

# 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 X.—Continued.

"Then how'd you happen to decide that just a hundred and fifty thousand



The police are chasing a badly convicted chap under the cliff.

ponds was what you wanted to give him?" he demanded.

"It was Mr. St. Aubyn's father who fixed the amount," replied Ethel desperately.

"His father! What's he got to do with it?"

"He is the Earl of Hawcastle, the head of the ancient house."

"And he asks you for your property—asks you for it in so many words?"

"Yes, as a settlement."

"And your young man knows it?"

"I tell you, Mr. Pike, I have not discussed it with Mr. St. Aubyn."

Pike laughed.

"I reckon not," he said amusedly.

"Well, sir, do you know what's the first thing Mr. St. Aubyn will do when he hears his father made such a proposition? He'll take the old man out

in the back lot and give him a thrashing he won't forget to the day of his death."

"She was about to answer when from a distance came the roll of drums and then the sound of a bugle. The sounds came from afar off, as if below the cliff.

"They both stopped to listen. Then the servants came running, with Mariano at their head. They rushed to the wall and looked over. All excitement Mariano turned to call to them over his shoulder.

"The bandit of Russia! The soldiers think he is hidden in a grotto under these cliffs!"

As he spoke Almeric ran down the steps with a shotgun in his hand and made for the steps leading down the face of the cliff. Pike turned to Ethel.

"I saw that fellow on the road here. What's he meant for?"

Ethel turned angrily from the lawyer and called sharply to her fiancé:

"Almeric!"

St. Aubyn turned and stopped.

"Hello!" he said.

"I wish to present my guardian to you," and turned to Pike as Almeric approached. "This is Mr. St. Aubyn," she said steadily.

Almeric stared at Pike through his monocle and laughed.

"Why, it's the donkey man, isn't it? How very odd! You'll have to see the governor and our solicitor about that settlement, though. I've some important business here. The police are chasing a badly convicted chap under the cliff yonder, so you'll have to excuse me. You know there's nothing like a little convict shooting to break the blooming monotony—what?"

He turned and rushed off down the stairway. Pike turned to look after him in mute astonishment and then turned to Ethel. She refused to meet his glance, and the hot blood rose to her face as she felt his scrutiny.

She tapped nervously with her foot, and the astonishment grew in Daniel's face. He looked from her to where Almeric had disappeared and back to her again. Then he took a step forward as if to speak and stopped. Finally the dawning horror in his face took concrete form, and he spoke.

"That!" he groaned. "Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for that! Say, how much do they charge for a real man over here anyway?"

But she was unable to meet his eye. Turning quickly, with her cheeks flaming with shame and anger, she rushed into the hotel and left him standing speechless on the spot.

ment. When she took him he was a poor man, but if he'd had \$750,000 I'll bet he'd 'a' given it for her."

Horace turned short about and retired from the scene. It was evidently impossible to argue with this phobian. As he went toward the gates he met Almeric and Lady Crech and informed them eloquently of the ill success of his attempt to reason with the lawyer. Then he went out again to the cliff.

Almeric accompanied him a few steps and then turned off to the village, for he said he stupidly must take another look at that pup. And Lady Crech announced that she intended to have "forty winks" in her own room. Five minutes later Daniel, looking up from a superb rendition of "Dolly Gray," saw her glaring at him from her window.

Then came the Herr von Grollenhagen from the hotel. He was the same calm, imperturbable individual as ever, and he smoked with the languid abandon of a man born to ease. He approached Daniel with a smile.

"You make progress, my friend?" he asked, and Daniel smiled at him.

"Your machine's like a good many people, doc. It's got sand in its gear box."

At that moment Mariano hastened out and frowned nervously with the lock on the big gates. Von Grollenhagen turned instantly.

"You are looking us in," he said.

"No, herr," replied the servant: "I look some one out—that bandit who have not been captured. The carabinieri warn all to lock the gates for an hour. Soon they will capture that wicked one. M'sieu, this convict is a Russian."

