

# The Prisoner of Zenda

Anthony Hope



## Part 2

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*'They'll kill you!'*

King Rudolf is now a prisoner of Black Michael. Only Rudolf Rassendyll from England can save him.

with  
glossary  
&  
activities

### Characters

**Rupert Henztau** - young adventurer. Works for Black Michael

**Sapt & Fritz** – loyal friends of King Rudolf

**Black Michael** – wants to replace Rudolf as King

**Antoinette de Mauban** –mistress of Black Michael

**Detchard, De Gautet, Bersonin** - Black Michael's men.

Level: Pre- Intermediate

# Part 2

## A Message From The Castle

*King Rudolf is now a prisoner of Black Michael.*

A week later Sapt came to see me. 'The King is at



the Castle of Zenda,' he said. 'Rupert Hentzau and two other men are with him. The drawbridge stays up.'

'Who opens it?'

'Only Hentzau or Black Michael.'

Sapt gave me a letter. There was no signature but I guessed it was from Antoinette de Mauban. I opened it and read it out to Sapt.

'She has a message for me and wants me to meet her at twelve o'clock tonight,' I explained to Sapt.

'Where?'

'In a garden at the end of New Avenue. There's a summerhouse there.'

Sapt laughed. 'Black Michael sent that letter,' he said.

I told Sapt about Antoinette de Mauban. Then I said, 'I'll go. I think that she can

help us.'

Sapt did not want me to go. But after some time he said, 'You can go. But I will come with you to the garden.'

At half-past eleven that night we rode to the place. It was a very dark night. I carried a light. I also had a gun and a **sword**.

We came to the house. A wall went round the garden. We found the door. I got off my horse.

'I'll wait here,' said Sapt. 'Good luck!'

### **They're coming.**

I opened the door and walked across the garden to the summer house. I pushed the door open. A woman stood before me.

'Shut the door,' she said.

I shut the door and looked at the woman. She was beautiful. Her clothes were beautiful, too.

'Don't talk,' she said. 'I know you, Mr Rassendyll. Michael wrote that letter. In twenty minutes three men will be here. They'll kill you.'

'Three - the three?'

'Yes. They'll kill you and leave you in the Old Town. Somebody will find you. Michael will then send a message to Zenda. The other three will kill the King. Michael will then become King and marry the Princess.'

'It's a clever plan. But why are you telling it to me?'

'I don't want Michael to marry the princess. Now go! And be careful!'

I took her hand and kissed it. 'You are helping the King tonight,' I said. 'Where is he in the Castle?'

'Across the drawbridge you come to a heavy door. Behind the door ... Listen! What's

that?’

From outside came the sound of foot-steps.

‘They’re coming. They’re too soon!’ Her face went white.

I went to the door.

‘Mr Rassendyll, we want to talk to you,’ said the English man, Detchard. ‘Can we come in? We can help you. We will give you fifty thousand pounds. We will help you leave Ruritania.’

‘They’ll kill you,’ said Antoinette in my ear.

I understood their plan. ‘Give me a minute,’ I said.

I turned to Antoinette. ‘Stand close to the wall,’ I said.

In the summer house there was a small tea-table. I took it in my hands.

I called out. ‘I will take your money. Open the door.’

The door opened. I saw the three men with their guns ready. I ran at them, with the table in my hands. They shot at me. I hit them with the table. We all fell down.

I stood up and laughed. Detchard was under the table. He shot at me again. I shot back. Then I climbed over the garden wall.

‘They want the King to marry Princess Flavia quickly’

### **You must talk to her.**

The next day Fritz and Sapt came to see me. ‘Black Michael left Strelsau this morning,’ he told me. ‘De Gautet, Bersonin and Detchard went with him. They went on the road to Zenda.’

I laughed. ‘How is my friend Detchard?’

Fritz smiled. ‘He cannot move his arm,’ he said.

‘Good. Did Antoinette de Mauban go with them?’

‘No,’ said Sapt. ‘She left by train at twelve o’clock. She bought a ticket to Dresden. But the train stops at Zenda.’

‘We are doing well!’

‘No!’ said Sapt. ‘The people here in the city are angry. They want the King to marry Princess Flavia quickly. And the Princess is angry with the King.’

‘What can I do?’

