ZUDORA

In the Twenty Million Dollar Mystery

By HAROLD MACGRATH

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SYNOPSIS.

Zudora is left an orphan at an early age. Her father is killed in a gold mine. Zudora and the fortune from the mine, which grows to be worth $20,000,000, are left in the guardianship of Frank Keene. Zudora's mother's brother, who has set himself up as a Hindu mystic and is known as Hassam Ali. He decides that Zudora must die before she can have a chance to come into possession of her money, so that it may be left to him, the next of kin. Hassam Ali sees an obstacle to his scheme in the person of John Storm, a young lawyer, for whom Zudora has taken a fancy, and he commands the girl to put the man out of her mind. Zudora insists that if she cannot marry Storm she will marry no one.

"Well, well," says Hassam Ali, "solve my next twenty cases and you can marry him; fail in a single case and you must renounce him."

Zudora unravels a mystery and wins her first case—a case in which John Storm is saved from being convicted of a murder instigated by Hassam Ali himself.

Zudora and Hassam Ali visit Nabok Shan's house, where sleep overcomes every one whenever Nabok attempts to marry a princess. Storm, seeking Zudora, is made a prisoner. Zudora foils Nabok Shan, restores the princess to her original lover and saves Storm from death.

A broker of diamonds tells Hassam Ali his secret. Storm informs Zudora that his life is being attempted frequently. Storm suspects Hassam Ali. Storm is arrested for stealing the diamond maker's gems, but Zudora discovers the real thieves—a pair of mice.

The negro help employed on Storm's father's farm are fleeing because a great skeleton hand appears at night upon a hill near by. Storm is baffled in his investigation, but Zudora learns that her uncle has employed Jimmy Bolton, a half witted man, thus to annoy Storm's parents. Zudora finds Bolton operating a big magic lantern and is attacked by him. Storm appears and saves her.

Hassam Ali asks Zudora to find a gem lost by two mysterious old men. Zudora gets a photograph of the gem and it burns in her hand. An old house is mined by Hassam Ali and the old men. Storm and Zudora are lured there and narrowly escape destruction when the house blows up.

John McWinter, endeavoring to trap and kill George Smith, is killed himself, and Smith is charged with murder. Hassam Ali conspires to have John Storm meet the same fate as McWinter, and he and Storm are overcome by powerful fumes. Zudora saves them, proves that McWinter's own dog trapped and killed him and saves Smith from a band of lynchers.

An inventor blows up a submarine with a powerful heat ray which he sends through water. Hassam Ali sends Zudora to a photographer directly beneath the inventor's laboratory and orders the inventor to kill her. Zudora gets a warning, and her life is saved. The heat ray machine is destroyed, and the photographer, after a quarrel with Hassam Ali, is found dead in the river.

Wu Chang prevents Zudora's elopement with John Storm by hypnotizing her, and he and Hassam Ali attempt to smuggle her out of the country. This plot is frustrated by Storm.

Baird, Hassam Ali's double, falls in love with Zudora. Baird and Mme. Du Val kidnap Zudora and the Van Wick child. Storm rescues them, and Hassam Ali dies.

With Hassam Ali dead Zudora is released of her pledge to solve twenty cases. She confronts, however, the greatest mystery of all, which is the mystery of her own life, and the ambition to secure the vast fortune of $20,000,000 left to her. This great photo serial is being shown in the leading moving picture theaters by the Thanhouser Film Corporation. Among those participating are Marguerite Snow, Mary Elizabeth Forbes, James Cruze, in the new role of reporter-hero, Sidney Bracey and Frank Farrington.

On looking through her uncle's papers Zudora finds that her father left her an interest in a diamond mine, and Storm and Baird both lend assistance in trying to regain for her possession of this estate which is being appropriated by rogues under the leadership of Mme. Du Val. They plan to frighten Zudora so that she will run away. Failing, they kidnap Zudora and Howard, the mine superintendent, and put them in a private insane asylum. Howard dies, but Zudora, nearly famished, is rescued by Storm and his friends. Detective Hunt and Baird find the Zudora gold mine.

