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# The Eye of Benares

A Man Counts His Loss as Gain

By CLARISSA MACKIE

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The Street of the Sellers of Precious Stones was a dusty, sun smitten alley in the business quarter of Benares. The striped awnings, unstirred by any breeze, drooped limply above the tiny shops burrowed out of the stone walls. Stephen Lawler swung briskly down the narrow thoroughfore, his blue eyes

keenly awatch for a familiar face. At last he came to the shop of Hanzal-Benal and, thrusting aside the hangings, stooped and entered. The proprietor, aged, white bearded

and patriarchal of visage, sat like a hewn stone image of "Contented Old Before him was a large, heavy block of Agra granite, worn smooth by much trafficking and rubbing of leather jewel bags in brown, slim hands. "My lord is late," remarked Hanzai

Benal, with a trace of reproach in his kindly tones, as he signaled for the American to be seated on the rich rug before the stone table. "I might be drowsing in the heat of the noontide, but the Eye of Benares-it never sleeps, and it watches for the coming Lawler's eyes followed the backward

jerk of the Hindu's thumb, and he stifled a sharp exclamation of wonder at the sight. Peering down at him from the gloom of the darkened in-terior was a lurid red and angry eye that seemed to belong to nothing human. Fiercely glowering out of space, at first it impressed him as exerting some strange influence over him. Then he laughed shortly and remembered that he was in India and must keep his wits about him.

"So that is the famous Eye of Bennares?" he asked with assumed non-The jeweler nodded solemnly.

never sleeps, and it seeks unerringly the souls of the wicked. No wrong-doer can hide from its searching light. What is now passing through the brain of my lord is revealed to the eve." "I have heard all that before, Han-

zai-Benal," remarked Lawler signifi-"My time is limited, as I cantly. must catch the train for Calcutta, where a steamer awaits me." "I was only reminding my lord of

the mysterious power of the ruby," said the Hindu humbly as he opened a large ebony box and placed it on the stone table. He pulled out tray after tray and placed them before his customer, revealing a glittering array of precious stones-diamonds, rubies, emeralds, pearls, lapis lazuli and sapphires-bankrupt spoils from the treasure chests of many a hard pressed prince. "What are these?" demanded Law

ler without interest as the stones under the jeweler's skillful manipulation dazzled his eyes almost to blindness. "Perhaps my lord prefers one of these to the Eye of Benares," suggest-

ed Hanzai-Benal craftily. "The deal is off, Hanzai-Benal," said Lawler curtly. "I've dickered with you over this confounded ruby for the past two weeks, and now when I come to you with the purchase money you sidestep the bargain. Not another rupee will I add to the offer I made you, and you will either deliver the goods now or consider the incl-

closed. Which shall it be?"

"My lord has purchased the ruby,"

said the Hindu hastily. He clapped his bands sharply and then held his palms upward. The Eye of Benares dropped softly down into Hanzai Benal's slim brown fingers and was deftly flashed in Lawler's face and then placed on the stone table. "Shall the bargain be concluded?" asked the jeweler suavely.

Lawler dropped to his seat on the rug and took the beautiful stone be tween finger and thumb. The sunlight increased its brilliance a thousandfold From every finely cut facet it radiated light and color-the color of blood.

He bent over the stone, examining it closely and even bringing out a mag nifying glass to assist his keen eyes There was not one flaw on this mag nificent jewel, which was as large as walnut and slightly flattened in shape.

Hanzai-Benal watched his customer anxiously. He knew that Stephen Lawler was agent for a large Ameri can firm of importing jewelers, and the sale of the Eye of Benares was not their first business transaction. though it was destined to be their last.

Slowly the American brought forth his leather wallet, together with heavy bag of gold. These he set down the table among the jewel trave and close beside the ruby he had purchased. "Your letter writer is herethe notary?" he asked. "The transaction must be in writing." For an instant the Hindu hesitated.

and then he clapped his hands. From the shadows there were evolved the dim outlines of a turbaned form, and then there slipped down on the carpet the thinnest specimen of a Brahmin priest that Lawler had ever seen, and he had seen a good many. The priest or secretary or notary-

he acted in whatever capacity he was required-drew forth a roll of yellow paper and an inkhorn from the tip writing case at his waist. He flourished a long goose quill and adjusted huge hore spectacles on his nose. "I am ready," he uttered, his little

black eyes fixed greedily on the ruby. Lawler, in the stuttering Hindu stant he had learned, dictated the terms of the short document. When he had concluded and the paper had been duly signed and witnessed Law ler counted out the price of the Eye of Benares and pushed a pile of golden rupees across the table.