‘There is a dance tonight in the city. You must talk to her.’

‘She loves you,’ said Fritz. ‘And she is very sad. She wants you to show her love.’

That night I danced many times with Princess Flavia. -We were happy together. Everybody looked at us.

**They’ll  
kill you!**

### **Angry**

Later we drank coffee in a small room. I looked at in her eyes. She was very beautiful!

What could I do? I forgot the King in Zenda. I forgot everything. I kissed her hand.

Suddenly she pushed me away. ‘Is it true? Do you love me? Or do you only love your country?’

‘It is true!’ I answered. ‘I love you more than anything in the world!’

‘I did not love you before the coronation. But now I do!’

I was very happy. Who won her love? It was not the King. Rudolf Rassendyll won her love.

I took her in my arms. ‘I want to tell you something,’ I said. ‘To you I am the King -’

‘I love you, Rudolf,’ said the Princess. ‘I don’t love ‘the King’.’

‘Flavia,’ I said. ‘I am not -’

Suddenly a man came into the room. It was Sapt. He looked angry.

'I am sorry,' he said. 'Everybody is waiting for the King.'

We went back. The dance ended. The Princess looked very happy. But I was very, very sad.

The next day I went to see Flavia. 'I am leaving Strelsau for a short time,' I told her. 'I'm going hunting.'

'Is it not interesting here? I am sorry!'

She was angry with me. She did not speak again for a few minutes. Then she began to cry.

'What is it?' I asked.

'You were not like this before the coronation. I gave my love to a different King!'

I took her in my arms.

'My love, this hunt is not .... I am going after Michael.'

Her face became white. She was very afraid.

'Please, don't go into danger, Rudolf!

When will you be back?'

'I don't know, my love.'

'Come soon, Rudolf! Please come soon!'

'I will. I will see you once more!'

Fritz found a house for us. It was in a forest about five miles from Zenda. We told everyone, 'We are here to hunt.'

Ten men came with us. They all loved the King. Sapt spoke to them about the prisoner at Zenda. 'This prisoner,' he said, 'is a friend of the King. Michael is holding him at the Castle.'

'What can we do?' said Fritz to Sapt and me. 'We can't fight at the Castle - Michael will kill the King. He knows we're here. He's waiting for us.'

'Michael thinks that I want to be King,' I said. 'He won't kill the King now. He'll kill me first!

Then he'll kill the King.'

## Rupert visits

Michael sent Rupert Hentzau to see us. He was twenty-two or twenty-three.

He had a message for us. 'Michael's ill,' said Rupert. 'And he cannot see anyone. He is very sorry about that.'

'I am sorry,' I said. 'How is my friend Detchard? Is he ill, too?'

Rupert smiled. 'He will soon feel better.'

I laughed. I liked Rupert because he was clever and brave.

They left soon after. Later that night Fritz and I went to the village of Zenda. I covered my face with my coat.

We took a room for the night. The old woman did not know me. Later her daughter brought dinner to our room.

'Are you ill?' she asked.

I moved the coat from my face. The girl called out in surprise.

'It was the King, then! We saw your picture. Oh, I am sorry!'

'You did nothing wrong. But you must say nothing about the King to anybody. Is Johann here?'

'No, he is at the Castle. They say there is a woman there now.'

'Send Johann a message. He must meet you tomorrow night at ten o'clock on the road to Zenda. You will walk home with him.'

She was a little afraid. I gave her some money. We finished dinner. I covered my face and we went out again.

## 'Michael will give you gold'

The next morning Rupert Hentzau came back to the house. 'I have a message from Michael,' he



said.

I sent the others away. He sat down next to me.

'Rassendyll,' he began. 'I want to help you. I like you.'

'What's the message?'

'Michael will give you gold. But you must leave Ruritania.'

I laughed.

'Is the answer "no"?' Rupert smiled happily. 'Then we'll kill you!'

Again I laughed. 'You'll be dead first. How is your prisoner?'

'He's not dead. And how is your pretty Princess? I know you like her very much. But it's no good. Black Michael will marry her, and -'

I got up. 'Go, or I'll kill you,' I said.

Rupert turned to his horse. Then he turned to me. I watched his right hand. His left hand was in his coat.