With a keen glance, Von Grollenhagen waved the man aside. Daniel smiled.

"They've got two companies of the fin soldiers. Out my way the town marshal would have had him yesterday."

"My friend, you are teaching me to respect your country, not by what you brag, but by what you do."

"How's that?" asked Pike.

"I see how a son of that great democracy can apply himself to a dirty machine while his eyes are full of visions of one of its beautiful daughters."

"Doc, there's sand in your gear box!" Then he looked up. "Now, you go down to the kitchen and make signs for some of the help to give you a bunch of nice clean rags."

For an instant the German drew himself up haughtily.

"What is it you ask me to do?"

"Got me some more rags," said Daniel quietly, and Von Grollenhagen bowed low.

"I'd go myself, but it wouldn't be safe to leave the machine."

"You fear this famous bandit would steal it?" laughed the German.

"No; there's parties around here might think it was a settlement."

"My friend," Von Grollenhagen said gravely, "I do not understand."

"That's where we are in the same fix, doc," said Pike, with a chuckle, and bent over the machine again, while Von Grollenhagen departed on his mission.

While Pike worked he thought, and the thoughts finally arrived at the point where he saw that all he had to do to save the girl he had come so far to see was to sit tight on his refusal. He had accurately gauged the noise and his interesting son and sister-in-law, and he knew that it was a thousand to one that they would not agree to a marriage if there was no money in sight.

"They'll make more'n one bid for old Simpson's money," he assured himself and then looked up quickly, for the leaves on the pergola were rustling in a way that no wind should have caused.

As he looked the figure of a man appeared over the top of the vines and a pale face looked into his with imploring eyes. Pike looked at him calmly and knew at once that this was the man the carabinieri were pursuing.

"Est ce que vous etes un homme de bon coeur? Je ne suis pas coupable!" ("Are you a kind hearted man? I am not guilty!") he began, when Pike cut him off with a shake of the head.

"There ain't any use in the world your talking to me like that," he said mournfully, and the refugee's eyes gleamed with hope.

"You are an American?" he said, making preparations to descend.

"They haven't made anything else out of me," answered Daniel, and the refugee climbed down and leaned weakly against the car.

"If you give me up I shall not be taken alive! I have no weapon, but I shall find a way to cut my throat!"

"Are you the bandit they're looking for?" asked Daniel, with interest.

"They call me that? How close are they?" asked the other, with sudden fright. Pike looked at the gates and heard a clank of sabers off on the road.

"There!" he said and stripped off his blouse. "Did they see you climb that wall?"

"I think not," murmured the man.

"Do you know anything about automobiles?" asked Daniel, holding out the coat.

"Not a thing in the world," replied the other despairingly.

"Then you're a chauffeur, all right," returned the lawyer, forcing the rough garment on the man. "Here; climb in under that machine, and don't you dare unscrew anything. Pretend you are fixing it."

He pushed the refugee toward the machine and saw him wriggle beneath it, then heard Mariano's agitated voice calling in the hotel. An instant later the maître d'hotel rushed out to the entrance gates and threw them wide open, revealing two carabinieri without, who immediately entered. Then ensued a conversation in Italian that was pure Sanskrit to Pike, who looked on with calm interest. The command-

ant of the file addressed the lawyer in a long speech, to which Pike smiled and waved a cigar.

"Wishing you many happy returns, colonel," he said genially, and Mariano hastened forward.

"It is the robber of Russia. You think he climb the wall, the access. The others, they surround all round. These two, they search here. They say you please, signore, have you seen him climb the wall?"

"No," replied Daniel shortly, turned away.

"They ask, then, has any one cross the lawn?" went on the servant.

"No," replied Daniel, and as he spoke one of the men pointed his gun beneath the car at the figure in the blouse.

"Be ask who that is, signore," said Mariano excitedly, also pointing.