CHAPTER XV.

The Robbery of the Ruby Coronet.

HUNT and Baird had at least found out where the Zudora mine was, but the rightful ownership still hung in the air. Hunt also declared that the false claimants had been cognizant of their trip to Montana and had tried to push them off the board. The best thing they now could do would be to wait for some fresh move against Zudora. Sooner or later they would make another attempt against her life or liberty. Hunt warned both Zudora and Storm that if anything turned up of a suspicious character to notify him at once.

About this time Copeland, the banker and broker who had handled various deposits from Zudora and at whose bank she had her safety deposit box, concluded to make his wife a fine birthday gift. This gift was a handsome coronet of rubies. Mrs. Copeland possessed many splendid jewels, but this latest addition surpassed them all. Womanlike, she wanted to show her friends how generous her husband was, so she decided to give a dance. Among those who received invitations were Mme. Du Val, Captain Radcliffe and Bruce. Mrs. Copeland knew Mme. Du Val, but not the other two. They were business friends of her husband, and as such she accepted them.

Zudora and Storm were invited because Mrs. Copeland looked upon these two as friends. It had been some time since Zudora and Storm had gone to any social function, and naturally she was excited. She was in nowise in mourning for her uncle, the late Hassam Ali, but she had gone nowhere for weeks. The color and music would be a great relief to her. She had been through so much that she had begun to crave a little pleasurable excitement.

On the night of the dance Mrs. Copeland decided to put on the new coronet, together with her collarette and

This Gift Was a Handsome Coronet of Rubies.

bracelets of diamonds. She scintillated, as the saying goes.

She kept her jewels in a small wall safe. She was giving her hair a few finishing pats when the maid entered to announce that guests were arriving. Hastily the mistress replaced in the safe those trinkets she could not use and shut the door. But in her hurry she left on the dresser a little book which contained the combination numbers.

The moment she was gone the maid pounced upon the book and thumbed it hurriedly. She had seen this little book many times, but until now she had never been able to get her hands upon it. She knew that it contained the combination of the wall safe. She turned her apron over and jotted down the numerals on the linen. She replaced the book in the identical spot she had found it and left the room.

Baird was glad to see Zudora and Storm. He chatted with them until the dancing began, then he wandered out among the smokers.

Captain Radcliffe and Bruce presently drew together.

"Did you see that fellow Baird?" asked Bruce.

"Yes, and he has his eye on me. But I don't think he connects me with the man he met on the road to the Zudora mines."

"Well, I want to keep out of his

He Saw the Safe in the Wall and Examined It.

sight. I've an idea that he has placed me," said the diamond smuggler.

"What if he has placed you? He hasn't anything like proof."

"He saw me go into Dr. Mann's front door and out the rear. I'm certain of that."

"If he had been certain you'd have heard from him long before this. Take my word for it. Now, come along. I'm going to take a quiet stroll upstairs. This house looks like good hunting one of these days."

"You would rob Copeland?" whispered Bruce.

"I would take the pennies off a dead man's eyes if I needed them. Come on."

The two worthies mounted the stairs casually, but once in the upper hall they became alert.

"I'll try this room here," said Radcliffe. "It looks as if it might be Mrs. Copeland's boudoir. Cough if any one comes in sight."

Radcliffe slipped into Mrs. Copeland's boudoir and glanced about with the skilled eye of a man who finds it necessary to observe all things. He saw the safe in the wall and examined it. That magnificent coronet and that collaret of diamonds would repose in yonder safe. But it would be a hard nut to crack.

His glance swept over the top of the dresser and rested upon the little book. Such things were generally valuable. In a moment he was thumbing it. When he came across the combination he was delighted. He quickly transferred it to a slip of paper, stowed it away, and started for the door just as Bruce coughed his warning. He was safely in the hall by the time the maid came along.

"The gentlemen's coat room?" he asked.

"The door opposite, sir."