Suddenly I saw the sword in his left hand. But it was too late. The sword cut my arm. I called out and fell back. My friends shot at him. But it was no good. Rupert jumped on his horse and rode away. He was afraid of nothing.

### **Johann returns**

Sept and Fritz carried me to bed. I slept for some time. Then I heard noise. I opened my eyes.

Fritz was there. 'We cleaned the cut,' he said. 'It'll soon be better. And we've got Johann here.'

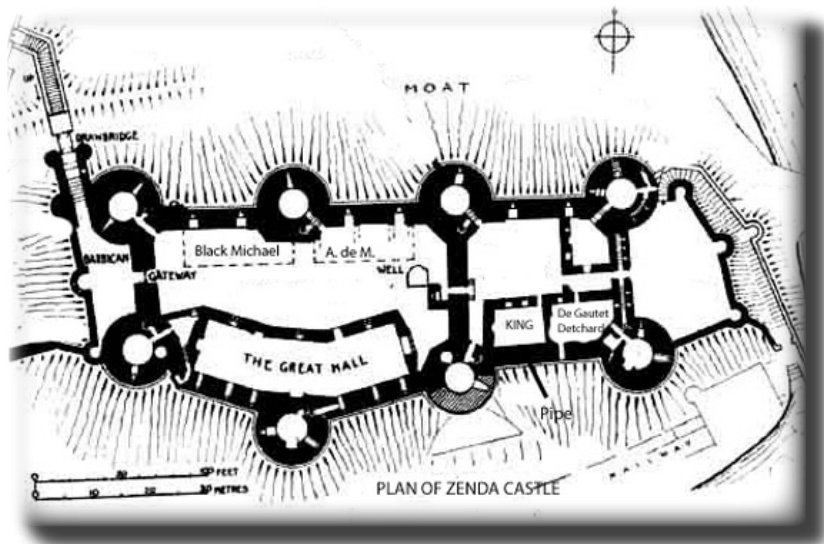
'Bring him in,' I said.

Johann came into the room. Sapt walked behind him and pushed a gun in his back. Johann was very afraid. But he wanted to help us.

'Michael,' he said, 'will kill me. I know too much.'

'We won't kill you,' I told him.

Johann told us about two rooms below the Castle. Only one room had a small window. This looked out onto the **moat**.



'There are always three of Black Michael's men in the outside room. The King is in the inner room. They can kill him at any time.'

And there is a **pipe** going from the inner room down into the moat. They will drop the dead King down the pipe into the water. They can also leave the Castle through the pipe! 'Will they kill the King?'

'Yes. But they must kill you first,' said Johann.

I looked at Sapt and Fritz. We were all afraid.

'Does the King know about this plan.'

'Yes,' Johann answered. 'I put the pipe there. Rupert Hentzau watched.'

The King asked about the pipe. Rupert laughed. "Its to take you from this world to the next world!" he said."

'How is the King?'

'Very bad. He's very ill.'

Sapt looked at me. 'We must do something soon,' he said.

## It was too dangerous

The next night we went out. It was dark and wet. I carried my sword. Sapt and Fritz brought horses and men. We did not go through the town of Zenda. We climbed up to the castle.

We stopped near the castle. Three of the men hid. Fritz, Sapt and I went on. We met nobody. We came to the moat.

I climbed down into the moat. It was not cold. I swam round the walls. I could not see much. There were lights in the new building.

I found the pipe. It was very big. I swam closer and looked inside. I could see the light from the King's room.

Then I heard the King speak, 'I want my brother to kill me. Anything is better than this!'

A second person spoke. It was Detchard. 'Michael doesn't want you dead - not now! You must wait! Sleep well!'

The light went. The door closed. The King began to cry.

I did not call to him. It was too dangerous! I could do no more that night!

The next morning I rode out to the forest. After an hour I saw Rupert Hentzau in front of me. I rode after him. He turned quickly.

'I don't want to fight,' I said. 'I want to talk.'

He slowed his horse

'You can help the King,' I said. 'Bring him to me.'

Rupert smiled. 'No,' he said. 'You listen to me.'

## Rupert's plan

He spoke more quietly. 'Come with your men to the castle tomorrow. There'll be a fight. And when Sapt, Fritz and Michael are all dead -'

'What!'

