

The Mazaroff Mystery

—By—
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W. N. U. Service

CHAPTER VII—Continued

"You think that, Maythorne?" I asked as we paused at the door of the elevator.

"Of course!" he exclaimed. "Doesn't need half an eye nor an ounce of brain to be dead certain of that! She knows—knows! And, as I said in there—who is it? Here's one thing certain, Holt—if she won't speak, I'll have to tell the police. But between now and tomorrow she'll have time to reflect. And in the meantime—"

He broke off abruptly. We went down and into the street, and in silence walked quickly down Edgeware road. I knew what he was after—Cottlingey. And Cottlingey suddenly appeared before us in Præd street, as if he had shot out of the earth.

"He's come!" said Cottlingey. "Alone. They're both in the house, now. All's arranged." Maythorne nodded; they whispered together a moment; then Maythorne and I turned away.

"Did he mean that Eccleshare had come?" I asked. "And that—they'll watch him?"

"Eccleshare, of course," answered Maythorne. "Who else? Watch him?—Aye, they'll watch him—they'll watch both of 'em!"

I went back to my rooms thoroughly muddled in mind by the day's events. It seemed hopeless to try to piece them together, and yet I could scarcely refrain from the attempt. And underneath everything lay an uncomfortable suspicion, which forced itself upon me however much I fought against it—it was Mrs. Elphinstone an accessory to Mazaroff's murder, and if so, after . . . before? Out of all speculations one clear fact emerged—she had come into possession of that will, which, without doubt, was in Mazaroff's pocket when his murderer shot him.

All this was still seething in my mind when I met Maythorne next morning at Crole's office. We were shown into Crole's private room at once; there, by Crole's desk, sat Mr. Herman Kloop. He gave us a knowing look as we walked in, and Crole nodded at him, as much as to say that whatever was to be said first was to come from the diamond merchant.

"News!" remarked Crole, laconically. "Another development!"

We sat down and turned on Kloop. "I came round to Mr. Crole as soon as I had breakfasted—to tell him," he said. "Now I tell you. It is what I learned last night—late. From some of my friends in our trade, Mazaroff's pair of blue diamonds have been sold! They have been sold to a syndicate of three well-known dealers. A fancy price, too!" he added, with a chuckle.

"What price?" asked Maythorne. "It is said—and I dare say it's quite correct—two hundred thousand pounds," Kloop replied. "Of course—they're worth that—and more. Sufficiently more to give the buyers a nice big profit—when they sell. As—equally of course—they will."

"Well?" Maythorne asked. "But—who sold?"

Kloop laughed, glancing at Crole. "To be sure!" he replied. "A pertinent question! Armintrade sold. No concealment about that. Armintrade—the bank man."

"Armintrade only returned from the north last night," said Maythorne. "Where and how was this deal carried out?"

"Yes," answered Kloop. "I can tell something of that, but not precise details. I should say—by correspondence."

Maythorne looked at Crole: Crole shook his head.

"What concerns us," he remarked, "is the fact that Armintrade sold these things—Mazaroff's property. We know that Armintrade was in possession of what we call Blue Diamond Number One, and we also know that Mazaroff had Blue Diamond Number Two on him when he went north. So—Mazaroff must have met Armintrade and handed over to him the second diamond. They must have met—unknown to anyone—at Marrasdale."

Maythorne turned to Kloop. "Armintrade's name was openly, freely mentioned to you in connection with this?" he asked. "Was Mazaroff's name mentioned?"

"Oh, to be sure! As the source from which the diamonds came."

Maythorne got up from his chair and began to button his overcoat. "There's only one thing to be done," he said, glancing at Crole. "You and I and Holt must see Armintrade at once. We want an explanation. As far as I'm aware, those diamonds, since the moment of Mazaroff's death, have been the property of Mr. Holt here. Isn't that so, Crole?"

"Yes," answered Crole, laconically. He got up from his desk, crossed over to a safe in the corner, and unlocking it, took from some inner receptacle an oblong envelope. "Here's the will," he said. "I'll take it with me. But I think Armintrade will be found to be all right. By that I mean that he will have acted within his rights. How, I don't know. But—come along."

