



The Lure of the Mask

By HAROLD MAC GRATH

Copyright, 1908, by the Bobbs-Merrill Co.

(Continued.)
SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—Jack Hilliard, a wealthy New York clubman, hears a mysterious voice singing in the night under his window.

II—He inserts an advertisement in a personal column to find the singer. He receives a reply.

III, IV, V, and VI—He visits the mysterious singer, but she wears a mask. He falls desperately in love with her, but he has not seen her face. The unknown woman gives her name as Mme. Angot, which is assumed. They have dinner. She refuses to see him again.

VII—Hilliard and Dan Merryhew decide to go to Italy. Merryhew loves Kitty Killigrew, a comic opera singer, who has gone to Italy. Hilliard receives a black mask in an envelope.

How old he looked, poor devil! Hilliard had not taken particular notice of him during the past week's excursions. Giovanni had aged ten years since they landed.

"And was this cousin glad to see you? And is he to be trusted?"

"Both, signor. He had some news. She—the girl—is a dancer in a Paris cafe."

"Would you like me to give you the necessary money to go to Paris and bring her back to the Sabine hills?" Hilliard asked softly.

"I shall go to Paris, signor—after."

"What is his name?" Hilliard had never till this moment asked this question.

"I know it. That is sufficient. He is high, signor, very high, yet I shall reach him. If I told you his name"—

"There would be the possibility of my warning him."

"That is why I hesitate."

"You are a Catholic, Giovanni."

Giovanni signified that he was.

"Does not the God of all Catholics, of all Christians, in fact—does he not say that vengeance is his and that he will repay?"

"But there are so many of us, signor, so many of us small and of slight importance, that, likely enough, God, with all his larger cares, has not the time to remember us. What may happen to him in the hereafter does not concern me, for he will certainly be in the purgatory of the rich and I in the purgatory of the poor. It must be now, now!"

"Go your own way," said Hilliard, dismissing him. "I shall never urge you again."

Giovanni gone, Hilliard leaned against the casement. The sun was bright this morning, and the air was clear. He could see Naples distinctly. Below, the fishermen and their wives, their bare feet plowing in the wet sands, were drawing in the nets, swaying their bodies gracefully.

And then Merryhew burst in upon him wildly excited and flourished the hotel register.

"Look at this!" he cried breathlessly. He flung the book on the table and pointed with shaking finger.

Hilliard came forward, and this is what he saw:

Thomas O'Mally
James Smith
Arthur Worth
La Signorina Capricciola
Kitty Killigrew
Am. Comic Opera Co., N. Y.

"Kitty has been here!"

"Perfectly true. But I wonder"—

"Wonder about what?" asked Merryhew.

"Who La Signorina Capricciola is, whimsical, indeed. She must be the mysterious prima donna."

Hilliard studied the easy flowing hand and ran his fingers through his hair thoughtfully.

"What is it?" asked Merryhew curiously.

"I am wondering where I have seen that handwriting before."

Another fortnight found the pair back in Naples after spending a week on Capri. At the hotel they found a

batch of mail. There was a letter which held particular interest to Merryhew. It was from the consul at Rome, a reply to Hilliard's inquiries regarding the American Comic Opera company.

"We'll now find out where your charming Kitty is," Hilliard said, breaking the seal.

But they didn't. On the contrary, the writer hadn't the slightest idea where the play actors were or had gone. They had opened a two weeks' engagement at the Teatro Quirino. There had been a good house on the opening night. The remainder of the week did not show the sale of a hundred tickets. The American manager had shown neither foresight nor common sense, and his backer withdrew his support. The percentage demanded by the managers in Florence, Genoa, Milan and Venice was so exorbitant (although they had agreed to a moderate term in the beginning) that it would have been nothing short of foolhardiness to try to fill the bookings. The singing of the prima donna,

"How old he looked, poor devil! Hilliard had not taken particular notice of him during the past week's excursions. Giovanni had aged ten years since they landed."

"And was this cousin glad to see you? And is he to be trusted?"

