

# The Mazaroff Mystery

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W. N. U. Service

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS  
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## CHAPTER VIII—Continued

"Show them in!" said Maythorne. He turned wonderingly on us as the girl withdrew. "Manners!" he exclaimed. "Here in London? What's that mean? Something fresh! Well, Manners?" he continued, as the sergeant and another man, both in plain clothes, came into the room, staring curiously at their surroundings, "what brings you here? Take a seat—you know these gentlemen?"

Manners grinned at Crole and myself. He jerked a thumb at his companion, a quiet-looking, observant man.

"Detective Sergeant Corkerdale, of the Yard, gentlemen," he said. "Well, Mr. Maythorne, I'm here on business you can guess at. The fact is, I learned something yesterday, and I hurried up to town, by orders, and I've been to New Scotland Yard, and told all we know. They've put Corkerdale here on to help me. Two or three things happened our way yesterday. All the folks—Elphinstones—left Marrasdale tower for London, sudden. Then, the High Cap lodge party broke up and came here, too—same train. Later in the morning that old chap Cowie, that lives in a cottage close by Reiver's den, came to me and said that he'd something to tell—something, he said, that he'd kept to himself until the gentlemen had gone away from Mr. Courthope's. Then, when I'd assured him that no harm would come to him, he went on to tell me that on the night of Mazaroff's murder, some little time after hearing a shot fired near his cottage, he went out, and from behind his garden hedge, saw two men, close by. One, he said, was the big fat gentleman from High Cap lodge, the other was Parslave. And, says Cowie, he saw 'em go away together, talking, sort of whispering, in the direction of Courthope's. Now, as we know, Parslave's never been seen since—in our parts. Where is he?"

"Is that what you've come to see Doctor Eccleshare about, Manners?" asked Maythorne.

"That's it, sir!—me and Detective Sergeant Corkerdale here are going to see Doctor Eccleshare and hear what he's got to say," answered Manners. "If Parslave was with him that night, then I want to know why—and I want to know where Parslave is now!"

"Then I'll save you some trouble, Manners," said Maythorne. "Parslave is where he's probably been ever since the night of the murder—or, rather, since the day after. He's in Doctor Eccleshare's house, at Paddington!"

The two policemen looked at each other. But that was only for a second; each turned sharply on Maythorne. The man from New Scotland Yard spoke.

"That looks like some sort of collusion between him and this doctor," he said. "They'll have to be seen."

"We were just going to see them when you came," remarked Maythorne. "You'd better come with us. Come along!—we'll go see him, and hear the latest."

We all five filed out and squeezed ourselves into a taxicab: Maythorne bade its driver to set us down at the corner of Chapel street. Arrived there, he turned a little way down Edgware road, looked at his watch, and beckoning the rest of us to follow, entered the saloon bar of a pretentious looking tavern. There, in a quiet corner, a tankard of ale and a plate of bread-and-cheese before him, sat the queer clerk, Cottingley, quietly munching, and reading a newspaper.

We grouped ourselves round Cottingley. Maythorne, instead of plunging straight into business, invited us all to take a drink, and said nothing until each of us had a glass in his hand. Then he turned on the clerk.

"Well!" he said.

Cottingley leaned closer, over the little table at which he sat.

"Eccleshare," he answered in a low voice, "came home, from Euston, about six-thirty last night. Three suitcases and a guncase. Parslave came out and helped to carry them in. At seven o'clock Eccleshare came out, alone. He went to Riggiori's, round the corner here in Chapel street. He dined there. He left there just after eight, and went home. About nine o'clock Parslave came out. He went to a public house, higher up the street, and had a pint of ale there. Then he went back. Neither of 'em showed again last night: neither of 'em left the house this morning. But about nine o'clock a van came there and left six trunks—the sort of trunks people use that are going long-distance traveling; those strong, zinc-lined affairs. They were carried in by the men who came with the van. That's all."

"Plenty!" observed Maythorne. He glanced significantly at the man from New Scotland Yard. "Eccleshare is going to clear out!" he said. "What do you think, Corkerdale?"

"What I think," Corkerdale answered, "is that the sooner we get to business the better."

"The simplest thing to do," said Maythorne, "is to walk in there, say that Parslave's been seen to enter, and have it out with the two of them. Come on!—we'll go there and walk straight in."

We left Cottingley and, led by Maythorne and Manners, went off to the quiet side street. Maythorne knocked; the door was opened almost instantly by a tall, elderly woman in cap and apron.

"Doctor Eccleshare at home?" demanded Maythorne. "Just so—thank you, we'll come in."

He and Manners were over the threshold before the woman could say anything; the rest of us crowding them behind, and, looking over their shoulders, found ourselves gazing on a big, roomy hall, set in the center of the ground floor. And there, before us, and now turning on this incursion with wondering and surprised faces, were our two men. The trunks of which Cottingley had spoken were open on the hall floor, Parslave, in his shirt sleeves, was engaged in packing things into them, under Eccleshare's superintendence. Clearly, as Maythorne had suggested, Eccleshare was contemplating a departure.