'We'll drop the dead prisoner down the pipe into the moat. Then there'll be only two men: Rupert Hentzau and the King of Ruritania.'

Suddenly Rupert was very happy. 'You'll be King,' he said. 'You'll get your princess. And for me - a little money, perhaps.'

'You're the worst man in the world!' I said.

'Remember this. The Princess is a beautiful girl. I like beautiful girls.'

I wanted to kill him. But I started to laugh. 'You are one of the Michael's men. Are you now against him?'

'I almost put a sword in him last night.' Now I was not angry. I wanted to learn something about Michael and Rupert.

'Was it about a woman?' I asked.

'Yes, a beautiful one. You know her.'

'Did we meet round the tea table? With your friends?'

'You were lucky! I wasn't there.'

'And does Michael want your girl?'

'No. That's not it. She likes him better. But perhaps I can change that!'

## Angry

I rode back to the house. There was a letter there for me. I opened it.

*Johann will bring this to you. I helped you once. Now please help me!*

- A. de M.

How could I help Antoinette? Everyone at the castle was ready to fight us. And there was very little time left.

The people in Strelsau were angry. They wanted the King back in his palace. They wanted him to marry Princess Flavia.

**"You must wait!"**

I sent a message to the newspaper in Strelsau. The next day it was on the front page:

*The Ruritania Times*

**KING TO MARRY FLAVIA IN FOURTEEN DAYS**

of the newspaper.

Johann brought us news from the castle. 'I was with Black Michael, Rupert and Antoinette de Mauban when the newspaper arrived.' he told us.

'What happened?'

'Rupert laughed at Michael. He said, "Rassendyll is a better King than you. And the Princess is lucky. She will marry the best man in the country.'

'And how is the King?'

'Very bad. He's too ill to move easily. Antoinette de Mauban sees him every day. He's in great danger.'

We asked Johann many more questions. Then I gave him a message for Antoinette de Mauban. 'You must give this to her. Then at two o'clock tomorrow morning go to the front door of the new building. Open the door and then run.'

Johann was very afraid. But he went back to the Castle. I called Sapt and Fritz. I told them my plan.

'Sapt, you will take some men to the front door. Johann will open the door for you. At the same time Antoinette de Mauban will call out: 'Help! Michael, help!' Then she will call out the name of Rupert Hentzau.

'Michael will be very angry with Rupert. He will run out - and Sapt's men will get him.

'Rupert will be in the other building. He'll hear his name and come out. My men will lower the drawbridge. I'll swim to the drawbridge

where I'll fight Rupert. I'm hoping the other men will leave the King and come out to help him.'

**Prisoner**

At one o'clock the next night I swam to the pipe. The drawbridge was above me to the right. I looked at the new house.

Near the drawbridge on the right there was a window. This was Michael's room. The window for Antoinette's room was to the left of the drawbridge.

Suddenly there was a light in Michael's room. Someone opened the window and looked out. I saw Antoinette's pretty head.

Then a man came out. He put his arm around her. She moved away. He laughed. It was Rupert.

It was too early!

Then he said something I could not hear, and she replied: 'I will jump into the moat!'

He looked out of the window. 'Why do you love Black Michael? He already has the Princess.'

'I'll tell him -'

Rupert laughed. Then he kissed her quickly. 'Tell him that!'

Suddenly a door opened. A man said, 'What are you doing here?'

'I was helping this young woman,' said Rupert with a laugh. 'She was sad because you were not there.'

Now I saw the other man. It was Black Michael. He was very angry.

'You can leave us,' said Michael. 'The drawbridge will go up in ten minutes. And you don't want to swim to your bed.'

Rupert walked back across the drawbridge. Some men pulled it up behind him.

Ten minutes later I heard a sound. I looked up and saw a man climb the wall to my

right. It was Rupert again. He had his sword.

Rupert swam under the water. I wanted to swim out to him. I wanted to fight. But the King was more important. I watched. I waited.

He climbed up steps in the wall to the gate. Then he took out a key. I heard the sound of a key in the door.

I swam to the drawbridge. Then I climbed up the wall. I waited near the gate and listened.

There was no light in Michael's room. But there was light from one of the other windows.

I was not the only man with a plan that night.

