



The Lure of the Mask

By
**HAROLD
MAC GRATH**

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(Continued.)

CHAPTER XI
A BOX OF CIGARS.

ON the way up to Rome Hillard and his pupil had a second class compartment all to themselves. The train was a fast one, for the day of slow travel has passed in Italy, and the cry of speed is heard over the land.

There was a change of cars at Rome and a wait of two hours.

After luncheon Merrihew secretly bought two boxes of cigars to carry along. They were good cigars and cost him \$15. He covered them with some newspapers and at the station succeeded by some legerdemain in slipping them into one of his cases. Hillard would have lectured him on his extravagance, and this was a good way to avoid it. But some hours later he was going to be very sorry that he had not made a confidant of his guide.

As they were boarding the train they noticed two gentlemen getting into the forward compartment of the carriage.

"Humph! Our friend with the scar," said Hillard. "We do not seem able to shake him."

"I'd like to shake him. He goes against the grain somehow." Merrihew swung into the compartment. "I wonder why the Sandfords dropped him?"

"For some good reason. They are a liberal pair, and if our friend forward offended them it must have been something outside the pale of forgiveness. But I should like to know where old Giovanni is. I miss him."

"Poor devil!" said Merrihew, with careless sympathy.

The train started.

"Monte Carlo! Gold, gold, little round pieces of gold!" Merrihew rubbed his hands like a miser.

"Hard to get and heavy to hold!" quoted Hillard. "I suppose that you have a system already worked out."

"Of course. I shall win if I stick to it."

"Or if the money lasts. Bury your system, my boy. It will do you no good. Trust to luck only. Monte Carlo is the graveyard of systems."

"But maybe my system is the one. You can't tell till I have tried it."

Soon the train began to lift into the mountains, the beautiful Apennines. By the time they arrived in Genoa, late at night, both compared favorably with the coolers in the harbor of Naples.

Early the next morning the adventurers set out for Monte Carlo—more tunnels; a compartment filled with women and children. But the beauty of the Riviera was compensation.

Ventimiglia, or Vintimille, has a sinister sound in the ears of the traveler if perchance he be a man fond of his tobacco. The train drew in. A dozen steps more and one was virtually in France. But there is generally a slight hitch before one takes the aforesaid steps—the French customs. A porter popped his head into the window.

"Eight minutes for examination of luggage!" he cried.

"Come, Dan," cried Hillard; "lively if we want good seats when we come out. We change trains."

After a short skirmish they located their belongings. They would have to be patient.

Among the inspectors at Ventimiglia is a small, wizened Frenchman with a face as cold and impassive as the sand blown sphinx. He possesses, among other accomplishments, a nose peculiar less for its shape than for its smell. He can "smell out" tobacco as a witch doctor in Zululand smells out a "devil." Fate directed this individual toward the Americans. Hillard knew him of old, and he never forgets a face, this wizened little man.

"Monsieur has nothing to declare?" he asked.

Hillard made a negative sign and opened his cases. With scarce a glance at their contents and waving aside the coupons the inspector applied the chalk and turned to Merrihew.

"Monsieur has nothing to declare?"

he repeated.

Merrihew shook his head airily. "Niente, niente!" he said in his best Italian. He did not understand what the inspector said. He merely had suspicions.

"Look!" suddenly exclaimed Hillard. Passing out of the door which led to liberty and to France, their luggage guaranteed by cabalistic chalk marks, were two women. One of them was veiled; the other was not.

"Kitty Killigrew, as I live!" shouted Merrihew, making a dash for the door.

But the inspector blocked the way, beckoned to a gendarme, who came over, and calmly pointed to Merrihew's unopened cases.

"Open!" said the inspector.

"But"—Merrihew struggled to pass.

"For heaven's sake," cried Hillard, "be patient and open the cases at once."

Merrihew handled his keys clumsily. It is ever thus when one is in a hurry. Finally he threw back the lids, feeling that in another moment he must have spouted Italian or French out of pure magic simply to tell this fool inspector what he thought of him.

"Oho, monsieur in a hurry!" mocked the inspector. "Nothing, nothing!" He took out two boxes of cigars.

