



SYNOPSIS.

George Percival Algernon Jones, vice-president of the Metropolitan Oriental Rug company of New York, thrifting for romance in Cairo on a business trip. Fortune returns to Jones the money borrowed by her mother. Mrs. Chesoye appears to be engaged in some mysterious enterprise unknown to the daughter.

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

Some one was sitting down beside him. It was Ryann, in evening clothes, immaculate, blase, pink-cheeked. There are some men so happily frigid that they can don ready-made suits without calling your attention to the fact. George saw at once that the adventurer was one of these fortunate individuals.

"Makes a rather good picture to look at, eh?" began Ryann, rolling a cigarette. "Dance?"

"No. Wish I could. You've done quick work," with admiring inspection. "Not a flaw anywhere. How do you do it?"

"Thanks. Thanks to you, I might say. I did some tailoring, though. Strange, how we love these funeral toggeries. We follow the dance and we follow the dead, with never a variation in color. The man who invented the modern evening clothes must have done good business during the day as chief-mourner."

"Why don't you send for your luggage?" Ryann caressed his chin. "My luggage, I believe, in the hands of the enemy. It is of no great importance. I never carry anything of value, save my skin. I'm not like the villain in the melodrama; no incriminating documents, no lost wills, no directions for digging up pirates' gold."

"I suppose you'll soon be off for America?" George asked indifferently. "I suppose so. By the way, I saw you at the game today."

"No! Where were you?"

"Top row. I am going to ask a favor of you. It may sound rather odd to your ears, but I know those two ladies rather well. I kept out of the way till I could find some clothes. The favor I ask is that you will not tell anything regarding the circumstances of our meeting. I am known to them as a globe-trotter and a collector."

"That's too bad," said George contentedly. "But I have already told them."

"The devil you have!" Ryann dropped his cigarette into the ash-tray. "If I remember rightly, you asked me to say nothing."

"I know," said George, visibly embarrassed. "I forgot."

"Well, the fat is in the fire. I dare say that I can get round it. It was every hour to hear of some one arriving from Bagdad."

"There's no boat from that direction till next week," informed George, who was a stickler on time-tables.

"There are other ways of getting into Egypt. Know anything about racing-camels?"

"You don't believe . . . ?"

"My friend, I believe in all things that haven't been proved impossible. You've been knocking about here long enough to know something of the tenacity of the Arab and the East Indian. Given a just cause, an idiot's eye or a holy carpet, and they'll follow you round the world ten times, if that ever there was in the days of Drake and the Spanish galleons. There's an adventure lurking round the nearest corner—romance, too. What this organization does is to direct you; after that you have to shift for yourself. But, like a first-rate physical instructor, they never map out more

the Holy Yliordes was given; Mahomed-El-Gebel, the Pasha's right-hand, a sheik in his own right."

"But you haven't got the rug now." "No, Mr. Jones, I haven't; but on the other hand, you have. So, here we are together. When he gets through with me, your turn."

George laughed. Ryann grew thoughtful over this sign. Percival Algernon did not seem exactly worried.

"Aren't you a little afraid?" "I? Why should I be?" inquired George innocently. "Certainly, whatever your Arab friend's arguments may be, moral or physical, I'm going to keep that Yliordes."

"Was he bluffing? Ryann wondered. Did he really have nerve? Well, within forty-eight hours there would come a test."

"Say, do you know, I rather wish you'd been with me on that trip—that is, if you like a rough game." Ryann said this in all sincerity.

"I have never been in a rough game, as you call it; but I've often had a strong desire to be, just to find out for myself what sort of a differer I am."

Ryann had met this sort of man before; the fellow who wanted to know what stuff he was made of, and was ready to risk his hide to find out. His experience had taught him to expect nothing of the man who knew just what he was going to do in a crisis.

"Did you ever know, Mr. Jones," said Ryann, his eyes humorous, "that there is an organization in this world of ours, a company that offers a try-out to men of your kidney?"

"What's that? What do you mean?" "What I say. There is an established concern which will, upon application for a liberal purchase of stock, arrange any kind of adventure you wish."

"What?" George drew in his legs and sat up. "What sort of a jolly is this?"

"You put your finger upon the one great obstacle. No one will believe that such a concern exists. Yet it is a fact. And why not?"

"Because it wouldn't be real; it would be going to the moon in a Coney Island."

"Wrong, absolutely wrong. If I told you that I am a stockholder in this company, and that the adventure of the Yliordes rug was arranged for my special benefit, what would you say?"

"Say?" George turned a serious countenance toward the adventurer.

