

# The Mazaroff Mystery

by J. S. FLETCHER

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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## THE STORY

Mervyn Holt is engaged by a man calling himself Mazaroff as a traveling companion. After a short tour they put up at the Woodcock Inn on Marrasdale moor. They meet, casually, Mrs. Elphinstone and Sheila Merchison. Mazaroff tells Holt they are his wife and daughter and that his real name is Merchison. That night Mazaroff falls to return to the inn and his disappearance is unexplained. Holt meets Sheila and tells her of Mazaroff's disappearance. Holt is questioned by Police Sergeant Manners and a reporter, Bowens. Mazaroff's murdered body is found. Crole, Mazaroff's lawyer, and Maythorne, private detective, arrive. Valuable diamonds that Mazaroff usually carried are missing. A gun, stolen from Mazaroff, is found at the scene of the murder. Evidence at the inquest proves Mazaroff was Merchison. He will leave all to Holt. Herman Kloop, close friend of Mazaroff, is in London.

## CHAPTER V

### The Diamond World

We found Mr. Kloop at half past ten, leisurely finishing a late breakfast, a little dapper, Hebraic looking gentleman. He appeared to take unusual interest in me as we revealed our separate identities, and I remembered then that the details of Mazaroff's will had come out in Postlethwaite's evidence at the inquest, and that newspaper reporters had been present. "I only arrived in London last night," he said, as we seated ourselves. "I read about Mazaroff in the paper. A strange affair, gentlemen!—and yet not so strange as it seems. Mazaroff was a careless man. He was too ready—sheer thoughtlessness, you know—to let people see what he had on him. And he carried things that I should have kept under lock and key. However—but tell me—how did you find out that I was here?" "We found these letters of yours in Mazaroff's rooms at the Hotel Cecil," replied Maythorne, producing the letter case, "and judging from them that you were a very intimate friend of his, I cabled to your address in Cape Town yesterday morning, and received a reply at night that you were here. You have read up the case, Mr. Kloop?" "All that there is in these papers," replied Kloop. "I see the police suspect some local man—a villager of no very good reputation. May be so—but I should say, knowing what I do of Mazaroff, that there is something deeper in the case than a mere vulgar murder and robbery. Now, as I learn from the newspaper accounts that Mr. Holt was Mazaroff's companion in his north-country excursion, and with him all the time at this Woodcock Inn, I should like to ask Mr. Holt to tell me two or three things—questions that occur to me, you know. Did you ever notice anything to make you think that you—that is to say, that Mazaroff was being followed—tracked?" "I can't say that I ever did," said I. "You never, for instance, noticed a man, or men, who turned up with some regularity at the hotels you stayed at?" "Well," I answered, "I can only think of this—that seems to have anything to do with your suggestion. We stayed a night at Huntingdon—our first night. I saw Mazaroff talking, evidently confidentially, to a man in the smoking room late that night. Then, one day at York, I saw him in conversation with the same man in York station." "You'd know the man again?" suggested Kloop. "Oh, yes—a young, fair-haired, fresh-complexioned man, very smartly dressed," I said. "A man of probably twenty-five, or so." "Were there any other guests than yourselves at this Woodcock Inn?" inquired Kloop. "Staying there—no," I replied. "People came in, though, for lunch—people who were motoring north or south." Kloop folded his hands on the table and looked from one to the other of us. "What is in my mind," he said, "is that Mazaroff may have been tracked to this place, caught on that moor by the man who had tracked him, and done to death." "For what he had on him?" suggested Kloop. "That—or something like it," answered Kloop. "I see it's stated in the papers—from Mr. Holt's evidence—that he probably had a lot of money, and his valuables on him. But—do you know if he had anything else—anything that would make a man resort to actual murder to gain possession of?" "We don't," answered Maythorne. "The fact is, Mr. Kloop, we came to you hoping that you, as a close friend of his, could throw a lot of light on Mazaroff. What, now, was he likely to have on him?" "I will tell you what I know of Mazaroff. It may do some good—but I think the secret of this business will be unearthed only by getting at Mazaroff's own doings between the time he arrived here in London and his murder at Marrasdale moor." "You have read what was said at the inquest about Mazaroff being in reality one Andrew Merchison? Very well—do you know if he was Andrew Merchison?" Maythorne asked.