"Why the devil didn't you tell me you had them?" Hillard demanded wrathfully. To find the women by this stroke of luck and then to lose them again for two boxes of cigars! It was maddening.

The inspector went through Merrihew's possessions with premeditated leisure. Everything had to come out. He even opened the shaving sets, the collar box, the pin cases and the tie bag.

"Will you hasten?" asked Hillard. "We do not wish to miss this train."

"Others follow," said the inspector laconically.

Hillard produced a five franc piece. The inspector laughed without noise and shook his head. This one inspector is impervious to money or smooth speeches. He is the law personified, inexorable.

Hillard strained his eyes, but saw neither Kitty nor the veiled lady again. Doubtless they were already on the train. Had Merrihew been an old traveler he would have left him to get to Monte Carlo the best way he could, but Merrihew was as helpless as a child, and he hadn't the heart to desert him, though he deserved to be deserted.

Ding-ding! went the bell. Whee-whee! went the whistle. The train for Monte Carlo was drawing out, and they were being left behind. Hillard swore and Merrihew went white with impotent anger. If only he could hit something! The inspector smiled and went on with his deadly work. When he was certain that they could not possibly catch the train he handed the cigars to their owner and pointed to a sign the other side of the barricade.

"What shall I do now, Jack?" Merrihew asked.

"I refuse to help you. Find out yourself."

So Merrihew, hopeless and subdued, went into the room designated, saw the cigars taken out and weighed, took the bill and presented it with a hundred lire note at the little window in the off room.

Procuring his change, he found Hillard sitting disconsolately on the barricade.

"I hope you are perfectly satisfied," said Hillard, with an amiability which wouldn't have passed muster anywhere.

"Oh, I'm satisfied," answered Merrihew. He stuffed his pockets with cigars, slammed the boxes into the case and locked them up.

"I warned you about tobacco."

"I know it."

"You should have told me."

"I know that, too, but I didn't want you to lecture me."

"A lecture would have been better than waiting here in this barn for three hours."

"Three hours?" despondently.

(To be continued.)

Why do they advertise in The Tribune? Easy. They get results.—F.

CITY NOTICES.

Continued from Page 2

The city of Medford, which check shall be held by the city of Medford on the conditions hereafter set forth. If said grantee, his associates, his successors or assigns, shall begin the actual work on the things mentioned in this ordinance within four months from its passage and taking effect, and shall prosecute the same with diligence until substantially completed, so that not less than twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2500) shall have been expended in the actual construction work of installing said plant on the ground in said city within six months from the date of the taking effect of this ordinance, then, and as soon as the said sum of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2500) shall have been so expended, and said fact certified as hereinafter set forth, said check may be withdrawn upon depositing in lieu thereof a sufficient bond, in the penal sum of two thousand dollars (\$2000), guaranteeing the construction of said plant in accordance herewith, so as to have the same substantially complete within 12 months after the date of the passage and taking effect of this ordinance.

It is understood and agreed that the city engineer of the city of Medford shall determine the question as to the amount of work actually done, and that the repayment of said check shall only be made upon the certificate of said city engineer that said work has actually been performed within said time.

CITY NOTICES.

It is further understood and agreed that time is, and shall be of the essence hereof, and that if said grantee, his associates, his successors or assigns, shall fail to begin actual work on the things mentioned in this ordinance within four months from its passage and taking effect, or to prosecute the same with reasonable diligence, so that there shall have actually been expended, as aforesaid, within the aforesaid six months, the said sum of twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2500) in the actual work of construction on the ground in said city, then all rights of the said grantee, his associates, his successors or assigns, in or to said certified check, shall be absolutely forfeited to said city, and said city shall retain the same and all thereof as liquidated damages for the breach of this contract.

Section 22. This ordinance shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage, approval and posting.

Done at Medford, Oregon, 1909.

The foregoing ordinance was passed by the city council of the city of Medford, Oregon, on the 22nd day of October, 1909, by the following vote: Welch, aye; Merriek, aye; Wortman, no; Eifer, aye; and Demmer, aye; Emerick, absent.

Approved this 23rd day of October, 1909.

W. H. CANON, Mayor.

ROBT. W. TELFER, City Recorder.

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