

The Man From Home

By BOOTH TARKINGTON and HARRY LEON WILSON

A Novelization of the Play of the Same Name

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CHAPTER FIVE (Continued)

"Don't stop with her, though," "Why not?" demanded the earl angrily. "A sort of man in the village got me to look at a bull terrier pup," Almeric went on, with a yawn. "Wonderful little beast for points. Jolly luck, isn't it? He has got a head on him!" Hawcastle interrupted savagely. "Well, concede his tremendous advantage over you in that respect," he said and threw the cigar he had just lighted into the coffee cup. "Is that all you have to tell us?" implored the countess, with a dramatic gesture, leaning forward. Almeric looked up with surprise. "Oh, no!" he said. "She accepted me." The earl dropped into a chair with a sigh of relief, and the countess clasped her hands ecstatically. "Enfin! Brava! And will she let it be soon?" Again Almeric stifled a yawn. "I dare say there'll be no row about that," he replied. "You see, I've made her awfully happy." "On my soul, I believe you're right," said Hawcastle, "and thank God you are!" Rising, he walked up and down the terrace and then turned quickly. "Here's her brother," he said softly. "Attention now!"

CHAPTER VI EASY PREY.

USUALLY when a man through inclination or environment decides that the manners of his people will not serve for him and that the customs of the land of his adoption are more applicable to his purpose he outdoes even the natives in his conformation to the existing modes.

Horace Granger-Simpson—the Granger was but a recent innovation due to the belief that Simpson by itself was altogether too hopelessly plebeian to attract even a modicum of attention—had consorted with the gilded youth of several capitals, and his education had progressed to such an extent that the youth of Kokomo would have stoned him instantly upon his arrival at the town depot.

He ambled with a rocking gait, drawn from the guardsmen he had so carefully watched, down the steps of the hotel on to the terrace, and his attire would have attracted notice from a Hindoo idol. He wore spotlessly white flannels, white shoes pipelaced to a dazzling degree, a thoroughly British straw hat, camoufles gloves and a pale blue scarf held together with a massive pearl.

For an instant Mme. la Comtesse looked at him and then, with a little cry of greeting, rushed toward the steps and took both his startled hands. "Ah, my dear Horace Granger-Sempson!" she said excitedly. "Has your sister told you?"

Horace swallowed once or twice savagely and then made a heroic effort to keep down the radiance that was choking him, made two effectual dabs at his eyes with the handkerchief he took from his sleeve and responded joyfully, though brokenly:

"She has, indeed. I assure you I am quite overcome, my dear friends. Really, I assure you."

With a silvery laugh Mme. de Champligny stepped backward from him, making a little courtesy as she did so. The earl came forward with outstretched hands and grasped one of Horace's between both his own.

"My dear young friend," he said. "Not at all—not at all."

As the remark seemed a trifle ambiguous, Horace looked at him inquiringly, but, reading reassurance in his face, replied instantly:

"I assure you I am. I assure you I am. It's quite overpowering, isn't it?"

With a look of commiseration the countess regarded him and said softly:

"Ah, poor M. Horace!"

From his sprawled attitude in the chair the honorable Almeric drew a protest.

"I say! Don't take it that way, you know. She's very happy."

Horace recovered himself instantly and crossed the terrace quickly to grasp the hand of the bridegroom to be. The fact that it was as limp as a mackerel did not worry him an instant.

"She's worthy of it—she's worthy of it. I know she is! And when will it be, St. Aubyn?" he said.

"Enchanting!" cried the countess enthusiastically. "So clear is his grasp of the case, eh?"

Hawcastle flashed her a glance and turned to Horace.

"Oh, the date?" he said doubtfully. "I dare say within a year—two years."

There was another little cry of protest from the countess, and the earl glanced at her menacingly. Horace started, but he seemed to be entering a positive objection, but he contended himself by saying:

"Oh, but I say, you know, isn't that putting it jolly far off?" The

thing's settled, isn't it? Why not say a month instead of a year?" "Ha-hum," said the earl. "Oh, if you like! I don't know that there is any real objection."

"I do, indeed," returned Horace. "See here! Why not let them marry here in Italy?"

Hawcastle could scarcely conceal his satisfaction, while Mme. de Champligny executed a bit of a pas seul behind Horace's back.