We parted from Kloop in the street outside; Crole, Maythorne, and I got into a taxicab and set off for Court-

thinking hard. He looked up at last. "It seems pretty clear—now!—that Mazaroff wasn't murdered for the sake of those diamonds," he muttered, as if somewhat dissatisfied at the new turn of affairs. "In that case—what was he murdered for?—what was the motive?"

"He'd other valuable property on him, you know," observed Crole. "And there are other people to question when we've done with Armintrade. Eccleshare, for instance, and that man Parslave."

We entered Courthouse's bank together and sent in our cards to Armintrade. He took small notice of Maythorne and myself; his attention gave itself to the solicitor.

"Well, Mr. Crole?" he began. "What can I do for you?"

"You can give us some much-needed information, Mr. Armintrade," replied Crole, promptly. "You are aware, of course, that, having acted as the late Mr. Mazaroff's solicitor here in London, I have employed Mr. Maythorne to inquire into the mystery of his murder. Now, we have ascertained from Mr. Herman Kloop of Cape Town, a close personal friend of Mazaroff's, now in London, that Mazaroff possessed two extremely valuable dia-



We Were Shown Into Crole's Private Room at Once; There by Crole's Desk Sat Mr. Herman Kloop.

monds, one of which was in his possession when he went north, to Marrasdale, and the other of which had been in your keeping, as Mazaroff's agent, for some months. Kloop tells us that you have sold these two diamonds to a syndicate for two hundred thousand pounds. Is that correct?"

Armintrade, whose smile, sardonic and inscrutable, had never left his eyes, nodded. "Quite correct!" he answered.

"Do you mind telling us all about it?" Crole asked. "I gather the whole thing is plain enough—when explained."

"Plain as a pikestaff," replied Armintrade, with a laugh. "I have acted as agent or intermediary, or whatever you like to call it, for Mazaroff for some time. Well, now, as regards these blue diamonds—great rarities. I have had the first in my hands for some time. The second he handed to me personally at Marrasdale the day after he arrived at the Woodcock."

"Ah!—you met him there?"

"Certainly I met him there?"

"Well? And what happened?"

"We discussed the sale of the diamonds, and came to an arrangement."

"May I ask what it was?"

"Certainly! He gave me an option on them."

"Ah! I see! An option? Just so. You were to have them at a price?"

"Of course. But I'll show you the terms, in Mazaroff's handwriting. He had brought me this, already written and signed—there you are!"

He produced a sheet of letter paper and handed it to Crole, who took and read it attentively. "I see!" he said, handing it back. "He gave you the option for one month of buying the diamonds for a hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds. And—you have taken it up. Then—what about the option money? Which, of course, should and would have been paid to Mazaroff?"

"Exactly! The money is at the disposal of the late Salim Mazaroff's rightful heir or heirs, beneficiaries, residuary legatees, or whoever has a proper and legal right to it."

Crole pointed to me.

"Mr. Holt there is Mazaroff's residuary legatee," he said. "He comes in for—everything!"

Armintrade laughed, and gave me a shy smile.

"Lucky for Mr. Holt!" he remarked. "But—are you sure of that? I understand that the will made at York is lost?"

"The will is here!" said Crole, holding up his envelope. "You can see it and read it."

"It," answered Crole, promptly. "It won't be contested, either. Everything that Mazaroff died possessed of belongs to Mr. Mervyn Holt. So—"

"So I owe Mr. Holt one hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds," said Armintrade with a laugh. "Very good!—shall I send the check and the papers along to you, Mr. Crole? Just so—it shall be done at once. Glad you've found the will."

We all rose. For the first time Maythorne spoke—addressing Armintrade.

"You didn't think it necessary to give evidence at the inquest?" he suggested.

"What evidence had I to give?" asked Armintrade. "My affairs with Mazaroff had nothing to do with his murder."

"Have you any theory, yourself, about his murder?" continued Maythorne.