At the same instant he picked up the ruby and, carefully rolling it in a slik handkerchief, placed it in the inner pocket of his linen coat. The Brahman watched him ceaselessly.

Lawler rose to his feet with a sharp breath of satisfaction at the conclusion of such a good piece of business His firm had given him a commission to purchase for one of their customers as large a ruhy as the world's markets afforded, and the agent confidently believed he had accomplished the task. Hanzai-Benal placed the rupees in a

large bag and tossed the bag over his shoulder. It did not fall to the floor. but disappeared soundlessly, as though it might have been caught by a pair of ark hands and passed on to one an another pair until secrecy had swallowed it up. The Brahman moved to the narrow entrance of the shop and blocked the opening by carelessly lounging there.

"Farewell, Hanzai-Benal," said Lawler courteously. "I shall return next year and look at your goods. If you have anything of great merit-like the Eye of Benares—let me know through the medium of the public letter writer.

Here's my\_card." He dropped the bit of pasteboard down on the table and turned to go. As he did so there was a rushing forward from the shadowy corners, a heavy cloak was thrown over his head, while agile fingers slipped here and there among his garments in search of the Eye of Benares.

"Help, help!" yelled Lawler as he pulled out his revolver and endeavored to crowd the muzzle under the edge of the muffling cloak.

They pulled out the white handkerchief in which he had wrapped the Eye of Benares, only to find it empty, for Stephen Lawler by clever sleight of hand had deluded them and con cealed the ruby elsewhere. While they searched him with nimble fingers he struggled to release himself from their wiry grasp. It was a case of one against seven, and Lawler was fast losing his strength when all at once there came the welcome sound of an English speaking voice, and a stout stick was laid heavily among the squirming legs in the shop.

As if the stick had possessed some magic inspired by the sharp authoritative voice of its wielder, Lawler's assailants vanished, bearing with them the enveloping cloak. Hanzai-Benai still sat before his table, replacing the jewels in the box, his placid features somewhat disturbed.

In the doorway was a stout figure clad in gray flannels-a good American face, clean shaven, strong and ut-terly fearless. "What's all this? Hey, there?' bawled the stranger at the

Lawler stepped down into the street and his hearty hand struck the open palm of the newcomer. "Mr. Ferriss.

## SOUR RISINGS FROM STOMACH

Those Who Experience Fullness and Pain After Meals, Stomach Disorders, and Indigestion, Should Read Below.

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anything. This is a whole lot of good
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## Dr. Hamilton's Pills Cure the Stomach

where did you come from? I have to thank you for saving me from a nasty row. You came in the nick of time. "Don't thank me-thank Beatrice here. My dear, where are you hiding? Ah, this is Stephen Lawler-used to know his father. This is my daughter." Lawler found himself greeting the

most charming girl he had ever met, and he wondered why he had never known that Mr. Ferriss must have had a daughter. He had missed years of joy in not knowing her before. Mr. Ferriss was indulging in a lin-

guistic combat with Hanzai-Benal in a broken mixture of English, Arabic, scraps of Latin and very little Hindustant. Lawler came to the rescue. "Just tell him," sputtered Ferriss,

mopping his heated brow, "that I have called to get the ruby my daughter left here to be engraved. She took a fancy to have it engraved. It isn't a first class stone; I may as well admit tt. I picked it up last year at an auc tion room in Paris, but Bee doesn't know that. She thinks its a pigeon blood. Tell the old rascal I've come for it and I want it in a hurry; got to catch a train for Calcutta."

Lawler looked long into the shrinking face of Hanzai-Benal, and then from some mysterious source about his garments he brought forth the Eye of Benares. "This the thing?" he asked

"Yes, and the rascal hasn't touched it yet. Never mind. Here, Bee!" He sed the counterfeit that was brilliant enough to stand among the rarest gems without detection. "What were you doing with it?" he asked of Lawler, and the agent told him briefly.

The sight of two revolvers pointed close to his venerable head induced Hanzal-Benal to clap his hands and bring from the darkness the bag of rupes which Lawler counted before re-turning to his pocket. "The Eye of Benares was watching you, Hanzai-Benai," he said coolly.

As they all made their way to the railroad station, for it developed that they were all to sail home on the same steamer, Beatrice Ferriss turned to Lawler.

"I am afraid you are very unhappy now that you cannot fulfill your com mission to procure a great ruby for your firm," she said sympathetically. "I haven't a regret in the world," assured Lawler hastily. "I count this the luckiest day of my life." He reiterated this statement the day

they were married, and he added that the pair of brown eyes he had won far outmatched the farfamed Eye of Benares, which still eludes him.

## \$100 Reward, \$100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken in ment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mutous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it tails to cure. Send for list of testimonials.

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