"Why, the whole thing is absurd on the face of it. As a joke, it might go; but as a genuine affair, utterly impossible."

"No," quietly. "I admit that it

sounds absurd, yes; but ten years ago they'd have locked up, as insane, a man who said that he could fly. But think of last summer at Paris, at Rheims, at Frankfurt, the Continental air was full of flying-machines. Bah! It's pretty difficult to impress the average mind with something new. Why shouldn't we cater to the poetic, the romantic side of man? We've concerns for everything else. The fact is, mediocrity is always standing behind the corner with bricks for the initiative. Believe me or not, Mr. Jones, but this company exists. The proof is that you have the rug and I have the scars."

"But in these prosaic times!" murmured George, still skeptical.

"Prosaic times!" sniffed Ryann. "There's one of your bricks. They swing it at the head of the first printer. Prosaic times! My friend, this is the most romantic and bewildering age humanity has yet seen. There's more romance and adventure going about on wheels and steel-bottoms than ever there was in the days of Drake and the Spanish galleons. There's an adventure lurking round the nearest corner—romance, too. What this organization does is to direct you; after that you have to shift for yourself. But, like a first-rate physical instructor, they never map out more

# The Carpet from Bagdad

by HAROLD MAC GRATH  
Author of HEARTS AND MASKS  
The MAN ON THE BOX etc.  
Illustrations by M.G. KETNER  
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than a man can do. They gave me the rug. Your bones, on such a quest, would have been bleaching upon the banks of the Tigris."

"What the deuce is this company called?" George was enjoying the conversation immensely.

"The United Romance and Adventure company, Ltd., of London, Paris, and New York."

"Have you any of the company's paper with you?" George repressed his laughter because Ryann's face was serious enough.

"Unfortunately, no. But if you will give me your banker's address I'll be pleased to forward you the prospectus."

"Knauth, Nachod and Kuhne. I am shortly leaving for home. Better send it to New York, I say, suppose a chap buys an adventure that is not up to the mark; can he return it or exchange it for another?"

"No. It's all chance, you know. The rules of the game are steel-bound. We find you an adventure; it's up to you to make good."

"But, once more suppose a chap gets a little too rough a game, and doesn't turn up for his dividends; what then?"

"In that event," answered Ryann sadly, "the stock reverts to the general fund."

George lay back in his chair and let go his laughter. "You are mighty good company, Mr. Ryann."

"Well, well; we'll say nothing more about it. But a moment gone you spoke as if you were game for an exploit."

"I still am. But if I knew the adventure was prearranged, as you say, and I was up against a wall, there would be the inclination to cable the firm for more instructions."

Ryann himself laughed this time. "That's a good idea. I don't believe the company ever thought of such a contingency. But I repeat, our business is to give you the kick-off. After that you have to fight for your own down."

"The stock isn't listed?" again laughing.

"Scarcely. One man tells another, as I tell you, and so on."

"You send me the prospectus. I'm rather curious to have a look at it."

"I certainly shall do so," replied Ryann, with gravity unassumed.

"Ah! Here come Mrs. Chesoye and her daughter. If you don't mind, I'll make myself scarce. I do not care to see them just now, after your having told them about the stolen Yliordes."

"I'm sorry," said George, rising eagerly.

"It's all in the game," gallantly. George saw him gracefully maneuver his way round the crush toward the stairs leading to the bar. Really, he would like to know more about this amiable free-lance. As the old fellows used to say, he little dreamed that destiny, one of those things from Pandora's box, was preparing a deeper and more intimate acquaintance.

"And what has been amusing you, Mr. Jones?" asked Mrs. Chesoye. "I saw you laughing."

"I was talking with the rug chap. He's a droll fellow. He said that he had met you somewhere, but concluded not to renew the acquaintance, since I told him that his adventure in Paris was known to you."

She couldn't have suggested anything more to his liking. And so, after a little hurrying about, the two young people went outside and began to promenade slowly up and down the mo'e. Their conversation was desultory. George had dropped back into his shell and the girl was not equal to the task of drawing him out. Once he stumbled over a sleeping beggar, and would have fallen had she not caught him by the arm.

"Thanks. I'm clumsy."

"It's rather difficult to see them in the moonlight; their rags match the pavement."