"I have had two. One was that he may have been followed from London by somebody who knew that he had the second blue diamond on him—he was a very careless, thoughtless man!—the other that it was just a common, vulgar murder for the sake of robbery by one or other of those men whom he had been treating at the Woodcock. For instance, where is that man who disappeared—Parslave? So far, I believe, the police have failed to track him. Possibly he murdered Mazaroff, robbed the body and cleared out. Anyhow—he's vanished."

CHAPTER VIII

Fresh Links

We took our departure—silently and unceremoniously, as if we had been very ordinary customers, doing very ordinary business. But outside, in Mining lane, Maythorne halted, and looked questioningly at Crole.

"Satisfied?" he asked.

"As far as that goes—yes," replied Crole. "There's no doubt about the option—that's clear enough. No getting past Mazaroff's own handwriting and own terms!"

"Very well—if you're satisfied," said Maythorne. He moved forward a few yards and against stopped. "I wish we knew a bit more about Mazaroff's movements on the day following his arrival at the Woodcock," he muttered. "It's all vague, shadowy, uncertain—and yet bits keep coming out. Well—the next job is Eccleshare and Parslave. If we can't get some light through those two . . ."

He paused, looking round for a taxicab; as he signaled to one a little distance away, Crole spoke.

"My impression is that Eccleshare will have as straight a tale to tell us as we've heard from Armintrade," he exclaimed. "We're off the track, Maythorne!—or, rather, we've never been on it. I've got an intuition that neither Armintrade, nor Eccleshare, nor Parslave know anything about nor have anything whatever to do with Mazaroff's murder."

"All the same, we're going to have things out with Eccleshare and Parslave," answered Maythorne. "We may get a hint; a bit of a clue; anything. Perhaps," he added, as we settled ourselves in the cab, "perhaps I've got a pretty good idea of how things are, myself, Crole—but I want all the contributory information I can get. And I'm wanting to know why Parslave has been lying safely hidden in Doctor Eccleshare's house in London ever since this affair happened."

At Maythorne's bidding we got out at the corner of Conduit street and walked along to his office. Outside his door stood a fine, obviously brand-new Rolls-Royce car. Crole smiled at the sight of it.

"One of your aristocratic clients, eh, Maythorne?" he observed chaffingly. "A duke or a duchess at least—what?"

"On the contrary, if you want to know," answered Maythorne, who had given car and chauffeur a sharp glance. "That's Sir Samuel Loeke's car—or one of 'em—and his livery. And

Humble Ax Revealed as Instrument of Romance

The ax is a tool of romance. In almost every age it has played a major part in man's struggle for existence.

From earliest history, on down through the Stone age, the Bronze age and the Iron age, and more especially during the time of America's early pioneers—the ax has been the indispensable friend of man.

With the building of primitive log cabins went the building, too, of strong characters and stout muscles. Washington, Boone, Lincoln, Roosevelt, Gladstone of England, and many other great names in history are associated with the ax.

No other tool promotes the same

Sanity in the Madhouse

I should imagine that a madhouse would be an excellent place to be sane in. I'd a long sight rather live in a nice, quiet, secluded madhouse than in intellectual clubs full of un-intellectual people, all chattering nonsense about the newest book of philosophy; or in some of those earnest, elbowing sort of Movements that want you to go in for Service and help to take away somebody else's toys.—From "The Poet and the Lunatics," by G. K. Chesterton.

I've a pretty good idea as to whom we shall find upstairs."

"Who?" asked Crole. "Lady Loeke?" "No—but her nephew, Mallison," retorted Maythorne. "A thousand to one on it! Come in!"

We went upstairs. One of the girl clerks came forward as we entered the outer office.

"Mr. Mallison—waiting to see you, sir," she said.

We went forward to Maythorne's private room. There stood, examining a picture, the young man whom I had seen Mazaroff talking to at Huntingdon and at York. He turned sharply as we walked in, and a flicker of his quick eyes showed that he recognized me. He instantly picked out Maythorne. "Oh—er—Mr. Maythorne?" he said. "I—er—just dropped in to see you, don't you know—this Mazaroff affair. Queer business, ain't it?"