"The new chauffeur for the machine, from Paris," answered Pike casually, and with a bow, the two went off, to the right and the other to the left. As they disappeared Von Grollenhagen came walking across the grass with some white rags in his hands and an amused smile upon his face.

"Is there a new eruption of Vesuvius?" he asked, waving the clothes.

Daniel met him and took the rags.

"No," he said dryly. "It's an eruption of colonels trying to arrest a man."

He paused and went on: "But I committed the great Russian crime. I was caught, and through treachery. There was an Englishman who lived in Petersburg. He had contracts with the government. I thought he was my friend—my best friend. I had married in my student days in Paris. Ah, it is the old story! he cried bitterly. "I knew the Englishman admired my wife, but I trusted her, and I trusted him, and he made my house his home. So many have done that thing. I had 50,000 rubles in my desk—the funds I had transferred—to be delivered to my society. One day the police came to search, and they found only me—not my wife, not my English friend, not the 50,000 rubles. I went to Siberia. Now I search for those two."

He leaned against the automobile and pressed his hands over his face, while Pike and Von Grollenhagen glanced at each other sorrowfully. Finally the latter asked:

"It was they who sent the police?"

And Ivanovitch replied vigorously:

"After they had taken the money and were beyond the frontier themselves. That is all I have against them."

For a moment the hunted look left his eyes, and into them came the ravens' gleam of the hunting, starving wolf. His fingers clasped and unclasped themselves spasmodically, and there was a set look about his jaws that spoke ill for the guilty pair should they ever meet this man with the manacles off his hands.

The lawyer shuddered slightly as he gazed at him, and he laughed a short, hard laugh.

"Looks to me as if that would be about enough to have against them," he said. Von Grollenhagen stood combing his wild beard with strong fingers and evidently studying the case. At last he spoke.

"Then by your own confession you are an embezzler and a revolutionist," he said, and at Ivanovitch's start of

school professor. I've got him under your car there, yonder."

The start the German gave would have been ludicrous in any other situation.

"My friend," he said, "do you realize the penalty for protecting a criminal from arrest?"

"I told them he was your chauffeur. We'll be proud of the risk, doc." He turned to the refugee under the machine. "This man owns the car," he went on. "You can trust him the same as your own father." And the German shrugged his shoulders in protest. There was a clatter of arms, and Pike looked up.

"Look out!" he said. "The governor's staff is coming back." And as the carabinieri returned he said casually to Von Grollenhagen:

"You'll have to get a new front tire, doc. That one is pretty near gone. Better have Jim here put on the spare one when he gets through."

The German looked at him.

"Do you know what you are asking me to do?"

"To have a new front tire put on," answered the lawyer. The police were looking on with interest, and finally Mariano approached.

"The carabinieri, with all excuses, beg that you will order the chauffeur to step forth from the machine."

Pike made an exclamation.

"No, sir! I worked on that machine myself for three hours. He's got his hands full of nuts and bolts and screws half fastened. We want to get the job finished. Tell them to go on up Main street with their Knights of Pythias parade and come around some day when we're not busy."

Mariano held a hurried consultation with the carabinieri and turned back.

"Because the chauffeur have been engage today the carabinieri ask ten thousand pardons, but inquire how long he have been known to his employer."

"How long! Why, he was raised on doc's father's farm!"

"If that is so," began Mariano.

"So? Of course it's so. Tell 'em, doc!"

The German looked at Mariano gravely.

"You have heard my friend say it."

"I have your permission, Herr von Grollenhagen, to reveal your incognito to the carabinieri?"

"Is it necessary?"

"Otherwise they will not depart."

"Very well; tell them. But I rely upon them to preserve my incognito from all others."

Mariano smiled.

"Monsieur, they depart," and turned to the uniformed men. An instant later these swung through the gate and went their way. Pike looked after them in astonishment.