The Egyptian night, that sapphire darkness which the flexible imagination peoples with lovely and terrible shades, or floods with mystery and romance and wonder, lay softly upon this strip of verdure aslant the desert's face, the Valley of the Nile. The moon, round, brilliant, strangely near, suffused the scarred old visage of the world with phantom silver; the stones of the parapet glistened dully, the pavement glistened whitely, all things it touched with gentleness, lavishing beauty upon beauty, mellowing ugliness or effacing it. The deep blue Nile, beribboned with the glancing lights from the silent feluccas, curling musically along the sides of the frost-like dababahs and steamers, rolled on to the sea; and the blue-white arc-lamps, spanning the Great Nile bridge, took the semblance of a pearl necklace. From time to time a caravan trooped across the bridge into Cairo.

"Do you care for poetry, Mr. Jones?" "I? I used to write it."

"And you aren't afraid to admit it?" "Well, I shouldn't confess the deed to every one," he answered frankly. "We all write poetry at one time or another; but it's generally not constitutional, and we recover."

"I do not see why any one should be ashamed of writing poetry."

"Ah, but there is poetry and poetry. My kind and Byron's is born of kindred souls; but he was an active genius, whereas, I wasn't even a passive one. In all great poets I find my own rejected thoughts, as Emerson says; and that's enough for my slender needs. Poets are rather uncomfortable chaps to have round. They are capricious, irritable, temperamental, selfish, and usually demand all the attention."

The little vocal stream died up again, and once more they listened to the magic sounds of the night. She stopped abruptly to look over the parapet, and his shoulder met hers; after that the world to him was never going to be the same again.

Moonlight and poetry; not the safest channels to sail uncharted. The girl was lonely, and George was lonely, too. His longing had now assumed a definite form; hers moved from the quick to the still indefinitely. The quickness with which this definition had come to George rather startled him. His first sight of Fortune Chesoye had been but yesterday; yet here he was, not desperately but consciously in love with her. The situation bore against all precedents; it ripped up his preconceived ideas of romance as a gale at sea shreds a canvas. He felt a bit panicky. He had always planned a courtship of a year or so, meetings, separations, and reunings, pleasurable expectations, little junkies to theaters and country places; in brief, to witness the rose grow and unfold. Somewhere he had read or heard that courtship was the plummet which sounded the depths of compatibility. He knew nothing of Fortune Chesoye, save that she was beautiful to his eyes, and that she was as different from the ordinary run of girls as yonder moon was from the stars.

Again she stopped, leaning over the parapet and staring down at the water swirling past the stone embankment. He did likewise, resting upon his folded arms. Suddenly his tongue became alive; and quietly, without hesitancy or embarrassment, he began to tell her of his school life, his life at home. And the manner in which he spoke of his mother warmed her; and she was strangely and wonderfully attracted.

"Of course, the mother meant the best in the world when she gave me Percival Algernon; and because she meant the best, I have rarely tried to hide them. What was good enough for

other with earnest calculation; Wallace no longer hid his cupidry; Ryann's immobility of countenance was in itself a tacit admission to the burning of all his bridges that he might become a part of this conclave.

"And there we are, Kate. It really isn't the gold; it's the excitement of getting it and coming away unscathed. If I could only get you to look at all sides of the affair! It's the Rubicon."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Time of Her Life. The new colored domestic, fresh from Kentucky, took her first "Thursday afternoon off" and failed to return to prepare the seven o'clock dinner for the family. Next morning she reappeared rather "donsle." "Why, Sibbie," said the lady of the house, "you look sick. What is the matter?"

"Yes'm, I done been sick, awful sick, but it was with it. Dat doliab you given me, I spent every cent of it an' I done had de time of my life. What I done with it? Well, missus, I tell de truth an' no more'n de truth. I bought ten glasses of soda and went to ten of dese movable pictuh shows. My, my, one can't have no sitch time in Kaintucky."—Indianapolis News.

In Fat Berth. Towne—No; Grafton doesn't work at all now.

Brown—He doesn't? Why, when I knew him he seemed to be a young man with considerable push.

Towne—All that's changed now. He's a young man with considerable pull and doesn't have to work.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Tact. He (tired of dodging)—Would you marry a one-eyed man? She—Good gracious, no! He—Then let me carry your umbrella.—Illustrated Bits.

To set color in wash materials and embroidery cottons soak them in strong salt water.

her to give was good enough for me to keep. It is simply that I have been foolish about it, superstitious. I should have laughed and accepted the thing as a joke; instead, I made the fatal move of trying to run away and hide. But, taking the name in full, lightly, "It sounds as incongruous as playing Traumerel on a steam-piano."

He expected her to laugh, but her heart was too full of the old ache. This young man, kindly, gentle, intelligent, if shy, was a love-child. And she? An offspring, the loneliest of the lonely, the child that wasn't wanted. Many a time she had thought of flinging all to the winds, of running away and hiding where they never should find her, of working with her own hands for her bread and butter. Little they'd have cared. But always the rebel spirit died within her as she stepped outside the villa gates. To certain assured comforts, things of which she was fond, things to which she was used, she couldn't do it, she just couldn't. Morally and physically she was a little coward.

