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The Man From Home

A Novelization of the Play of the Same Name
By **BOOTH TARKINGTON** and **HARRY LEON WILSON**
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CHAPTER XIV. BLACKMAIL.

PIKE was still standing with the letter in his hand, looking after Ethel, when he awoke to the realization of what her words meant to him. She had given her promise, and she did not mean that anything in the world should make her revoke it. That promise was sacred to her, just as if it had been spoken before a clergyman.

In his heart Pike knew he would have to give in if he was to make her happy, and yet he knew that in making her temporarily happy he would be making her eternally miserable. If he could have the strength to hold out against her and refuse to sanction the marriage he knew the crew of aristocrats would never accept her without the cash, and that by the terms of John Simpson's will could never be theirs without his consent.

Of his own hopes he could see but the faintest glimmering. He had irrevocably offended the girl, and she would hate him all her life for it, he feared. His entrance into her new phase of life had been unfortunate. His continuance in it was little else than an insult, according to her way of thinking. And Jim Cooley, whom he had trusted to find the flaw in the Hawcastle escutcheon that he knew had existed, had failed him miserably.

The lawyer felt that he was a long way from home. He sighed and turned to where the sun was sinking in a haze of red across the bay. Then he heard the voice of Horace and chiming with it the cultured accents of Lord Hawcastle. Apparently they were coming to seek him. She had reiterated his refusal.

Wearily he turned again to the automobile and leaned against it. As he did so he heard Horace say: "But Ethel says Mr. Pike positively refuses."

In return he heard Hawcastle reply: "Leave him to me. In ten minutes he will be as meek as a lamb."

Dumbly Pike wondered what fresh argument the earl had to offer and mentally steeled himself against it. As he looked up he encountered the steady glare of the earl.

"My dear Pike," began the latter, "there is a certain question—"

"I said I would not discuss that with you. I meant what I said," observed Daniel quietly.

"This is another question," went on the other, heedless of the warning or at least unaffected by it.

"Late this afternoon I developed a great anxiety concerning the penalty prescribed by Italian law for those fortunate and impulsive individuals who connive at the escape or concealment of certain unfortunates who are wanted by the police."

Daniel looked at him, with a smile.

"So you're all worked up about that, are you?" Hawcastle glared at him, but went on.

"So deeply that I ascertained the penalty for it. For the person whose kind heart has so betrayed him the penalty is two years in prison, and Italian prisons, I am credibly informed, are—unpleasant."

Pike ruminated and folded his letter. "Being in jail ain't much like an Elks' carnival," he observed.

"Even a citizen of your admirable country could not escape if his complicity were proved—if he were caught in the act. I will be plain with you."

These last words had an ominous note. "Let us imagine that a badly wanted man appeared upon the pergola here and made an appeal to one of your countrymen who, for the purposes of argument, is at work upon

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this car. Say that the too amiable American conceals the fugitive under the automobile and afterward, with the connivance of a friend, deceives the officers of the law and shelters the criminal, say, in a room of that lower suit there."

He looked about in the growing twilight and pointed dramatically to the window. Pike, now thoroughly interested and with his pulse beating a rapid tattoo, followed his finger. The earl went on:

"Imagine, for instance, that the shadow which appears upon that curtain were that of the wanted man. Would you not agree then to a reasonable request?"

Daniel swallowed painfully, for he saw in some manner that that swaying window curtain which had caught his eye an hour ago had held a distinct menace. It seemed too bad that this should be the end of it all—all the defenses he had raised for the girl of his dead friend should be swept away in an instant by a bit of folly.

"What would be the nature of that request?" he asked.

"It would concern a certain alliance—might concern a certain settlement," the earl replied softly.

"If the request were refused, what would the consequences be?" Pike went on, with lowered eyes, for he would not trust himself to meet those of the nobleman.

"Two years at least in prison for the American."

"Looks bad for—that American, eh?" Pike inquired whimsically.

Lord Hawcastle stepped close to him.

(To be continued.)

GOLD HILL ITEMS.

(The News.)

Basil Kellogg of Grants Pass was in Gold Hill Tuesday.

A. N. Hulbert visited Grants Pass the fore part of this week.

Miss Martina Thiele is visiting friends living in Ashland this week.

Mrs. Bertha Dixon (nee Nichols) of Crook county is visiting relatives and friends in the valley.

S. C. McClendon and A. Jennings, with their families, returned Wednesday from a camping trip on Evans creek.

J. H. Beeman and family returned this week from a trip to the Lucky Bart mines, where Mr. Beeman is having done some development work.

Irvin Ray and John Ralls returned Tuesday from a hunting trip on the headwaters of Evans creek. They report game plentiful, but hard to get, owing to the dryness of the woods.

Marion Lance, J. G. Phlegar and M. S. Biden were in Gold Hill Thursday on their way home from a hunting trip in the Sardine creek section. They had the usual luck.

Ralph Darling, Sam Hodges, R. H. Moore and L. C. Applegate left on Thursday morning via auto for Crater Lake. They expect to make the round trip in three days and be back by Saturday morning at the latest.

The numerous brush fires have caused the atmosphere to be pretty considerable murky of late. The fires seem to be principally in the lower hills, the higher ranges being guarded very closely both by the government rangers and watchmen of private owners of timber lands.

Charles Gilchrist, a prominent banker and lumberman of Centralia, Wash., together with his wife and son, Harry and his wife, Ed Bowers and wife and son and Mr. Bowers' mother, formed an automobile party, which reached here Tuesday evening from Centralia on a pleasure trip of the coast. They are traveling in two machines and intend going by way of Crescent City through California as far south as Los Angeles. They are equipped with camping outfits and are taking their time along the road. The object of their stop here was to visit Thomas Gilchrist, the sage of Foote creek, whose occasional contributions to these columns have been much enjoyed by our readers.

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