

# Prisoner of Zenda essay sample

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Black Michael was the half brother of the king. He was favourite of his father who had made him the Duke of Strelsau. As his mother was a woman of humble birth, therefore he was not entitled to the crown. He did not inherit the red hair. His hair was black, therefore he was called Black Michael. He wanted to become the king and tried his best to defeat his brother.

Michael is the villain of the novel who creates the whole problems for Ressendyll. He makes various schemes and plays an evil role in the novel. He keeps himself in the background and uses his six string men. He exploits the weakness of his half brother and makes him senseless by sending him a bottle of drugged wine. He invites Ressendull to the Summer House because he wants to kill him. He is very cruel and treats the king in a cruel manner when he is in his hands.

Michael was a wicked schemer. When his first plan failed, he tried to invent another. He kidnapped the king from the shooting lodge and imprisoned him in the castle of Zenda. Michael had no principles. He was deceitful and untrustworthy. He was a coward and could not face Ressendyll bravely. He always used his six men. Michael's cruel and wicked nature caused his ruin. He intended to marry Princess Flavia after getting the throne. He was deceitful and selfish even in love. In the beginning he loved Lady Mauban, and promised to marry her, but later on he diverted his attention to Princess Flavia, realizing that Lady Mauban was an ordinary woman, while Flavia was a Princess. Because of his selfishness, Lady

Mauban turned against him and took active part in the schemes of Ressendyll made for the release of the king. LADY MAUBAN. Lady Mauban is

a rich and attractive widow. She was come to Ruritania to marry Michael. Rupert also falls in love with her, but she is very careful and does not give lift to anybody else. She loves Michael. She does not like Princess Flavia because Michael wants to marry her. She knows that if Michael succeeds in getting the throne of Ruritania, she will lose him. As she wants to win the Duke therefore she helps Rassendyll. She does not want that Michael should become the king and marry Princess Flavia. Therefore she informs Ressendyll about the prison of Zenda and also about Michael's company. In her letter to Ressendyll, she clearly admits that it is only out of her jealousy that she wants to tell him about some secrets of the Summer House. She also writes letters to Princess Flavia because she does not like Duke's attachment to her.

She wants to marry a person of no less importance than Duke and ready to do anything to win him. She follows him to Ruritania and stays with him after the imprisonment of the real king only to watch Michael's activities. When she comes to know that she can not get marry with Michael, therefore she joins hands with Ressendyll. It is through her co-operation that a successful attack is made on Zenda and the king is released.

Madam De Mauban loves Michael from the depth of her heart. When she finds that he is unfaithful and wants to marry Princess Flavia, she becomes sad. Meanwhile Rupert tries to make love to her but she remains loyal to the Duke. She even tries to kill Rupert with a pistol after he murdered her lover. It shows that she does not have revengeful feeling for Michael, although he proves faithless to her.

Lady Mauban is a kind hearted and sympathetic woman. In the last scene of the novel, when the wounded king is brought to Michael's room, she washes his wounds. COLONEL SAPT. Colonel Sapt is a middle-aged man. He is strong. He is an experienced soldier and is a loyal servant of the king. He is very wise and intelligent. He is very cautious about everything. He loves the king inspite of all his weaknesses. He has a natural hatred for Michael and can not compromise with the idea of his becoming the king of Ruritania. He keeps close watch over Rassendyll and does not allow him to reveal his identity when is alone with Princess Flavia. He is very wise remains hopeful even in the most difficult situations. He remains calm and cool when he faces some trouble. He knows how to handle a problem and quickly thinks a solution for it. He always gives proper advises to Rassendyll. He instructs Rassendyll most minutely about the past life of the king, his weaknesses and also about his friends. He always "remains near him all the time. It is through his efforts that Michael fails to get the crown and the throne is finally restored to the king.

Sapt is an experienced administrator. He knows about human nature very well. He keeps a close watch over the activities of Michael. His advises are always fruitful. He uses Rassendyll and Princess Flavia as pawns and finally succeeds in his aim of restoring the throne to the king. Sapt is a jolly person. Even in dangerous situations, he laughs and cuts jokes with his companions.