"Thanks," said Radcliffe.

He and Bruce entered the coat room as a matter of precaution, then went downstairs again. Radcliffe would have been greatly astonished could he have glanced into Mrs. Copeland's boudoir ten minutes later. The butler, having ideas of his own, was at that moment copying down the combination of the wall safe from the little book the mistress had forgotten in her hurry.

Zudora and Storm, however, enjoyed themselves thoroughly. What with the music and the dancing and the pleasure they found in each other's company the rest of the world seemed very well lost. On the way home, however, Zudora expressed her dislike for Captain Radcliffe. She was quite positive that she had seen him before under unfavorable circumstances. She wondered if Copeland knew anything about the man.

"Where do you think you have seen him?" asked Storm curiously.

"That's the baffling part of it. I know I've seen him, but beyond that

Zudora and Storm, However, Enjoyed Themselves Thoroughly.

things are hazy. I don't like him. I'm certain of that much."

"I wish you'd marry me straight off and let me take you away where you'd forget all these unhappy affairs."

"Ah, John, my father was a sportsman. He never gave up a fight, and neither shall I. It isn't the money, though, that's always handy. It's the thought of dishonest people getting the benefit of what is mine. Until I've won or lost I prefer to remain as I am. I've caused you enough trouble, John, as it is. No one has any enmity toward you. It is I."

"Well, I guess I'll hang around," said John pleasantly, though he did not experience any particular pleasure at that moment. "You might change your mind, you know, and when you do I want to be at hand."

"You're very good to me, John."

"Millions and millions of money," he murmured. "I'm beginning to hate money."

"So am I. So let's say no more about it."

The following day, at Mme. Du Val's, plans were completed for the robbing of the Copeland wall safe. Bruce and Radcliffe agreed that the attempt should be made that night, as the Copelands had spoken of going into the city for a night at the opera. They sent two lesser crooks to watch the premises.

And while they watched they saw shadows against the curtains of Mrs. Copeland's room. At first they believed that the Copelands had not gone into town, but a minute or two later one of the shades rolled up, revealing the butler and the maid.

Mr. Hook had been butler in the Copeland house for about six weeks. He had been highly recommended by Marie, the maid, who had served her mistress with apparent loyalty for two years. All for the purpose that was now being enacted. Hook was merely her partner in crime, and both were wanted by the police in other cities.

The butler went directly to the safe in the wall, turned the knob the exactic number of times, and swung open the door.

"There they are, Marie. This is the last job. We'll hike across the pond and live in comfort for the rest of our days. I never could find out where the missis kept that little book, and we both fell on it last night. Some luck, eh? Thirty thousand dollars; as easy as turning over your hand. Give me the handbag."

He dumped the jewels into the bag, but the ruby coronet was too large for the receptacle.

"I'll have to carry that under my coat. Now, then, give me a kiss and

The Butler Went Directly to the Safe in the Wall.

I'll be off to Riodon's saloon to hide the stuff. We'll have to split the swag three ways, but we'll pull down a clear $20,000, or I don't know our Uncle Isadore."

"Hurry! I'll follow just as soon as I can."

"Right-o! Now, to make it look real and lifelike, I'll drop out of the window here. I've a pair of the master's shoes on, and that'll bunk the bulls until we can make a safe getaway."

He dropped, almost into the hands of the two men watching him. But he was too agile and quick for them. He was off like a deer. They gave chase heartily enough, rather certain that Captain Radcliffe would miss his haul if they did not catch this shrewd butler. Hook, by dodging and doubling, succeeded in eluding them. He had in mind to hide the jewels and return some other night for them. He wasn't anxious to have them fall into the hands of absolute strangers. That they were in the same deal as himself he had no doubts.

He drew out his handkerchief to wrap around the receptacle, and in doing so the memorandum book and a card fell from his pocket. Mr. Hook was not wholly fortunate in his adventure this night. As he scaled the wall and dropped down the other side of it he dropped into Bruce's arms. Bruce had heard the trampling of feet and was ready. In the struggle the coronet fell to the ground. With a mighty jerk Hook managed to free himself, and he took to his heels, glad enough to have some of the booty.