"Ah, the dashing methods of our Americans!" returned the earl smiling. "You carry things on so! Next you'll be saying, 'Why not here at Sorrento?'"

"Well, and why not, indeed?" asked Horace instantly.

"And then," went on Hawcastle, smiling, "and then it will be, 'Why not within a fortnight?'"

"Right-o!" cried Horace. "And why not within a fortnight?"

Almeric sat up and stared at his noble father and brother-in-law to be, but the earl smiled once more that cheerful smile and waved a deprecating hand.

"Ah, you wonderful people! You are whirlwinds, yet I see no reason why it should not be in a fortnight."

"Oh, here! I say, you know?" interjected Almeric, leaving himself erect in the chair and waving a protesting crop. The earl turned on him instantly.

"As I say, dear boy, why not?" he inquired suavely, and Almeric wilted immediately.

"Just as you say, governor," he answered meekly.

"Enchanting! Brava!" cried the countess, and Hawcastle again turned to the palpitating Horace.

"My son is all impatience," he murmured, fixing the young man with his eye.

"Quite so, quite so!" answered Almeric dazedly, and his father went on: "Shall we dispose of the necessary little details at once—the various minor arrangements, the—er—er—settlement?" and interrupted himself with a friendly laugh and patted Horace upon the back. "Of course as men of the world—our world—you understand there are formalities in the nature of a settlement."

Horace, who was in the seventh heaven of delight at the approaching alliance between one of the ancient houses of Kokomo, Ind., and the honorable line of Hawcastle, broke in eagerly:

"Quite so, of course! I know! Certainly! Perfectly!"

"Then we'll have no difficulty about that, my boy. I'll write my solicitor tonight and he'll be here within two days," said the earl carelessly. "If you wish to consult your own solicitor you can cable him, of course."

Suddenly Horace seemed taken with a fit of embarrassment.

"The fact is, Lord Hawcastle," he said, "I've a notion that our solicitor—Ethel's man of business, that is—from Kokomo, Ind., where our government lives—in fact, a sort of guardian of hers—may be here at any time. I've heard from friends that he is coming in this direction."

The word had caught Hawcastle's attention, and he leaped at it.

"A sort of guardian? What sort, eh?" he inquired, seemingly taken aback.

"I really can't say," replied Horace apologetically. "Never saw him that I know of. You see, we've been on this side so many years, and there's been no occasion for this fellow to look us up, but he's never opposed anything Ethel wrote for. He seems to be an easy going old chap."

"Hum!" said Hawcastle doubtfully. "Would he consent to your sister's marriage—or the matter of a settlement?"

Horace laughed cheerfully.

"I have no doubt of it. If he has the slightest sense of duty toward my sister he'll be the first to welcome the alliance, won't he?"

"Then when he and my solicitor come they can have an evening together over a lot of musty papers, and the thing will be done. Again, my boy, I welcome you to our family. God bless you!"

He wrung Horace's hand again and turned away as if to hide his emotion, but really to wink at the countess.

"I'm overpowered, you know—really overpowered, you know," stammered Horace, fanning himself desperately with his hat.

"Come, Almeric," said the earl, and as the youthful heir to his house arose languidly he sidled close to the countess and whispered in her ear:

"Let him know it's a hundred and fifty thousand."

Then he and Almeric went up the steps into the hotel, leaving Horace and the countess gazing at each other delightedly.

She crossed over to him impulsively and, taking both his hands again, said: "My friend, I am happy for you."

"Think of it!" said Horace joyously. "In a fortnight at the most, dear old

Ethel will be the Hon. Mrs. St. Aubyn, future Countess of Hawcastle!"

"Yes," replied the countess, with drawing her hands and picking up her parasol, "and there is but the little arrangement of the settlement between your advocates and Lord Hawcastle's. But you Americans—you laugh at such things. You are big, so big, like your country!"

Horace followed her across the terrace to the wall.

"Ah, believe me, dear countess," he said, "the great world—your world, countess—has thoroughly alienated me."

The countess turned her shapely head and looked at him admiringly and with a touch of irony at the surprise she was about to give him.

"Ah, you retain one quality. You are careless, you are free," she said and held her right hand upon his arm, and Horace thrilled at the intimate touch.

"Well," he laughed, "perhaps in those things I am American, but in others I fancy I should be thought something else, shouldn't I?"