"What do you know about it, Mr. Mallison?" asked Maythorne. "We're anxious to get any information we can. And if you can tell us anything—"

Mallison sought inspiration in his cigarette.

"Oh, well, I—I scarcely know anything at all!" he said. "Of course, I met Mazaroff in Park lane, and I saw one of the blue diamonds, and heard about the pair of 'em—the other was in the hands of a chap named Armintrade—something—not Armstrong, though—a banking man. And between you and me, Lady Loeke was jolly keen about getting hold of the pair, though she didn't say much about it just at the time. But I know, she was all for Sir Samuel buying 'em there and then. That's what I gave Mazaroff the tip about when I met him as I was going north."

"I see!" said Maythorne. "You were both going north about the same time, eh? To be sure. And what were you going north for?"

"Inspect some shootings," answered Mallison, promptly. "Looked over a lot while I was up there—both sides the Tweed."

"Capital idea!" agreed Maythorne. "And you met Mazaroff—accidentally? At Huntingdon, first; then at York. Exactly. But—did you ever meet him again?"

"Oh, yes," replied Mallison. "I met him at Gilchester."

"At Gilchester, eh? That's the market town for Marrasdale—a few miles from the Woodcock. How did you come to meet him there?"

"Accident! I'd motored over from Jedburgh to look at a shooting near Gilchester. I went into the hotel there to get some lunch, and stopped a bit afterward. Mazaroff came in—we had a drink or two together."

"You met Mazaroff at Gilchester. Did you talk about the diamonds again?"

"Of course! He told me what he'd done. He said he'd seen this agent of his—Armintrade—"

"The man's name is Armintrade."

"That's it!—Armintrade. He said he'd just seen Armintrade, who was shooting in the neighborhood, and they'd come to an agreement. Mazaroff had given Armintrade an option—for a hundred and seventy-five thousand. He believed Armintrade would take it up. But, if he didn't, then, Mazaroff said, Lady Loeke should have the pair at the price first named—a hundred and sixty thousand."

"That corroborates Armintrade," remarked Maythorne in an aside to Crole and myself. "Well," he went on, turning again to his caller. "I'm much obliged to you for calling."

"That's all right," replied Mallison, artlessly. "Thought I'd just drop in, you know—always glad to be of help."

He went away presently, and the three of us looked at each other. Crole spoke first.

"As you said just now, Maythorne, that corroborates Armintrade," he remarked. "And I'm beginning to think that this is a simple case of murder for the sake of robbery."

"That's no new theory," observed Maythorne. "It's the original one—but it may have all manner of variations. Well, now—Eccleshare and Parslave! That's the next—"

The door opened just then—a girl clerk appeared.

"Sergeant Manners and Detective Sergeant Corkerdale to see you, sir," she announced.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



REVENGE

The young bride was standing on the tiled porch using a new pair of field glasses.

"Darling," she cried, "the real estate agent who told you that our house was only a stone's throw from the station is getting out of the train now."

"Oh, is he?" returned her husband grimly. "Well, give me a brick out of the garden and I'll do my best."

NOT WILLING TO HELP



"Is your rich uncle willing to help you?"

"No—he's willing everything to his wife."

The Real Student

The merry boss to pleasure turns While we eat simple hominy. The one who pays the taxes learns Political economy.

Her Pointed Remark

Husband (excitedly)—Where is my hat? Wife—Hanging on that lamp! Husband—Lamp! Huh! What crazy place will I find it next, I wonder?

Wife (snappily)—On your head, I suppose!

Unanimous

Walter (to party of fourteen men)—Gentlemen, there is a lady here who says her husband promised to be home at midnight and she has come to fetch him.

All Fourteen Rising—Goodnight, old fellows—see you again soon.

Up in the World

"Biffins has worked himself up, hasn't he?"

"How do you mean?"

"He used to be a chiroprapist, now he's a dentist."

Mercy!

Mazie—Whazza matter with your lips? Daisy—I think the hot kisses my boy friend printed on 'em last night blistered the paint.

MODERN VERSION



Tortoise—Let it be understood before we run this race that I want 75 per cent of the gate receipts and all movie rights!