Sapt possesses a great political insight. He knows about the political development of his country. He understands the wishes of the people. On the whole, Colonel Sapt plays an important role in the novel. He performs his

duties excellently. He blocks the way of Michael. It is due to his selfless efforts that the king is released and the throne is finally restored to him.

#### CAPTAIN FRITZ.

Captain Fritz is a loyal servant of the king. He is a close associate of Col. Sapt and accompanies him every where. He plays middle height. He belongs to a very noble family. Countess Helga, the lady-in-waiting room to the Princess is in love with him.

Cap. Fritz is a courageous soldier. He is as very anxious to get the king released as Sapt and Rassendyll and is ready to take any risk. He arranges for the stay for rassendyll near the castle of Zinda when he goes there for hunting, which is in fact an attempt to defeat Black Michael. He is a good fighter but he knows when to avoid risks. When Rassendyll wants to follow Rupert in the jungle in Zinda, he stops him from taking that unwise step. He does not take part in actual fighting with Black Michael, but he is fully associated with all the activities of his friends.

Fritz loves the king and is ready to do anything to help the king. He is very anxious about the safety of the king when he is lying unconscious in the wine cellar. He is very obedient and carries out the orders of Col. Sapt. He does not like Michael and can not compromise on the idea of his becoming the king.

Captain Fritz is more polite and kind hearted than Sapt. During the three months stay of Rassendyll in Ruritania he becomes more attached to him than Col. Sapt. At the time of the departure of Rassendyll from Ruritania, he

takes him to the room of Princess Flavia and then accompanies him to the railway station. He does not forget Rassendyll after his departure, but comes to meet him at Dresden every year. He also brings gifts from Princess Flavia. He is the only person with whom Rassendyll continues his friendship afterward.

He thus a simple and sincere person. He is very tenderhearted and polished in his behaviour. He is loyal to the king.

#### RUDOLF ELPHERG.

Rudolf Elpherg is the crown prince of Ruritania. In physical appearance, he has a striking resemblance with Rassendyll, but mentally he is quite different from him. He does not have the qualities, which Rassendyll have. The king does not have the courage, self-confidence and the sense of responsibility. The king is pleasure loving and a carefree type of a young man. As soon as he has seen Rassendyll and known the reason for his resemblance, he invites him to dinner and becomes frank with him.

Rudolf Elpherg loves wine. During his stay at Zenda, he drinks so much that he forgets his coronation and falls in to the trap laid by his half brother Black Michael, who sent drugged wine to make him senseless. This shows that king has no sense of responsibility. Because of his care free habits, a large number of people are against him, and they want Black Michael to be their king. The landlady of the inn at Zenda is also of the opinion that the Duke is a better candidate for the throne. It is because of his bad habits that the

throne is almost lost to him. If Rassendyll did not help him, Michael would have ruled over Ruritania.

Rudolf Elpherg is a friend. He is a pleasant tempered man and is a sincere lover. All his friends remain loyal to him till last. Sapt and Fritz are devoted to him. They manage to restore the throne to him with the help of Rassendyll. During the last attack on the prison of Zenda, when the life of Raddendyll is in danger, he throws a chair at him and saves the life of Rassendyll. The king was not an ungrateful person. He was thankful to his friends, particularly he thanks to Rassendyll for his selfless services. His love for Princess Flavia is pure, and unselfish. It was because of his some good qualities and sincere efforts that the throne was finally restored to him.

RUPERT.

Rupert is one of the six rogues of Black Michael. He is a hired soldier. Who works for Duke Michael. He is a handsome young man and plays a very important role in the novel. He is the chief of Michael's strong men. Michael always depends upon him in the fulfilment of his mission.