"I do not," replied Kloop. "But," he added, with a quiet smile, "I dare say he was. In fact, I should conclude he was the Andrew Merchison spoken of at the inquest. He was a bit of a mystery man. But I never knew him as anything else than Sallim Mazaroff, and he never said a word to me about his antecedents, during the whole time of our friendship.

"When he first became known to me, Mazaroff was what you might term a general trader, or general speculator in commerce. But of late years, he had given up all that and had turned his attention exclusively to diamonds. When he retired, and when he came to England he had a certain deal, or venture, or speculation on, and I am inclined to believe that it has more than a little to do with his murder.

"Last winter Mazaroff got hold of a truly magnificent blue diamond. I have seen the famous Blue Hope—Mazaroff's stone was finer, both in size and quality. It weighed fifty-five and a half carats; its color and brilliancy were superb! I don't think—indeed I am sure—it was not seen by anyone but myself in Cape Town; Mazaroff sent it off to England. He—" "To whom?" interrupted Maythorne. "That I do not know," replied Kloop.

Maythorne produced the receipt for the registered letter posted at Cape Town and passed it over to him.

"Do you think that receipt has anything to do with the sending?" he asked. "Look at the indorsement on the back—in Mazaroff's writing."

Kloop examined the bit of paper carefully, on both sides, and finally passed it back with a satisfied nod. "Oh, no doubt!" he answered. "That would be about the date. Sent it to the London branch of his bank, to be sure. The indorsement proves it, too—what could be clearer? 'H. D. L.' 'Blue Diamond One,' of course."

"Why, 'Blue Diamond One'?" asked Maythorne. "Is there, or was there, a Blue Diamond Two?"

Kloop smiled knowingly. "Precisely what I am about to tell you," he answered. "There was—in the end. And I feel convinced that Mazaroff had Blue Diamond Two, and perhaps Blue Diamond One, on him when he was murdered on the moor! After he got hold of that first blue diamond, he developed an almost feverish craze to get a second. I know that he got Blue Diamond One for what you call, I believe—in your English phrase—a mere song. But he was so intent on getting another blue diamond to match it that he told me he was prepared to go to a great length, a big price. In the end he got what he wanted."

"Another?" exclaimed Crole. "Another. And equally fine," replied Kloop. "I don't know, for he wouldn't tell me, what he gave for it. But he got it—and not very long before he sailed for England."

"You saw it?" asked Maythorne. "I saw it—yes," assented Kloop. "So—I have seen both. I don't think anybody else has. Unless—which I suspect—Mazaroff has shown them here, since his coming. He had his eye on buyers in Europe."

"Did he mention any particular buyers?" inquired Maythorne. "He did not. But he did tell me that he had a man here, in London, who did things for him, and who was in touch with European and American people of high degree that might be inclined to give a very fancy price for the pair."

"And you feel sure that he first sent Blue Diamond One to London, and then brought Blue Diamond Two in his own pocket?" suggested Maythorne.

"I feel sure of that," said Kloop. "I may say—I'm certain of it. And since I have learnt these particulars of his sad fate, I have wondered if Mazaroff did one of two things, or perhaps both? The first—did he get talkative on board ship, and show his second blue diamond to fellow passengers; the second, did he show it here in London, amongst the fraternity?"

"The fraternity?" said Crole. "You mean—"

"I mean Hatton Garden," answered Kloop, with a knowing smile. "Where, as you must know, the greater part of the diamond transactions of this country are carried out. It will surprise me if Mazaroff is not to be heard of there! Come, gentlemen, I will walk along the street with you . . . and we will see!"

We made a little procession along Holborn; Mr. Kloop and Maythorne in front, Mr. Crole and myself in the rear.

Kloop greeted a man whose fine cloth overcoat was ornamented by a luxurious fur collar and his black satin stock by a blazing diamond pin. They were evidently well acquainted and met with much enthusiasm and handshaking—after which Kloop drew his man aside. When a few minutes later, they parted, Kloop came to us, shaking his head.

"That's a man who knows this place from top to bottom and end to end," he remarked. "And he has not heard of Mazaroff and his blue diamonds. That inclines me to a further belief in what I've been thinking all along—which is that Mazaroff intended, and perhaps had in view—a private deal

with those stones—did not intend them to come on the market. This is the market—and that man knows nothing. But there are still other men."

After that he dived into several offices, and spoke to other men whom he met on the street, but we got no news of Mazaroff.

"The fact is evident," Kloop said, as we once more sought the open street. "Mazaroff has not visited these regions during his stay in London. I am convinced now that if he showed his blue diamonds here it was in private."