"Let us go in," she said sharply. Another moment, and she would have been in tears.

"Smuggling," said the major, with prudent lowering of voice, evidently continuing some previous debate. "Smuggling is a fine art, a keen sport; discovery are never serious. What's a fine of a thousand dollars against the profits of many successful excursions into the port of New York? Nothing, comparatively. For several years, now, we have carried on this business with the utmost adroitness. Never have we drawn serious attention. We have made two or three blunders, but the suspicions of the secret-service were put to sleep upon each occasion. We have prospered. Here is a gem, let us say, worth on this side a thousand, over there we sell it for enough to give us a clean profit of three or four hundred. Forty per cent, upon our investment. That ought to be enough for any reasonable person. Am I right?"

Mrs. Chesoye alone was unresponsive to this appeal.

"I continue, then. We are making enough to lay by something for our old age. And that's the only goal which never loses its luster. But this affair!"

"Talk, talk," said Mrs. Chesoye impatiently.

"My dear Kate, allow me to relieve my mind."

"You have done so till the topic is threadbare. It is rather late in the day to go over the ground again. Time is everything just now."

"Admitted. But this affair, Kate, is big; big with dangers, big with pitfalls; there is a hidden menace in every step of it. Mayhap death; who knows? The older I grow, the more I cling to material comforts, to enterprises of small dangers. However, as you infer, there's no going back now."

"No," assented Ryann, his mouth hard; "not if I have to proceed alone."

She smiled at him. "You talk of danger," speaking to the major. "What danger can there be?"

"The unforeseen danger, the danger of which we know nothing, and therefore are unable to prepare for it. You do not see it, my dear, but it is there, nevertheless."

Wallace nodded approvingly. Ryann shrugged.

"Failure is practically impossible. And I want excitement; I crave it as you men crave your tobacco."

"It's the Excitement of Getting It and Coming Away Unscathed."

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## SPIRIT IN TUBERCULOSIS WAR

Nineteen Million Dollars Expended Last Year in Fight Against the Dread White Plague.

Nearly \$19,000,000 was spent in the anti-tuberculosis campaign in the United States during the year 1912, according to the fourth annual statistical statement of expenditures in this movement issued by the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis. The expenditures during the year for sanatorium and hospital construction and treatment make the largest single item in the total, amounting to nearly \$16,800,000. This is an increase of nearly \$5,000,000 over the same group of expenditures for the year 1911. The anti-tuberculosis associations and committees spent over \$766,000, while dispensaries and tuberculosis clinics spent over \$600,000. Over \$415,000 was spent for the maintenance and establishment of open-air school and fresh air classes, which is more than double the amount spent for this purpose in 1911. Official, state and municipal expenditures outside of the maintenance of institutions, which are included in the other totals, amounted to \$280,000. In addition to these figures, about \$500,000 was spent by hospitals for insane and penal institutions in caring for their tuberculosis inmates.

Collecting Antiquities. Slopy received a card on which was engraved: "Professor Brace, Antiquarian."

He knew no such person, so his curiosity led him to receive him.

"What is your business, professor?" he asked, politely.

"I am a collector of antiquities," answered the old man.

"So I imagined. And how can I serve you?"

"By paying a deposit on this little bill you have owed for more than three years."

No Money, No Marriage. "A fortune teller told me that you are going to marry me," said the young man with the prominent nose.

"Did she also tell you that you are going to inherit a very large fortune?" inquired the girl with the matted hair.

"She didn't say anything about a fortune."

"Then she is not much of a fortune-teller, and you had better not place any reliance in anything she says."—Washington Herald.

Timely. Joseph Ettor, addressing the Little Falls strikers, cracked a timely joke.

"Let us emulate the firmness of the millionaire class," he said. "Our millionaires, you know, swear off at the beginning of each year, and infallibly keep their pledge."

"Aw, what do they swear off?" a striker incredulously demanded.

"They swear off their personal property tax!" was the reply.

False Alarm. "They say that Wombat is a genius."

"Nothing to that story. It's a canard. I loaned him a dollar once and he paid me back all right enough."

Improved Some. The Wife—Don't you think marriage has improved you, dear?" The Husband—Sure thing. I was an idiot when I married you!

Proper Rescue. "How did you come out of the tilt you had with the beauty doctor?" "Well, I managed to save my face."

And a baby would rather go to sleep than listen to a lullaby.

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