Rupert is greedy and immoral. He has no principles. He is a good rider and can throw a dagger very skilfully. He is afraid of nothing on earth. He jumps into the dangers and feels delighted. He makes a daring attack on Rassendyll in daylight and escapes unhurt. He is a very good swordsman and no one can beat him in fighting. On one occasion, dozen men attack on him, his two partners are killed in the fight, but he manages to escape unhurt after killing his opponents. In the last scene he manages to run away before

the arrival of the soldier. He jumps in to the moat with blood stained clothes. He passes satirical remarks on everyone. His tongue is as sharp as his sword. When Duke asks him why he had come to Mauban's room, he replies that he came to apologize to the lady for his long absence.

Rupert worships beauty. His loose character makes him an unlikable character in the novel. He cannot deceive anyone for his benefits. He is not even loyal to his master and tries to seduce his beloved. He is a traitor and is ready to give the crown and Princess Flavia to Rassendyll if he allows him to marry lady Mauban, and grant him a pardon for the rest of his life. He abuses his master on his face and fights with him many times.

In short Rupert is the dislikable character and plays the role of a villain in the novel.

#### RUDOLF RASSENDYLL.

Rudolf Rassendyll is the hero of the novel. He is a young man of 29 years of age. He is a tall, impressive and handsome youngman. He is educated and is very intelligent. Rassendyll is a born soldier. He is a "skillful swordsman, a very good shooter and an expert rider. He fights bravely against the six hirelings of the Black Michael. He goes to Zenda alone to get information and spends the night in the moat. All these qualities make him the most dominant character of the novel.

He loves to play with dangers. So he went to Ruritania. Because of his physical resemblance with the king, Sapt and Fritz request him to play the role of the king. He is well aware of the risk, but he accepts the challenge



and plays his role in order to save the king. His love for adventure takes him to the Summer House where he successfully fights with the three men of Michael who had come to kill him. He saves himself with the help of tea table and escapes unhurt.

He plays a leading role in the complicated drama and defeats Michael. He has to play the part of the king and has also to fight against Black Michael but he always comes out successful because of his qualities. His behaviour is praise worthy as a king. Everyone admits that after the coronation the king has become more clever. Princess Flavia says that she started love with the king after the coronation.

He is a brave and fearless man. His fight with the men of Michael in the last scene is praiseworthy. He is a good schemer. His plans are well prepared. The plan that he makes for release of the king proves that he is an intelligent man. Ressendyll has a strong sense of duty. He never forgets for a moment that he is to restore the throne to its rightful owner, Rudolf Elpherg. He is a man of honour and continues his efforts for the release of the king. He does not reveal his identity to Princess Flavia although he sincerely falls in love with her. He sacrifices his love for the sake of duty. Princess Flavia loves him and is ready to go with him but he makes no attempt to get her. He knows that like the crown of Ruritania, she is also the trust of the king.

He is a kind hearted and helpful man and helps Lady Mauban when she wants to be rescued from Michael and his men. Due to these extraordinary qualities, he impresses Sapt, Fritz and Flavia. They all love him because he is sincere.

## PRINCESS FLAVIA.

Princess Flavia is the heroin of the novel. She is a very important female character. She is a loving heart. She behaved kindly to other whole attending royal function. Therefore she was very popular in Ruritania. When the engagement is announced officially, the people of Ruritania became very happy. Princess Flavia is the cousin of Rudolf Elpherg and is the next heiress to the throne. The major characters of the novel love her. Rudolf Elpherg is to marry her as a royal cousin and Black Michael wants to marry her to become the king of Ruritania. Ressendyll falls in love with her when he meets her in the guise of the king. She however loves Rudolf Ressendyll.

Princess Flavia is a very intelligent woman and has unusual common sense. She knows that Michael is a dangerous person, so she advises Ressendyll to be careful about him. Although she is not directly involved in politics. She knows what is happening in the country. She is very courageous and moves about from one place to another actively. She visits Zenda when she comes to know that the king is lying wounded. She immediately goes there in spite of dangers.

Although she falls in love with Ressendyll, yet she is not a slave of her passions. She sacrifices her love for the sake of duty. She knows that her marriage with Ressendyll will destroy the peace of the country, therefore she decided to marry king Elpherg to bring peace and joy to her country.