"Both, signor. He had some news. She—the girl—is a dancer in a Paris cafe."

"Would you like me to give you the necessary money to go to Paris and bring her back to the Sabine hills?" Hilliard asked softly.

"I shall go to Paris, signor—after."

"What is his name?" Hilliard had never till this moment asked this question.

"I know it. That is sufficient. He is high, signor, very high, yet I shall reach him. If I told you his name"—

"There would be the possibility of my warning him."

"That is why I hesitate."

"You are a Catholic, Giovanni."

Giovanni signified that he was.

"Does not the God of all Catholics, of all Christians, in fact—does he not say that vengeance is his and that he will repay?"

"But there are so many of us, signor, so many of us small and of slight importance, that, likely enough, God, with all his larger cares, has not the time to remember us. What may happen to him in the hereafter does not concern me, for he will certainly be in the purgatory of the rich and I in the purgatory of the poor. It must be now, now!"

"Go your own way," said Hilliard, dismissing him. "I shall never urge you again."

Giovanni gone, Hilliard leaned against the casement. The sun was bright this morning, and the air was clear. He could see Naples distinctly. Below, the fishermen and their wives, their bare feet plowing in the wet sands, were drawing in the nets, swaying their bodies gracefully.

And then Merryhew burst in upon him wildly excited and flourished the hotel register.

"Look at this!" he cried breathlessly. He flung the book on the table and pointed with shaking finger.

Hilliard came forward, and this is what he saw:

Thomas O'Mally
James Smith
Arthur Worth
La Signorina Capricciola
Kitty Killigrew
Am. Comic Opera Co., N. Y.

"Kitty has been here!"

"Perfectly true. But I wonder"—

"Wonder about what?" asked Merryhew.

"Who La Signorina Capricciola is, whimsical, indeed. She must be the mysterious prima donna."

Hilliard studied the easy flowing hand and ran his fingers through his hair thoughtfully.

"What is it?" asked Merryhew curiously.

"I am wondering where I have seen that handwriting before."

Another fortnight found the pair back in Naples after spending a week on Capri. At the hotel they found a

batch of mail. There was a letter which held particular interest to Merryhew. It was from the consul at Rome, a reply to Hilliard's inquiries regarding the American Comic Opera company.

"We'll now find out where your charming Kitty is," Hilliard said, breaking the seal.

But they didn't. On the contrary, the writer hadn't the slightest idea where the play actors were or had gone. They had opened a two weeks' engagement at the Teatro Quirino. There had been a good house on the opening night. The remainder of the week did not show the sale of a hundred tickets. The American manager had shown neither foresight nor common sense, and his backer withdrew his support. The percentage demanded by the managers in Florence, Genoa, Milan and Venice was so exorbitant (although they had agreed to a moderate term in the beginning) that it would have been nothing short of foolhardiness to try to fill the bookings. The singing of the prima donna,

"How old he looked, poor devil! Hilliard had not taken particular notice of him during the past week's excursions. Giovanni had aged ten years since they landed."

"And was this cousin glad to see you? And is he to be trusted?"

"Both, signor. He had some news. She—the girl—is a dancer in a Paris cafe."

"Would you like me to give you the necessary money to go to Paris and bring her back to the Sabine hills?" Hilliard asked softly.

"I shall go to Paris, signor—after."

"What is his name?" Hilliard had never till this moment asked this question.

"I know it. That is sufficient. He is high, signor, very high, yet I shall reach him. If I told you his name"—

"There would be the possibility of my warning him."

"That is why I hesitate."

"You are a Catholic, Giovanni."

Giovanni signified that he was.

"Does not the God of all Catholics, of all Christians, in fact—does he not say that vengeance is his and that he will repay?"

"But there are so many of us, signor, so many of us small and of slight importance, that, likely enough, God, with all his larger cares, has not the time to remember us. What may happen to him in the hereafter does not concern me, for he will certainly be in the purgatory of the rich and I in the purgatory of the poor. It must be now, now!"

"Go your own way," said Hilliard, dismissing him. "I shall never urge you again."