Then, saying that he must now attend to his own business, Kloop left us. We three went to lunch.

"Well, we've got some information," observed Maythorne as we settled down at a corner table. "We've found out about those diamonds. I figure up the situation in this way: Mazaroff sent the first—Blue Diamond One, as



"Were There Any Other Guests Than Yourselves at This Woodcock Inn?" Inquired Kloop.

we'll call it—to his London bankers. Now then—did he send it for safety, until his coming, or did he send it that it might be shown to a likely customer? I think, to a likely customer—I also think more, in view of that cipher letter. I think that—probably for some time—Armintrude, then at the Imperial Banking Corporation of South Africa in London, had not only had charge of Mazaroff's correspondence with the bank, but had corresponded privately with Mazaroff. I think that Armintrude took charge of Blue Diamond One till Mazaroff's arrival with Blue Diamond Two, and, probably, during the interval made inquiries for a likely buyer of the pair.

"From all I hear of him, Mazaroff was an astute man. He probably figured that there was a lot of men here in England who, rightly or wrongly, have made vast fortunes out of the war. Such men—as we well know—want to set up in great style, or, rather, they do set up in great style. And the men have women—there's Lady Midas as well as Sir Gorgions. Now what does Lady Midas want—diamonds! What is a fashionable woman without diamonds? Her hair may be false, and her skin as yellow as parchment—but she's going to have diamonds glittering in one and on the other. Now I reckon that Mazaroff knew all that, and that he considered Lady Midas the customer he was looking for, eh?"

"Well—no doubt you're not far wrong," laughed Crole. "Now, if you've got Lady Midas' address in your pocket?"

"At present," observed Maythorne,

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## Many Republics Before That of United States

Probably the first government which can be considered republican in form was the ancient Israelitish commonwealth or republic, which lasted from about 1491 B. C. to 1005 B. C. About three centuries after this the Greek states, of which Athens was chief, set up what gradually came to be democratic republics. Ancient Carthage and Rome were for a short period republics. During the Middle Ages many of the free cities of Italy and Germany set up republics. San Marino in Italy is now the oldest existing republic, while Switzerland has existed as a republic since 1291. According to an article in the American Cyclopaedia, the degree of popular sovereignty in republics has varied very widely in the past, most of the so-called republics having been ruled by

an aristocracy which jealously guarded its own rights but treated the multitude as little better than slaves. "Real republican government may be said to date from the American Declaration of Independence, and even in the United States the government was largely one of class until about the second quarter of the Nineteenth century, when suffrage barriers began to break down."

### Eliminating Ground Ivy

A simple and effective remedy for ground ivy on lawns has been found. This consists of a single spraying with sodium chlorate, using 1 to 2 ounces per gallon of water, and that quantity of solution is sufficient to cover 100 square feet, providing a pressure sprayer is used. If applied with a sprinkling can, a trifle more solution will be needed, as that method of application is somewhat wasteful of material. The leaves should be thoroughly covered. The spray can be applied any time during the summer or fall. Since the spray discolors the grass for a short time, it is perhaps best to defer application until late fall.

### Moral Conveyed by Winter

The simplicity of winter has a deep moral. The return of nature, after such a career of splendor and prodigality, to habits so simple and austere, is not lost upon either the head or the heart.—Burroughs, in "Touches of Nature."

## Daddy's Evening Fairy Tale

MARY GRAHAM BONNER

### WHERE IT'S SPRINGTIME

Harry started to wander. He had been visiting the planet Mars. He thought he'd really discover whether Mars had people living upon his Planet. Just coming to the front door, as it were, of Mars' home, was not quite enough.

However, it wasn't fair to spy on Mars if he wanted to keep his secret and yet— At that moment Cosmo arrived. Harry imagined they must have had a way of signaling that made Cosmo come so promptly each time, and when he asked Cosmo about it Cosmo admitted almost that this was so.

"Did you have a nice talk with Mars?" Cosmo asked as they were in the plane again and speeding away. "Yes, and he sent a message to the Earth."

"Oh, won't the Earth be delighted?" "I'm not quite sure," Harry answered.

Jupiter had a great big voice, a great big body, a great big way of welcoming Harry. It was upon his Planet that they had now landed.