She laughed openly at him now, but earnestly withheld, and said:

"You are a debonair man of the world, and yet you are still American in that you are abominably rich. The settlement—such matter as that, over which a Frenchman, an Italian, might hesitate—you laugh. Such matter as £150,000—you set it aside, you laugh. You say, 'Oh, yes; take it!'"

For a moment she feared that Horace would fall over the low parapet, so white did his face become and then so flushed, but the boy was game all through. The generations of simple Indiana stock came to his rescue, and he steered himself with an effort and replied quietly:

"A hundred and fifty thousand pounds? Why, that's seven hundred and fifty thousand—I say, countess, she couldn't use the money to better advantage?"

There was real admiration in the Frenchwoman's glance this time, for she had lost none of the little byplay, and she admired the courage of the younger set. So she said:

"My friend, how wise you are!"

As she spoke she turned in time to see Ethel come down the steps of the hotel with a book beneath her arm and ran to her, clasping her in her arms and kissing her.

CHAPTER VII SUBBLED!

LARGESSE, sweet Countess of Hawcastle! the woman cried. "Largesse! And an revoir! Adieu! I leave you with your dear brother."

She ran quickly up the steps with a flirt of her parasol, and Horace took his sister's hand with tears in his eyes. "Dear old sis! Dear old pal!" he said, and she turned a radiant look upon him.

"Isn't it glorious, Huddy?" she said with exalted tone. "Look," and held up the book she carried. "It's Burke's 'Poerage.' And Prouisart's 'Chronicles'—I've been reading it all over

"Then keep nim out of the way. That's simple enough," he said. "None of them, except the solicitor, need see him."

Almost in a burst like an eruption there came an uproar outside the gates beyond the hotel—wild laughter, riotous cheering and the notes of the tarantella played by mandolins and guitar, then more shouts and cheers and cries of "Bravo, Ameriano!" and "Yanka Dooda!" Horace ran to the gates, but they were closed, and the uproar continued. Ethel stood by one of the tables, amazement written on her features, and turned to her brother as he came back shaking his head.

"What is that?" she asked tremulously. Lady Creech, all in a flutter, entered from the hotel. At a glance she would set her down for an aristocrat. There was no doubt of it. From the topmost tip of her white hair to the toe of her solid shoe she was an aristocrat.

"One of your fellow countrymen, my dear," she said to Ethel. "Your Americans are really too—"

"Not my Americans, Lady Creech!" said Ethel spiritedly.

"Not our, you know," reiterated Horace.

Almeric entered, at once laughing and beating his boot with his crop. Almost exhausted with his mirth, he threw himself into a chair and burst out:

"Oh, I say, what a go! Motor car breaks down on the way here. One of the Johnnies, a German chap, discharges the chauffeur, and the other Johnny—one of our Yankee chaps, Ethel—fires two silly little donkeys, like rabbits, you know, to pull the machine. Then, as they can't make it, you know, he puts himself in the straps with them and proceeds, attended by the populace. Ha, ha!"

He laughed long and loudly.

"I went up to this Yankee chap, I mean to say—he was pulling and tugging along, you see—and I said, 'There you are, three of you in a row, aren't you?' meaning him and the two don-

"It will be as soon as the settlement is made and arranged. It will take about all your share of the estate, sis, but it's worth it—a hundred and fifty thousand pounds."

Ethel lifted the book to the level of her eyes.

"What better use could be made of a fortune, Huddy, than to maintain the state and high condition of so ancient a house?"

He looked at her affectionately and took her hand.

"It does seem impossible that we were born in Indiana, doesn't it, sister?" And the tones of his voice were those of incredulity.

She smiled at him fondly.

"But isn't it good that the pater made his pile, as the Americans say, and let us come over here while we were young to find the nobler things, Huddy—the nobler things?"

"The nobler things—the nobler things! Why, sis, when old Hawcastle dies I'll be saying offhand, you know, 'My sister, the Countess of Hawcastle!'"

For a moment Ethel remained thoughtful and then turned to her brother.

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"I AM MISS GRANGER-SIMPSON."

"You don't imagine that father's friend, this old Mr. Pike, will be—will he queer, do you?"

"Well, the governor himself was rather raw, you know. This is probably a harmless old chap, easy to handle."