Giovanni gone, Hilliard leaned against the casement. The sun was bright this morning, and the air was clear. He could see Naples distinctly. Below, the fishermen and their wives, their bare feet plowing in the wet sands, were drawing in the nets, swaying their bodies gracefully.

And then Merryhew burst in upon him wildly excited and flourished the hotel register.

"Look at this!" he cried breathlessly. He flung the book on the table and pointed with shaking finger.

Hilliard came forward, and this is what he saw:

Thomas O'Mally
James Smith
Arthur Worth
La Signorina Capricciola
Kitty Killigrew
Am. Comic Opera Co., N. Y.

"Kitty has been here!"

"Perfectly true. But I wonder"—

"Wonder about what?" asked Merryhew.

"Who La Signorina Capricciola is, whimsical, indeed. She must be the mysterious prima donna."

Hilliard studied the easy flowing hand and ran his fingers through his hair thoughtfully.

"What is it?" asked Merryhew curiously.

"I am wondering where I have seen that handwriting before."

Another fortnight found the pair back in Naples after spending a week on Capri. At the hotel they found a

batch of mail. There was a letter which held particular interest to Merryhew. It was from the consul at Rome, a reply to Hilliard's inquiries regarding the American Comic Opera company.

"We'll now find out where your charming Kitty is," Hilliard said, breaking the seal.

But they didn't. On the contrary, the writer hadn't the slightest idea where the play actors were or had gone. They had opened a two weeks' engagement at the Teatro Quirino. There had been a good house on the opening night. The remainder of the week did not show the sale of a hundred tickets. The American manager had shown neither foresight nor common sense, and his backer withdrew his support. The percentage demanded by the managers in Florence, Genoa, Milan and Venice was so exorbitant (although they had agreed to a moderate term in the beginning) that it would have been nothing short of foolhardiness to try to fill the bookings. The singing of the prima donna,

"How old he looked, poor devil! Hilliard had not taken particular notice of him during the past week's excursions. Giovanni had aged ten years since they landed."

"And was this cousin glad to see you? And is he to be trusted?"

"Both, signor. He had some news. She—the girl—is a dancer in a Paris cafe."

"Would you like me to give you the necessary money to go to Paris and bring her back to the Sabine hills?" Hilliard asked softly.

"I shall go to Paris, signor—after."

"What is his name?" Hilliard had never till this moment asked this question.

"I know it. That is sufficient. He is high, signor, very high, yet I shall reach him. If I told you his name"—

"There would be the possibility of my warning him."

"That is why I hesitate."

"You are a Catholic, Giovanni."

Giovanni signified that he was.

"Does not the God of all Catholics, of all Christians, in fact—does he not say that vengeance is his and that he will repay?"

"But there are so many of us, signor, so many of us small and of slight importance, that, likely enough, God, with all his larger cares, has not the time to remember us. What may happen to him in the hereafter does not concern me, for he will certainly be in the purgatory of the rich and I in the purgatory of the poor. It must be now, now!"

"Go your own way," said Hilliard, dismissing him. "I shall never urge you again."

Giovanni gone, Hilliard leaned against the casement. The sun was bright this morning, and the air was clear. He could see Naples distinctly. Below, the fishermen and their wives, their bare feet plowing in the wet sands, were drawing in the nets, swaying their bodies gracefully.

And then Merryhew burst in upon him wildly excited and flourished the hotel register.

"Look at this!" he cried breathlessly. He flung the book on the table and pointed with shaking finger.

Hilliard came forward, and this is what he saw:

"The man at the wheel looked a bit like Sandford."

"Sandford? By George, that would be jolly!"

"Perhaps they will come this way again, Tom's fellow, that's what!"

Sure enough, when the car reached the Largo Victoria it wheeled and came rattling back. This time Hilliard had no doubts. He stood up and waved his arms. The automobile lurched and ground and came to a stand.

"Hello, Sandford!"