### **Help!**

The moat was now between Rupert and the King. De Gautet was in bed. Only Detchard and Bersonin were with the King. I waited for my friends to arrive with the keys.

There was light in Antoinette de Mauban's room. Michael's room was dark. Then there was the sound of a key turning in a door. I knew it was Rupert.

Just before two o'clock there was a sudden noise. The light in the window went out.

Suddenly there was a cry from Antoinette's room: 'Help! Michael, help!'

Then a man called out, 'Open the door!' It was Black Michael.

The answer came from the words in my letter: 'Help, Michael - Hentzau!'

Suddenly everything was happening too quickly. Doors opened all round the castle. There was noise everywhere. Antoinette's window opened. Rupert stood there with his sword. He turned and jumped back into the room.

'Johann, this is for you! And now for

Michael!' Johann was with Michael. How could he open the door for me? Perhaps he was dead.

Michael called out, 'Help!' Then there was a noise from near the King's room above me.

But nobody came.

I watched Rupert over the moat. He was fighting five or six men, but was too good for them.

Suddenly Rupert jumped up to the window. He laughed at all the men round him. Then he jumped into the moat.

I did not see him after that. De Gautet suddenly came through the door. I killed him with my sword.

I took the keys from him. There were only three. I took the biggest. It opened the door near me. I closed the door and went through. There were some steps down to a door. There were people behind the door.

'What is happening?' someone said.

### **'Do we kill him now?'**

And another answered: 'Do we kill him now?'

Then I heard Detchard. 'Wait. We must not kill him too soon.'

A key turned in the door. It was time. I ran down the steps. I pushed through the door. Bersonin stood there with his sword in his hand. Detchard was in the corner.

I fought Bersonin and killed him. Then I turned - Detchard was not there. There was a second door. The King's room! Detchard was in the King's room!

I ran through the door. The King was in the corner of the room. The doctor was in front of him.



Detchard tried to get to the King. The doctor tried to stop him. Detchard pushed his sword into the doctor and turned to me. 'Now you I am going to kill you!' he said.

Detchard fought very well. He drove me against the window and the pipe. He cut my arm.

I was afraid for the King until he jumped up and cried, 'It's my brother, Rudolf! I'll help you, brother!' He took up a chair. He could only move it a little.

'Come on!' I called. 'Hit his legs!'

The King laughed and pushed the chair in front of him.

With a quick jump Detchard, turned to the King. He hit him hard. The King fell down. Detchard turned to me. But he moved too quickly. He fell over the dead doctor. I pushed my sword into him.

Was the King dead? He did not move. I was very afraid.

### **'Michael, come and fight for her!'**

Suddenly I heard a loud noise from outside. There were men on the drawbridge. Perhaps they were Michael's men. I could not stay with the King.

I went to the outside room. I listened. I wanted to hear Sapt and my friends. I was very tired. I could not fight for much longer.

I went slowly up the stairs. Suddenly I heard a sound. It was the laugh of Rupert Hentzau. I did not understand. But I knew that my men were not there.

I sat down against the door. Then I heard Rupert again. 'Come over the bridge,' he called. 'Whereas Black Michael? Michael, come and

fight for her!'

I opened the door and looked out. The bridge was down. Michael's men were there next to it. Some carried lights. Other men had swords. They were all afraid.

Rupert was at the centre of the bridge. Michael's men watched him. I saw Johann with them. He had a cut on his face.

'Michael, you dog!' Rupert called. 'Are you afraid? Come and fight me!'

Suddenly a woman called out. 'He's dead! He's dead!'

'Dead!' said Rupert. He laughed. 'I won! Put those swords down. You are my servants now!'

Michael's men were very afraid. But suddenly there was noise from a different part of the castle. It was my men. They were late, but I was very happy!

Suddenly a woman came on to the drawbridge. It was Antoinette de Mauban. Her face was white and she looked very angry. Then I saw that she had a gun.

### **I ran after him**

Antoinette shot at Rupert. It hit the door above my head. Rupert looked at her and said 'I can't kill a girl I've kissed,'

Antoinette lifted her gun again. Rupert laughed and jumped into the moat. I jumped into the water after him. My sword was in my hand.

He swam quickly. I was tired. I called to him. He swam on. Then he climbed out of the water. He saw me.