He turned on us sharply as we crowded in, and the look that he gave us was one of nothing but surprise—there was no annoyance, no sign of self-consciousness; it was easy to see that all that was in his mind was just wonder at our presence.

"Hullo!" he exclaimed. "What's this? You, Manners?—and a whole company behind you? What's arisen?—some new development?"

Manners, without hesitation, pointed to Parslave, who, on his knees beside a trunk, had turned to stare at him, open-mouthed.

"Doctor Eccleshare!" he said. "What's that man doing in your house?"

Eccleshare, in his turn, stared—first at Parslave, then at Manners. "Parslave?" he said. "Why shouldn't he be in my house? He's in my employ—my man!"

"Your man—your servant?" asked Manners. "Since—when?"

"Since I engaged him at Marrasdale," retorted Eccleshare. He looked from one to the other of us. "I don't know what concerns it of anybody's, Manners," he went on, "but since you seem extraordinarily inquisitive, I may as well tell you that I've sold this practice and I'm going to South America—on other pursuits. I wanted a strong, capable man—preferably a countryman, used to outdoor life—to go with me, and I engaged Parslave. That's why he's here."

Manners drew a long breath and shook his head.

"You know that we've had a bill out for Parslave this last two or three days, Doctor Eccleshare," he said. "Posted all about the district! Why didn't you tell us where Parslave was?"

"Pardon me, my man, I know nothing whatever about any bill," replied Eccleshare. "I was never near Marrasdale nor Birnside nor Gilchester the last few days I was in your parts. I neither saw your bill nor heard of it."

Manners became official in aspect and tone. He jerked his head towards Corkerdale.

"Oh, very well, doctor!" he said. "This is Detective Sergeant Corkerdale, from New Scotland Yard. I've been there this morning and laid before the authorities certain facts concerning you and Parslave, and if we don't get some satisfactory explanation from you, I shall just have to ask you to come with us and explain things elsewhere."

Eccleshare's big face flushed a little. But he made an obvious attempt to keep his temper.

"Hullo!" He Exclaimed, "What's This?"

appears, mysteriously. Parslave is now discovered in your house, here in London. You've given an explanation of that. But—there's more, and it is this, I think, that Sergeant Manners is particularly referring to. After you and Mr. Armitrade and your host, Mr. Courthope, left Marrasdale yesterday morning, information was given to Manners to the effect that you and Parslave were seen near Reiver's den on the night of the murder, just after the informant had heard the shot fired which was, no doubt, the immediate cause of Mazaroff's death. Now, my dear sir, I think you should explain—anything that you can explain."

"Before I give any explanation," said Eccleshare, after a pause, "I should like to know who it was that saw Parslave and myself near Reiver's den on the night of the murder."

"Well—it was Cowie," said Manners. "The old man who lives in the cottage near Reiver's den. He saw you—both."

Eccleshare nodded. He was looking from one to the other of us, and for a moment or two he remained silent, evidently thinking.

"Look here!" he said, suddenly. "Am I—or is Parslave—or are the two of us suspected of the murder of Mazaroff?"

No one answered. Manners moved uneasily in his chair; the man from New Scotland Yard preserved a gran-

ite-like countenance; Maythorne showed what seemed to be indifference. Crole and myself looked on. There was a brief silence—broken by Manners.

"I should like to know what Parslave has to say about his movements that night!" he said. "A rare lot of trouble he's given us!"

"I'm quite sure that Parslave hasn't the slightest notion that he gave you any trouble," remarked Eccleshare. "You forget, I think, that Parslave can't read—so he hasn't learned anything from the newspapers. But—Parslave, tell Sergeant Manners what you did that evening you left Marrasdale."

Parslave, thus bludgeoned, screwed up his face to the feat of remembrance.

"Cloughthwaite fair day that was!" he said. "I'd been there. Come away from there end o' the afternoon. Then I went home, and according to orders—doctor's orders, there—changed clothes. 'Cause why? I was to go to London that night. Got my supper then, and after that walked along to the Woodcock. I went in there and had a pint—the strange gentleman as was stopping there, he come into the room where there was a regular crowd on us, drovers and shepherds and such like. He stood trest all round—drinks and smokes. Gen'rous, he was! Then he went away. I stopped a bit longer, then I went off. To meet the doctor there—by arrangement. I met him. That's all as I did that night—before leaving."

"Did you ever mention to anybody that you were going to London?" asked Maythorne.

"No, master, I never did," replied Parslave. "Haddn't no cause to. I'm a lone man—neither kith nor kin, nobody to leave. Paid up, I did, where I lodged—and just went off."

"Where did you meet Doctor Eccleshare?" asked Manners.

"Where it had been arranged," replied Parslave, promptly. "Near Reiver's den. He was to be there and give me orders and my traveling money. And there he was!"

"Just so!" Eccleshare said. "There I was!—and I think I'd better tell you, as things are, precisely what happened. Possibly, I ought to have told all this before. But I had reasons—for silence."

I felt that at last there was going to be some revelations as to the murder of Mazaroff which, up to then, had never been made. And I began to feel a curiously sickening sense of apprehension, not unconnected with the events of the previous evening. Eccleshare knew something!—so, too, probably, did Parslave. But—what?