Three Miles on a Pint

Bill thought his gas was getting low; He struck a match, the tank let go! Bill sailed three miles right in the air— Three miles on a pint is pretty fair.

Worst Part of It

Judge—You, a respectable young man, stole a coat. In consequence you have lost your post, and brought trouble and sorrow to your parents.

Accused—Yes, and the coat was too tight in the bargain.

A Small Matter

Clarence Littleneck—Thinking of you all day has given me absence of mind.

Dolly Dill—Don't worry. You'll never miss it.

Well Thought Of

"How are you getting along with your proposed Shakespeare testimonial?"

"I am agreeably surprised. Every body has a good word for Shakespeare."

Due Warning

Cutie—My little brother will tell if he sees you kiss me. Rudy—But I'm not kissing you. Cutie—Anyhow, I thought I'd tell you.

PAINS

No matter how severe, you can always have immediate relief



Bayer Aspirin stops pain quickly. A dose without any ill effects. Harmless to the heart; harmless to anybody. But it always brings relief. Why suffer?

BAYER ASPIRIN



Amazing value in all heavy breeds. White Leghorns, Game, and day-old turkeys. Write for new low prices. 100% live delivery guaranteed. 20 years' reputation your safeguard.

(Jay Todd) QUEEN HATCHERY 2420 1st Ave. Seattle, Wash.

Mosquito Bites

HANFORD'S Balsam of Myrrh

Mass' back for first bottle if not suited. All dealers.

Fresh Egg Specialist

Astonished observers rubbed their eyes and pinched each other the other day when they saw O. J. Stocum sedately walking to market with one egg in a basket. "How come?" they queried each to each. "Wherefore and likewise why?" "You fellows wouldn't understand," explained O. J., "but the fact is just this. When I sell fresh eggs, they are strictly fresh and don't ever doubt it. I follow the hens around and as soon as an egg is deposited in a nest I carry it to the store. If a customer is particular, he can get eggs for his breakfast that are not over ten minutes old. This is an age of specializing and I am a fresh egg specialist." —Vineyard (Mass.) Gazette.

FEEL GOOD?

Most ailments start from poor circulation (constipation or semi-constipation). Intestinal poisons sap vitality, undermine your health and make life miserable. Tonight try NATURE'S REMEDY—all-vegetable corrective—not an ordinary laxative. See how NR will aid in restoring your appetite and rid you of that heavy, lousy, peevish feeling.

NR TO-NIGHT TOMORROW ALRIGHT

War on Bald Eagles

During the past ten years 35,000 bald eagles have been killed in the Northwest. Spurred on by the bounty offered by the government, one dollar per pair of talons, Indians, fishermen, hunters and boys have combined to carry out the war against the birds. Not only do they prey on salmon, small animals and wild birds, but very young blue fox pups are carried off by them.

Scotch Women Curling

Curling, long considered a man's game, has become a feminine pastime in Scotland. Some women have become experts at the game, and many new curling clubs for them were formed during the winter. The famous Scottish organization, the Kinross Curling club, is the latest to form a women's section, which is already flourishing.

One Good Point

Blinks—Doesn't it make you laugh to think of the old horse-and-buggy days?

Jinks—Yes, except when I remember that a tack in the road wouldn't spoil a trip in those days.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

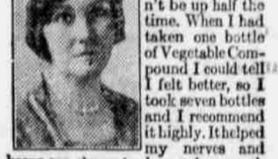
Seen Them?

"Cholly must love me." "Eh?" "He wants my photo by radio."

"A WONDERFUL HELP TO ME"

Read What Mrs. Arnold Says About Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Dothan, Ala.—"What a wonderful help Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has been to me. I was so nervous and rundown I couldn't be up half the time. When I had taken one bottle of Vegetable Compound I could tell I felt better, so I took seven bottles and I recommend it highly. It helped my nerves and keeps me strong to do my housework and wait on four little children. I hope some other suffering woman will try it."



—Mrs. PORTER L. ARNOLD, 1013 S. St. Andrews St., Dothan, Alabama.

W. N. U., Portland, No. 24-1930.