'Hello! Who's here?' he called. 'Oh, it's you! What are you doing here?'



He smiled down at me and ran off into the forest. I climbed out of the water and ran after him. But he ran faster.

I could not go on. I stopped and looked back. I saw a man on a horse. It was my friend Fritz. He had a gun in his hand.

Rupert looked back and laughed at me. 'Well meet again, Rupert Rassendyll,' he said.

Fritz shot at Rupert. Rupert rode away fast.

I was very angry. I wanted to go after Rupert. But Fritz got off his horse. He came and put his arm round me.

'Give me the horse,' I cried. I pushed Fritz away and tried to get up. But I could not move.'

'Fritz!' I said. 'Will the King -'  
'Yes,' said Fritz. 'The King will live. And it's because of you!'

I closed my eyes. I was very tired and very cold. Soon I went to sleep.

### **The Future?**

I went to see Princess Flavia for the last time. She was in a small beautiful room. There was very little light. The Princess stood by the window.

I walked up to her. Then I kissed her hand. She did not move.

'Flavia! Do you know -'

She took my arm. 'I know everything. Sit down - here!'

She put her hand on my head. 'How hot your head is!' she said.

I knew that she was afraid. 'I love you,' I said. 'I loved you the first time I saw you. You are the only woman in the world for me.'

'Oh, Rudolf! It was you I loved - not the King. But what can we do now?'

'I must go away tonight. People must not see

me.'

'I want to come with you,' she said.

'No,' I said quickly. 'Don't talk about that!'

'Why not? I love you. But is love more important than my country?'

I did not answer. I did not help her. She came near and put her hand on my arm.

For some minutes she did not speak. Then she said, 'I cannot leave, Rudolf. I must stay here for Ruritania. Why did we meet? I don't know. But I must stay.'

I said nothing. After a time she said, 'Your love will always be with me. But you must go. And I must stay.'

'My beautiful Princess!' I said.

'My love! Perhaps we will never meet again. Kiss me! And go!'

I kissed her. She held me. She said my name again and again.

Then I left her.

### **Rudolf - Flavia – always**

Now I live a very quietly in England. Every year I go for a week to Dresden. I meet my friend Fritz. He tells me all the news from Strelsau. In the evenings we walk around the city.

We talk about Sapt and about the King. We often talk about young Rupert. And late at night we talk about Flavia.

Every year Fritz carries with him to Dresden a little box. In it there is a flower and a message. The message is always the same. 'Rudolf - Flavia - always.'

Will I see her again? Will I see her face and her beautiful hair? I do not know. But everything I do is for her.

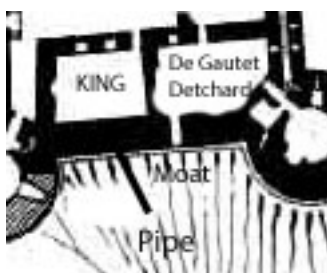
**The End**



### Glossary

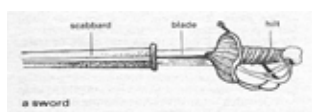
**moat** - water around a castle-

**drawbridge** - bridge over moat. You raise this to keep attackers out.



**pipe** - to carry water from one place to another-

**sword** - long steel blade used for fighting.



1. Choose a word from the list below to complete each of these sentences:

- Water is connected to the house by a .....
- You can ... on a horse.
- Somebody becomes a King at a ...
- When you go hunting you can sometimes stay at a hunting .....
- The water round a castle is called a ....
- The room under the house is called the .....
- A ----- is someone who looks exactly like another person.

**lodge, coronation, cellar, double, moat, ride, pipe**

### Answers

1. a) pipe b) ride c) coronation d) lodge e) moat f) cellar g) double

### About: The Prisoner of Zenda

Anthony Hope wrote several adventures stories about an imaginary central European country called Ruritania.

*The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) and a sequel *Rupert of Hentzau* (1898) were the most popular. 'The Prisoner of Zenda' was adapted for the stage in 1895 and there have been several films.

### Try the original story?

In the original story is much longer, with more characters and a more complex story.

The language, grammar and syntax are difficult but confident readers can try the original novel, complete with audio recording from the excellent LibriVox project [here](#):