"I wish I knew. I shouldn't like Almeric's family to think we had queer connections of any sort, and he might turn out to be quite shockingly American. I—I couldn't bear that Huddy."

There was a note of genuine pathos in her voice, and her brother responded instantly:

"Then keep nim out of the way. That's simple enough," he said. "None of them, except the solicitor, need see him."

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Ethel drew back quickly and said in a very small voice:

"Oh, I beg your pardon."

Then she sat down hurriedly by Lord Hawcastle.

CHAPTER VIII THE AMERICAN.

THE chatter will cut out countless unshaded and Ethel and Almeric walked back to the terrace rampart to stand looking out over the glorious bay.

Horace, still in the seventh heaven of delighted realization, took the Daily Mail from the table on which the earl had thrown it and seated himself to read beside Lady Creech, who was already deep in the Church Register.

The earl had buried himself in the Pall Mall Gazette and was apparently oblivious to such minor details as an Italian peasant row.

But to Horace in his highly strung condition of nerves the uproar was aggravating, and he called to Mariano, who was busily setting the table again:

"Mariano, how long is this noise to continue?"

The maitre d'hotel shrugged his expressive shoulders and replied:

"How can I know, m'sieu? We can do nothing."

Michele, who was assisting his chief, smiled covertly at the young man.

"The populace they will not be de-part so long as there shall be the chance once again to observe the North American who pulled the automobile with the donkeys?"

"Merced!" cried Mariano, with vigor. "He have confuse me. He have confuse everybody. He will not be content with the dejeuner until he have the ham and the egg, and he will have the egg cooked upon but one of two sides, and how in the name of the heaven can we tell which of these two sides?"

Mariano was about to continue his grumbling complaint when from the doorway of the hotel there came an interruption. The courier who had spoken with him earlier in the morning stood there and voiced but one word.

"Garcon!" he said softly. But it was like the command of a cavalry officer in its effect, for instantly the maitre d'hotel and his aid stood at attention like trained veterans. The earl evidently was not too deeply immersed to catch the sudden silence, for he looked up from his paper and observed:

"Upon my soul! Who's this?"

Mariano did not turn his head nor relax his attitude of stiff attention, but answered obsequiously:

"It is the Herr von Grollenhagen, a German gentleman, m'lord."

Hawcastle turned with an amused smile to Horace.

"The man who owns the automobile. Probably made a fortune in sausage."

From within the hotel there came

ed voice declaiming quickly: "Nein, nein, Rublere! 'S macht nicht!"

And instantly there came down the steps the German gentleman aforesaid. He was tall and of a commanding presence. He wore a grayish beard and an automobile cap that half concealed the eyes that stared with the fanaticism of ungodliness beneath. What it saw a kindly face, and though there was a stern command in the glare, there was genial humor and even a smile to be seen. By no authority even he had been considered well-bred. His looks seemed rather to have been thrown on negligently.

The little party at the table regarded him with hostility, and Lady Creech turned up her aristocratic nose.

"What a dreadful person!" she said and turned again to her paper.

The German walked sedately across the terrace to the table where the two servants still stood at attention and lifted his hand in a curt half military salute in acknowledgment of their bow.

"See to my American friend," he said.

"What a terrible person!" remarked Lady Creech again, and Hawcastle bent toward her.

"Undoubtedly, but he speaks English. So be careful."

"So many objectionable people do," commented the crusty dame.

Herr von Grollenhagen turned smilingly to Mariano.

"My American friend desires his national dish."

Mariano bowed.

"Yes, Herr von Grollenhagen," replied Mariano deferentially. "He will have the eggs on but one of two sides and the ham fried, so he go to cook it himself."

Von Grollenhagen smiled, when from without the gates came a shout of amusement and wild laughter. Mariano instantly bowed and ran toward the hotel.

"Ha!" he said eagerly. "He return from the kitchen with that national dish."

Michele emerged from the hotel walking backward and carrying a covered dish, while Ethel turned with a little shudder of disgust to the countess.

"How horrible!" she said, and the Frenchwoman patted her shoulder reassuringly.

Immediately following the servitor came Pike, clad in a linen duster and a straw hat that was decorated with a bright ribbon. If there was anything distinctive about him it was his scarf, which was of that type known as Windsor and much affected by artists in the east and every one in the west. He carried a towel with him and dropped it in one hand as he glanced about.

(Continued next week.)

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