT

IMMEDIATE AND CONCERTED ACTION BY MANUFACTURERS IS URGED.

SUPPLY FOR TWO MONTHS

Mr. Metz Says Manufacturers Should Declare an Industrial War on Great Britain.

Philadelphia.—Immediate and concerted action by American manufacturers to obtain a modification of Great Britain's rules governing overseas commerce was urged as a remedy for industrial ills by Herman A. Metz, member of congress from New York and a widely-known manufacturer in an address at a conference of dye men here. Mr. Metz said manufacturers should declare an industrial war on England.

Under the British government changes its policy Mr. Metz declared hundreds of factories throughout the United States will have to suspend operations and about 300,000 men will be thrown out of employment.

Mr. Metz said that American manufacturers are dependent on Germany for certain raw materials but to get them they must find a way to ship to Germany cotton and other things. "The Germans," he added, "have gotten tired of sending us dyestuffs and other materials without getting anything in return."

D. F. Waters of the city read a letter from President Wilson in which the president said the state department appreciates the situation and is doing all it can to relieve it. The meeting was under the auspices of the board of directors and advisory board of the National Association of Hosiery and Underwear Manufacturers.

Congressman Metz and D. F. Waters, president of the Master Dyers' Association were appointed a committee to place before the state department "the acute crisis in the dyestuff industry at present confronting this country and urge in the strongest terms that such steps be taken as shall relieve the situation." The committee also was empowered to act in conjunction with committees and similar organizations throughout the country.

Several speakers at the conference declared the supply of dyestuffs now in the United States would last only about two months.

RUSSIANS PUSHING GERMANS. Have Assumed Offensive Along Entire Front in Poland.

London.—The Russians are on the offensive along the whole front, from the Baltic Sea to the Romanian border and in the Caucasus and according to a Stockholm dispatch they have concentrated an enormous number of soldiers on the Finnish coast to prevent the Germans landing there.

All the Russian advances according to Petrograd, are proceeding with success. The Russian official report claims that the Germans in Poland are being pushed back to the East Prussian border and that in the Carpathians between the Lupkow and Uspasz Passes the Russians have captured still another strongly fortified ridge overcoming insurmountable difficulties. The Russian report also claims that the scaling of steep rocky-covered hills and forests of heavily-armed barbed-wire and timber obstructions.

The Russians are also attacking the Germans in the region of Kozulowka near the Ussak Pass. There are a large number of prisoners reported to have been captured.

German Sinks Three Trawlers. Newcastle, England.—Three trawlers, the Gloriana, Jasen and Nellie, were sunk by the German submarine U-10. After all the members of the crews were safely in small boats the Germans blew up the trawlers. They then towed the fishermen toward the Tyne until they met fishing craft which brought the men ashore.

PLANS FOR SAFETY IN MEXICO CITY

WASHINGTON PROPOSES THAT CAPITAL BE MADE NEUTRAL TERRITORY.

VILLA ACCEPTS PROPOSAL

Zapata Also Willing and Result of Effort Depends on Carranza Council to Maintain Order.

Washington.—With the hope of securing permanent protection for the 25,000 foreigners in Mexico City, the United States Government has proposed to the Villa-Zapata forces and to General Carranza that the Mexican Capital be declared neutral and outside the field of operations hereafter in Mexico's civil war.

The Villa-Zapata forces have agreed to the proposal and are willing to evacuate the city as soon as a similar agreement is obtained with the Carranza authorities. On General Carranza depends also whether or not the effort of the United States to neutralize the railway between Mexico City and Vera Cruz shall succeed as the Villa-Zapata officials have agreed to this.

The plan with respect to Mexico City contemplates an arrangement whereby order would be maintained by a local council of prominent residents. The Capital would not be subject to further attacks nor would there be more changes in Government until a central government had been established. Should the Capital be declared neutral, each of the apprehension for the safety of foreigners would be removed and the famine menace eliminated.

No important engagements between the Villa and Carranza forces were reported to the Washington authorities dispatched saying that comparative quiet prevailed along the border and that the Mexico City situation was unchanged.

CATTLE DISEASE IS CONQUERED. Department Announces Virtual Eradication—124 Animals Killed.

Washington.—Virtual eradication of the livestock foot and mouth disease in the United States was announced by the Department of Agriculture. It was said that except for a herd of animals near Syracuse, N. Y., telegraphic reports from throughout the country showed the disease wiped out.