"He must have mesmerized the militia, eh, doc?" and signed to the refugee to come out from the car. He was a pathetic figure as he emerged and held out his hands.

"To you both I give thanks"—But Von Grollenhagen cut in:

"My American friend has placed himself—and myself—in danger of the penal code of Italy for protecting you. Perhaps you will be good enough to let us know for what we have incriminated ourselves."

CHAPTER XII.

THE NIBBLIST.

WITH a hasty glance about the garden to make sure he was not observed, the refugee approached Von Grollenhagen and Daniel and spread out his hands as he stepped forward there

was a movement of the window curtains in the casement above the doorway to the hotel, and he turned; but, whatever had caused it, the movement had ceased and there was nothing apparent.

"The Italian journals call me a brigand," said the Russian, "and in this they are inspired by the Russian legation at Rome. I am known as Ivanoff Ivanovitch, and I have spent nine years in Siberia, nine years of hell. It is ten years ago since I was condemned in St. Petersburg, and you, who know nothing of the horrors of Russia, present, cannot understand what I have suffered, my friends. I was a professor of languages, a translator in the bureau of the minister of finance, and I was trusted."

For a moment he paused and pressed his scarred hands to his lined forehead, then sighed and went on:

"I was also a member of the Blue Fifties, a Constitutionalist, and as such was able to do a little for the cause, the cause, the same, my friend"—he turned to Pike—"for which your forbears suffered and fought—the cause of liberty. I could do but little, though I tried. At last I transferred the funds of the government to the Society of the Blue Fifties. It was a small thing. It was for the cause—not one ruble for myself. I swear it!"

Von Grollenhagen started back, with a gesture of repulsion, and Ivanovitch held out his hands.

"Not one ruble for myself!" he repeated. "It was for Russia's sake, not mine!"

He paused and went on: "But I committed the great Russian crime. I was caught, and through treachery. There was an Englishman who lived in Petersburg. He had contracts with the government. I thought he was my friend—my best friend. I had married in my student days in Paris. Ah, it is the old story! he cried bitterly. "I knew the Englishman admired my wife, but I trusted her, and I trusted him, and he made my house his home. So many have done that thing. I had 50,000 rubles in my desk—the funds I had transferred—to be delivered to my society. One day the police came to search, and they found only me—not my wife, not my English friend, not the 50,000 rubles. I went to Siberia. Now I search for those two."

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"Then by your own confession you are an embezzler and a revolutionist," he said, and at Ivanovitch's start of

subject misery and contrition Pike stepping forward and laid his hand on the German's arm.

"The man's down," he said gently.

"You wouldn't go back on him now?" He waited an instant and then chuckled grimly in a thin, humorous way.

"Besides, you've made yourself one of his confederates, doc," he finished.

As he spoke Von Grollenhagen glanced at him quickly, and his eyes took on a tinge of surprise.

"Upon my soul, but I have, my friend!" Then he laughed outright.

"Ah, from the first sight of you in the hotel at Napoli I saw that you were a great man."

Daniel looked at him and grinned in his face.

"What you doing, doc—running for congress?" he asked, and the German joined him in the humor of the situation and then turned gravely to the Russian.

"I fear the carabinieri did not depart without suspicion."

"Suspicion!" echoed Ivanovitch bitterly. "They will watch every exit from the hotel and grounds. What can I do until dark?" Pike interrupted him quickly and motioned to the hotel.

"Why, doc, he's got the whole lower

floor of this wing. You're his chauffeur!"

"I was about to suggest it," interrupted Von Grollenhagen, in his turn, with some grin of manner. "I have a room that can well be spared for Professor Ivanovitch."

"How can I ever thank you? God bless you both!" said the Russian, going toward them with outstretched hands.

"Hih! Don't waste time talking about it," said Pike. "I shouldn't be surprised if you were hungry."

He took the refugee by the arm and steered him in the direction of the hotel, and as the three entered the wide door the curtains above the entrance

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