"Jack Hilliard, as I live, and Dan Merryhew! Nell!" turning to one of the three pretty women in the tonneau, "what did I tell you? I felt it in my bones that we would run across some one we knew."

"Or over them," his wife laughed.

When we meet an old friend in a foreign land, one who has accepted our dinners and with whom we have often dined, what is left but to fall on his neck and weep? There was, then, over this meeting much ado with handshaking and compliments, handshaking and questions, and, as in all cases like this, every one talked at once—how was old New York, how was the winter in Cairo, and so forth and so on—till a policeman politely

told them that this was not a private thoroughfare and that they were blocking the way. So they parted, the two young men having promised to dine with the Sandford party that evening.

"What luck, Dan?" Hilliard was exuberant.

"Saves you the price of a dinner."

"I wasn't thinking of that. But I shall find out all about her tonight."

"Who?"

"The lady in the fog, the masquerading lady!"

(To be continued.)

The Dalles Nurseries

We are Growers—Buy direct from us
NO AGENTS
Our Trees are grown strictly
WITHOUT IRRIGATION
Write for free catalog. Large stock of
varieties suitable for commercial orchards
Choice Fruit, Nut and Ornamental Trees, Grape
Vines, Small Fruit Plants and Shrubs
THE DALLES NURSERIES
Main Office, 124 Grand Ave., Portland, Ore.

COMBINATION RANGE BOILER INSULATOR AND HOT FIRELESS COOKER



Containing two indispensable luxuries and two sources of economy.

Call and let us demonstrate its merits.

J. W. WHITNEY

Office in Aikin Plumbing Co.'s Store, Medford.



State Depository
Established 1888.
Capital and Surplus \$125,000
Reserves \$700,000

HIGHEST ATTAINMENT IN SYSTEMATIC BANKING SERVICE

The Jackson County Bank respectfully solicits your account, subject to your check, with the strongest guarantee of safety and efficiency.

We offer the highest attainment in systematic banking service, which assures the greatest care in every financial transaction, with this obliging institution.

W. I. VAWTER, President.
G. R. LINDLEY, Cashier.

WANTED

Timber and Coal Lands
ENGINEERING AND SURVEYING CONTRACTS TAKEN AND ESTIMATES FURNISHED.

B. H. Harris & Co.
MEDFORD, OREGON
Office in Jackson County Bank Upstairs

J. E. ENYART, President
JOHN S. ORTH, Cashier
J. A. PERRY, Vice-President
W. B. JACKSON, Ass't Cashier.

THE MEDFORD NATIONAL BANK

CAPITAL \$50,000
SURPLUS \$10,000

Safety boxes for rent. A general Banking Business transacted.
We solicit your patronage.

APPLES AND PEARS AND ALL KINDS OF
FRUIT AND ORNAMENTAL TREES.

YAKIMA VALLEY NURSERY

Largest Commercial Nursery in the Pacific Northwest. Not in the combine. Competes with all first-class nurseries.

L. E. HOOVER, Agent

MEDFORD.

OREGON



RESOLVED

The best resolution for you to make is to come to us for your next suit, if you want something out of the ordinary. We do the best work and charge the lowest prices.

W. W. EIFERT
THE PROGRESSIVE TAILOR

LOOK

A New Line of Silverware
That is Absolutely Guaranteed
See the Latest Patent Tea Strainer

Martin J. Reddy THE JEWELER
Near P. O.



THE...
NASH
LIVERY
GO.

Have the Best Turnouts in the City

You are treated right, the price is right, the team is right—in fact, everything is right. Come and see.

NASH LIVERY CO.

P. C. Hanson. Tom Moffat.
We make any kind and style of windows. We carry glass of any size on hand.
Medford Sash & Door Co.

When we suggest that you
Toast Your Bread
On Breakfast Table

We do not mean that you should eat off the stove—toast

With an Electric Toaster

and have crisp, brown, delicious toast—costs 1c per meal to operate. We have the best toaster on the market for sale at \$4.50. Clean, appetizing, sanitary

ROGUE RIVER ELECTRIC CO.

Successors to Condor Water & Power Co.