Figures compiled by the Department show that 124,414 diseased animals have been slaughtered from the time of the outbreak in October to March 25, last. It was pointed out, however, that the total loss could not be estimated alone by the number of animals killed. Interference with the operations of stock yards, the quarantining of infested regions and other precautionary measures, it was said, had caused indeterminate losses.

Ambassador Asked for Report. Washington.—Ambassador Sharp at Paris was called on by the state department for a report as to circumstances surrounding the arrest of Raymond Swoboda, an American, charged with having set fire to the La Touraine, a French liner, on her recent trip from New York to Havre. New York friends of Swoboda had brought press reports of his arrest to the department's attention and vouched for his American citizenship.

Barge Tampico Still Adrift. Wilmington.—The barge Tampico, with 13 men aboard which broke loose from the tug Pan American off Frying Pan Shoals in a gale recently was not yet arrived according to reports received from the department here. The tug guard cutter Seminole and the coast guard American still searching for the missing craft.

Ask Full Value of Cargo. Washington.—Indemnity for the full value of the American ship William P. Frye, destroyed at sea by the German converted cruiser Prinz Eitel Friedrich, has been formally requested from Germany by the United States government.

Divers on Way to Honolulu. Washington.—Rear Admiral Moore, in charge of operations to raise the long submerged submarine F-4 at Honolulu cabled to the navy department that he was proceeding with the work pending the arrival of divers appointed by the navy department to San Francisco to be shipped to Honolulu on the cruiser Maryland. Rear Admiral Moore's dispatch said he would not be able to report anything for several days but that he was "making preparations to lift."

MORE TROUBLE IN TAMPICO DISTRICT

CARRANZA AGAIN ASKED TO OBTAIN RESPECT FOR FOREIGN FLAGS.

FOOD CONDITIONS BETTER

Oil Operators Buying Corn For Distribution in Order to Relieve the Situation.

Washington.—The United States has renewed its representations to General Carranza to obtain respect for foreign flags recently violated at Manzanillo, asking that he instruct his officers there to afford protection to foreigners and their interests.

In the first note to Carranza a consular report was transmitted stating that the British and American flags had been violated by lawless Carranza troops. That was denied by Carranza and additional data has now been laid before him with a reference to the requisition made in the first communication. No reply has been received.

A separate communication was sent to Carranza calling his attention to the indiscriminate firing by his troops on the oil tanks near Tampico, 150,000 barrels of oil already having been lost as a result of perforations and by bullets penetrating the oil tanks.

Conditions in the Tampico district gave officials much concern. The dispatches said "that the oil operators are organizing for the purpose of buying corn in the United States for local distribution which will be disposed of at cost in order to relieve the situation."

From Manzanillo and the city of Colima came reports of further lawlessness. The State Department received a dispatch from Zacatecas confirming the report that General Leal, Chief Secretary of War to General Eulalio Gutierrez had "surrendered on April 1 of his command, much guns, ammunition and equipment to General Villa's forces near Camacho."

BIG STORM ON ATLANTIC COAST. Streets Flooded, Wires Down, Trains Not Moving Along Atlantic Coast.

A snow storm of unprecedented proportions swept practically the whole Atlantic seaboard. Snow, driven by a northeast gale, held at times blew 70 miles an hour, held up ocean travel, crippled telegraphic and telephone communication, delayed steam and electric trains and nearly dashed the hopes of Easter shoppers in New York and East New England.

In Greater New York nine inches of snow fell, a record for April and haviest of the year. It was accompanied by a 60-mile-an-hour blow and early crippled all surface traffic in the city and environs. Hundreds of accidents occurred. Upwards of 15,000 men attacked the snow and paid special attention to Fifth Avenue in an effort to clear it for paraders. In New York and other large cities the snowfall proved a boon to the unemployed.

Norfolk, where no trains arrived during the day and other places along the Virginia coast, were hit hardest by the storm. They also suffered from lack of wire communication. Although trains as far south as South Carolina arrived hours late at night, Philadelphia and other seaboard cities railroad officials professed to see a gradual restoration of normal schedules.

Italy and the War. Paris.—Giuseppe Bevilone, editor of The Turin Stampa and member of the Italian Chamber of Deputies told the Associated Press that he had a deep conviction that Italy would begin war against Germany and Austria before the end of April.

French Steamer Sunk. Three masted fishing vessel, Paquerette of Feccamp was sunk by a German submarine off Etretat, nine miles southwest of Feccamp. The crew was rescued.

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