"I say I had reasons for keeping silence," continued Eccleshare, settling down to talk to us. "I had—strong enough for me. Perhaps I've been wrong—perhaps in these cases—murder!—nobody should keep silent, under any circumstances. And yet—you'll see, as men, that I had reasons, and weighty ones. Now I'll tell you—as it seems absolutely necessary—precisely what happened to Parslave and myself on the night on which Mazaroff met his death. Let me begin at the beginning. Before I went up north, to Marrasdale, I'd decided to sell my practice—had sold it, in fact—and to leave England for South America and a quite different life—prospecting, shooting, hunting, and that sort of thing. I wanted to take with me a man who'd be useful to me—preferably a countryman; a game-keeper, used to outdoor life, was the sort of man I had in mind. At Marrasdale I came across Parslave—as you can see for yourselves, he's just the wiry, muscular sort of chap that was wanted. He is, as he's said just now, a lone man—nothing to tie him to England. He's thoroughly up in woodcraft and that sort of thing; in short, he was the very man I was looking for. I broached the matter to him, and we very soon came to terms. There were certain things that he could do for me here in London, so I arranged that he should come up in advance of me and stay at my house until my return. We arranged further that on the night after Cloughthwaite fair, which he had to attend on business, he was to meet me, and I was then to give him money and some final instructions and he was to leave for Newcastle and London."

"Why by Newcastle?" asked Maythorne. "It's a detail, but why not by Black Gill Junction and Carlisle?—the more usual western route?"

"I'll tell you," answered Eccleshare. "Parslave has some interest in a bit of cottage property in Newcastle; as he was leaving England he wanted to see a solicitor in Newcastle who manages that property and to give him some instructions about it. So we arranged that, after seeing me, he was to cross the moor to that little branch line that runs east of Marrasdale, catch the last train to Newcastle, stay the night there, see his solicitor in the morning, and then go on to King's Cross. All of which, he will tell you himself, he did."

"Very well—and—your meeting that night?" asked Maythorne.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



## MRS. MALAPROP AGAIN

Bookstall Attendant to Porcus Littarum, who has disarranged his display in a feverish attempt to find the object of his search; Can I be of any assistance to you? Are you looking for any particular book? Porcus Littarum—Yes, I want "A Girl of the Luggage Van," by Eugenie Station Porter.—Publisher's Circular

## SLEPT LIKE A TOP



He—My mind was in a whirl last night.  
She—So you slept like a top, I suppose.

## Genuine Cleverness

Some say that cheating is an art. But history shows us just the same The men who really then were smart Could win and play an honest game

## Groping

"A number of constituents are waiting to see you," said the able and discreet secretary.

"What do they say?" asked Senator Sorghum.

"That something is wrong."

"What do they want me to do about it?"

"They don't know. That's what they want you to tell them."

## Household Economy

Maid (to spring cleaning house-keeper)—There are half a dozen men downstairs with vacuum cleaners. They say they have appointments to give demonstrations.

Mistress—Yes, I sent for them. Put them in different rooms and tell them to get busy.—Humorist.

## In the Rough

Golfer—Terrible links, caddy, terrible!

Caddy—Sorry, sir, these ain't links—you got off them an hour ago.—Kitchener Record.

## WOMAN OF TODAY



She—What do you think of the woman of today?

He—Darned slow, judging from the standards of "the woman of tomorrow," as I expect her to be.

## Something Lacking

Mary had a little lamb,  
A regular go-getter,  
But it wandered into Wall Street  
And now it needs a sweater.

## Swish-Sh-Sh!

Hopeless Henry—I wuz offered two Jobs 'yestiddy widin' ten seconds. Soapless Sam—Where wuz dey?

Hopeless Henry—One wuz at dat big white farmhouse on the hill. T'other wuz about six mile down de road—Exchange.

## Oh, Sugar

"Have you had an interesting day?"  
"Well, about the only stirring event so far has been the sweetening of my coffee."

## Everybody Watching It

Visitor—That is a beautiful clock. Is it insured?

Manager—No, but it is absolutely safe. There are more than 100 people working on this floor, and every one of them is watching it.

## Height of Agility

"Gayley is wha. you might call an adroit man."

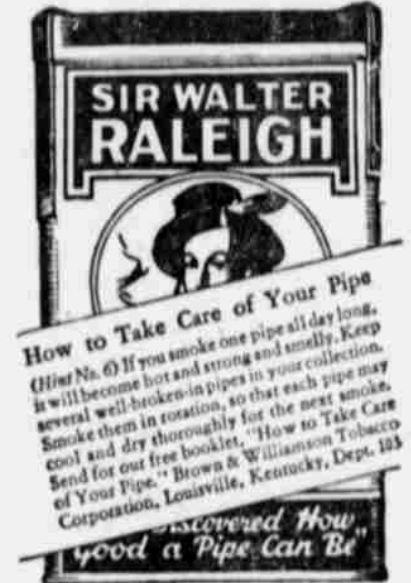
"Decidedly. His sins never find him out and his creditors never find him in."—Boston Post.

Would you call this a hint?



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