The weather was simply beautiful here. Harry thought he would have to tell his mother about it. She loved nice mild weather. His father would want to hear about his trip, too, for his father had always been interested in the stars. From the time he was only a little boy, and Nancy a baby, he had remembered how often his father had said that if only he had the time he would like nothing better than to study the stars.

Harry wondered about Nancy. It was too bad she couldn't be with him. Surely she couldn't be enjoying the trip she was having as much as she would have enjoyed this. She would have loved to have come with him. He felt, for a moment, the way he had when he was a little boy, and the circus parade had come down the street. He could never look at it until every member of the family had come out to watch, too.

How much he would have to tell them all. Their trip would be quite unimportant compared to his. "I'm glad to meet you," Harry told Jupiter, and afterward he thought with amusement that this had been a rather condescending way of speaking to so mighty a planet, with so mighty a name, but Jupiter had seemed entirely pleased.

He had greeted Harry in such a hearty, generous manner. "You don't mind if I appear to thunder at you as I speak?" Jupiter said. "It doesn't mean anything. They used to say I had control of the changes of the weather in the old days, and I began booming when I talked to try to live up to this reputation."

Harry assured Jupiter that he didn't mind how he talked so long as he did talk. "All is well, then," said Jupiter. "In poems by a gentleman named Homer—no doubt you've heard of him, for he gained a splendid name on your Earth—I was often called The Thunderer."

"Oh, what stories they used to make up about me. Do you like myths?" "Yes, I've always liked them pretty well. Why?" "I'd like to tell you a few. The Greeks thought there were twelve gods and goddesses who lived in Olympus. There is a mountain by that name on your Earth. Those who lived far away from it thought that it reached the sky and that the gods were up on top of the mountain right along the sky. Those who were near the mountain knew it didn't reach the sky but thought the gods and goddesses lived right in the sky."

"Chief of all, father of the gods, was the one they called the sky god Zeus. That was none other than myself, and that was my Greek name Jupiter is my Latin name and the name I use."

### The Come-Back

Sister—Now, Eddie, nice people always choose the smaller of two chocolates, so take your choice. Eddie—Thanks, sis. But ladies always choose first.

### Nor Cat in the Catnap

Diner—Hey, waiter, there's no turtle in this soup. Waiter—No, and if you look close you'll find that there is no horse in that horserradish.

**Milk for Soldiers**  
In the interests of the agriculture of his country, the Czech soldier will in the future be called upon to fight on milk instead of the traditional black coffee of the old Austro-Hungarian empire. It is estimated that the army will drink 75,000 liters of milk a day for breakfast. This measure has been adopted primarily to help the farmer, but perhaps the soldier will not object. He will at least know what he is getting, whereas his former guesses at the actual contents of the army coffee varied from dried turnips and mangolds to acorns. It is said to have tasted like all three.

## FAMILY DOCTOR LEARNED THIS ABOUT CONSTIPATION



Dr. Caldwell loved people. His years of practice convinced him many were ruining their health by careless selection of laxatives. He determined to write a harmless prescription which would get at the cause of constipation, and correct it. Today, the prescription he wrote in 1885 is the world's most popular laxative! He prescribed a mixture of herbs and other pure ingredients now known as Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, in thousands of cases where bad breath, coated tongue, gas, headaches, biliousness and lack of appetite or energy showed the bowels of men, women and children were sluggish. It proved successful in even the most obstinate cases; old folks liked it for it never gripes; children liked its pleasant taste. All drug stores today have Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin in bottles.

**Girls' Mothers Favor Golf**  
Mothers of young school girls in London are favoring golf for their daughters in the hope of keeping them from hockey. Hockey is condemned by many parents because it thickens ankles, damages teeth, encourages stooping and is useless in after-life. Many girls in their early teens are taking up golf, and in some clubs mother-daughter contests are held.

**Self-Quarrels**  
A man may quarrel with himself alone; that is, by controverting his better instincts and knowledge when brought face to face with temptation.—Channing.



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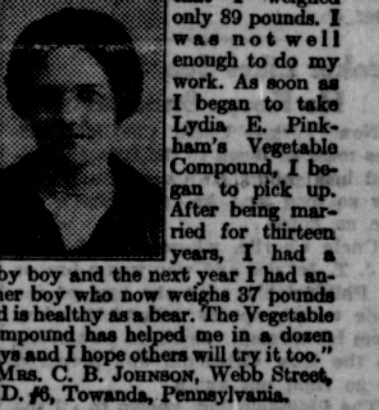
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