Bruce had a keen ear, and during the struggle he heard something fall. Immediately he began searching, and finally came upon the coronet. On the other side of the wall somewhere lurked his amiable confederate, Captain Radcliffe. Should he hail him and make known his find? Indeed no. There was honor among thieves in books, but rarely in life. Bruce stole off the scene, perfectly satisfied with his share of the loot.

But Captain Radcliffe found something. It was the card the crooked butler had dropped during his struggle with Bruce. Did Captain Radcliffe call aloud for his friend, Bruce? No. He was stirred by the same sense. This saloon in Ramona avenue was doubtless some kind of a fence, and he at once decided to investigate.

On second thought the maid concluded not to fly at present, but to announce the robbery the moment the Copelands returned. For awhile at least they would not suspect her of complicity. Nor did they. The maid wept. The butler was evidently guilty. And she had trusted him. She had even promised to marry him. He was a thief. It was all so very well done that the Copelands believed her implicitly.

Meantime Bruce wended his way quickly to a house he knew of. It was a rendezvous of his own not known by his confederates. In the library over the mantel hung a fine pair of antlers. These covered a hole in the brick chimney, and into this hole Bruce deposited the ruby coronet. He could wait now until the whole affair had blown over. On one of his European trips he could dispose of it for far more than he could safely get in America. He was well satisfied with himself.

The next day Detective Hunt learned of the robbery, but as he had not yet been approached in regard to it merely made note of the salient features of the case. He busied himself with several photographs and selected one of them. Later he would use this likeness as a disguise.

Baird came in breezily.

"They've put me on the Copeland robbery," he announced. "What do you think about it?"

"I guess the butler is the boy."

"If I can land a scoop on this story my little old pay envelope will get a boost."

"You're a queer card, Baird. You've got the stuff in you. You once lived like a prince, and yet you're willing to work hard for an honest living. Well, if the Copelands come to me I'll take you in on it."

"Any news on the other business?"

"Nothing you can put your hand on. I have a lot of suspicions, but I'm not going to tell you what they are. I wish I'd been at the Copelands the other night. There might have been a face there I could have placed."

The clerk came in. "Lady and gentleman to see you, sir."

"Name?"

"Copeland."

"Send them in," said Hunt, smiling. "I've an idea our friend Storm sent them here. Don't do any talking."

"All right," laughed Baird.

The upshot of the visit resulted in Hunt accepting the case. He went up to the house at once and went over the ground thoroughly. He quizzed the maid narrowly, but she was letter perfect in her part. She faced and disarmed him apparently, but he took careful notice of her features and her height and color. There were traces all over the lawn of a man, in fact that he could learn nothing in this direction.

That afternoon Mr. Hunt entered the grogshop of Mr. Riodon, greeted the barkeeper cordially, and proceeded upstairs to a room he had previously engaged. There he met one Marie and they laughed over the successful manner in which the detective had been fooled.

Downstairs Captain Radcliffe entered the bar, sat down by a window, ordered a drink, pretending to be interested in that morning's paper. Sooner or later he expected to encounter Mr. Hook. The exercise of a good deal of patience was necessarily required it.

Now, one thing Detective Hunt had found, and that was Hook's memorandum book. In that book he learned that the butler's "hangout" was Riodon's saloon in Ramona avenue, Bronx. So at the same time that Radcliffe read his newspaper and Hook flirted with the maid in John's house and Baird stopped on the opposite side of the street and eyed the name on the saloon windows.

"This is the shop sure enough," declared Hunt. "Suppose we stroll over and see what's inside."

Radcliffe chanced to be in a sort of a clear spot in the window and saw them. He was in a quandary for a moment. But he had his money on nothing. The detective and the porter immediately sought the place and Captain Radcliffe, as he went out the rear door, cursed himself for not going up the stairs himself.

There's always a slip twixt the cup and the lip. If Marie hadn't stolen a certain brooch which she slipped among the Copeland collection and if Hook hadn't strenuously refused to surrender it, they would not have quarreled, their voices would not have risen. The sound of their argument was music to Hunt's ears. Quickly he selected a key from his bunch of

He Dropped.

skeletons, whipped it into the lock, gave a twist, and shoulded open the door, followed by Baird.

Hook, without waiting to register his visitors' names and business, jumped toward a window and he and Marie followed him fearlessly.

Hunt turned upon the world sardonically.

"I thought I'd find you here." He scooped up the stolen jewels. "Where is the ruby coronet?"

"I don't know," whimpered Marie.

"He lost it in jumping the wall the night of the robbery."

Hunt did not doubt this. The thieves at the Copeland place had given evidence of a struggle.

"Where is his hangout?" he demanded.

"I don't know."

"All right." Hunt took out a pair of handcuffs. "Want to ride back to town with these on instead of diamonds?"

Marie reluctantly told him where he would doubtless find her lover. After all, if Hook hadn't made such a row over giving her what she wanted of the loot neither would have been in their predicament.

"It's the old Rutsdell house at Highwood."

"Go back to your mistress and stay there. I can't find your pal anywhere, so I'm going to give you a chance. But if you've lied to me I'll put you over."

When Hunt reached the Rutsdell place he was met by Baird, more or less out of wind.

"Did you get them all?"

"All but the ruby piece. I've an idea that it's in this joint. Where's Hook?"

"He got by me somehow. I shouldn't wonder if that old house had a dozen

In That Book He Learned That the Butler's "Hangout" Was Riodon's Saloon.

of those secret passages, but I couldn't find any. Let's get back to town with the stuff. We can come back here later."

When they did get back they encountered many thrilling things, as astonishing as they were thrilling. Zudora and John had gone out for a spin, and the machine had broken down near the Rutsdell place. Bruce, who had witnessed the accident, made up for the occasion and offered the hospitality of his home. This courtesy was readily accepted, with the result that the two young people found themselves prisoners. Zudora was tied to a chair in the library, while Storm was dragged down into the cellar.

Bruce was in high feather. He had not only the rubies, but the girl they had been after ever since she got away from Dr. Mann's private insane asylum. But eggs have to be hatched before you can count your chickens.

Hunt and Baird returned at once after they had given the bag of jewels to Mrs. Copeland. They found Zudora, to their amazement, struggling in the Morris chair.

"The ruby coronet is behind those antlers," she cried. "They took John downstairs. Go to him quickly."

So all the jewels—and perhaps the most precious, Zudora—were returned. But Hunt was distinctly dissatisfied with the adventure. The crooks had slipped through his fingers.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Mosquito Catchers.

Keep a duck, and so avoid mosquitoes is the lesson of some experiments conducted by the Pennsylvania commissioner of health. Mosquitoes breed in manure or quiet water, and the duck will generally subdue the mosquito pest in any farmyard. The breeding grounds of some kinds of mosquitoes prefer the standing water in a cleared space, such as a tin can in the back yard, and of course the duck cannot be expected to attend to that breed. The other kind of mosquito will attack in all the places they appear in any number of valley near the house, which by herders would make themselves a nuisance around the house. The experiments consisted of building two pens, one for the duck and the other in which pens the mosquitoes would breed. Results did not come immediately, with the mosquitoes apparently at sea in their quest, but results matured shortly and kept their pool free. Later, ten of the ducks were placed in the duck pond, and there followed an epidemic of quiet and calm in a few hours. Other experiments have found that some kinds of fish will eat the larva mosquitoes, and fish have been recommended as a solution, but the test gives some assurance that the mallard duck will do the work. Scientific Farming.

What They Could Do.

"Don't you think you could do something with that orchestra to improve my song?" asked the lady soloist.

"What's the matter with it?" asked the orchestra leader.

"Why, they could hardly hear my song for that drum!"

"Well, we can put in a couple more drums." Chicago News.

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