

# The PLACE of HONEY-MOONS by HAROLD MAC GRATH Pictures by C.D. RHODES

## SYNOPSIS.

Eleanora de Toscana was singing in Paris, which, perhaps, accounted for Edward Courtlandt's appearance there. Multimillionaire, he wandered about where fancy dictated. He might be in Paris one day and Kamchatka the next. Following the opera he goes to a cafe and is accosted by a pretty young woman. She gives him the address of Flora Desimone, vocal rival of Toscana, and Flora gives him the address of Eleanora, whom he is determined to see. Courtlandt enters Eleanora's apartments. She orders him out and shoots at him. The next day Paris is shocked by the mysterious disappearance of the prima donna.

### CHAPTER IV—Continued.

"There's the dusky princess peering out again. The truth is, Abby, if I could hide myself for three or four years, long enough for people to forget me, I might reconsider. But it should be under another name. They envy us millionaires. Why, we are the loneliest creatures going. We distrust every one; we fly when a woman approaches; we become monomaniacs; one thing obsesses us, everybody is after our money. We want friends, we want wives, but we want them to be attracted to us and not to our money-bags. Oh, pshaw! What plans have you made in regard to the search?"

Gloom settled upon the artist's face. "I've got to find out what's happened to her, Ted. This isn't any play. Why, she loves the part of Marguerite as she loves nothing else. She's been kidnaped, and only God knows for what reason. It has knocked me silly. I just came up from Como, where she spends the summers now. I was going to take her and Fournier out to dinner."

"Who's Fournier?"  
"Mademoiselle Fournier, the composer. She goes with Nora on the yearly concert tours."

"Pretty?"  
"Charming."

"I see," thoughtfully. "What part of the lake; the Villa d'Este, Cadenabbia?"  
"Bellaggio. Oh, it was ripping last summer. She's always singing when she's happy. When she sings on the terrace, suddenly, without giving anyone warning, her voice is wonderful. No audience ever heard anything like it."

"I heard her Friday night. I dropped in at the opera without knowing what they were singing. I admit all you say in regard to her voice and looks; but I stick to the whim."

"But you can't fake that chap with the blond mustache," retorted Abbott grimly. "Lord, I wish I had run into you any day but today. I'm all in. I can telephone to the Opera from the studio, and then we shall know for a certainty whether or not she will return for the performance tonight. If not, then I'm going in for a little detective work."

"Abby, it will turn out to be the sheep of Little Bo-Peep."

"Have your own way about it."

When they arrived at the studio Abbott telephoned promptly. Nothing

had been heard. They were substituting another singer.

"Call up the Herald," suggested Courtlandt.

Abbott did so. And he had to answer innumerable questions, questions which worked him into a fine rage; who was he, where did he live, what did he know, how long had he been in Paris, and could he prove that he had arrived that morning? Abbott wanted to fling the receiver into the mouth of the transmitter, but his patience was presently rewarded. The singer had not yet been found, but the chauffeur of the mysterious car had turned up in a hospital, and perhaps by night they would know everything. The chauffeur had had a bad accident; the car itself was a total wreck, in a ditch, not far from Versailles.

"There!" cried Abbott, slamming the receiver on the hook. "What do you say to that?"

"The chauffeur may have left her somewhere, got drunk afterward, and plunged into the ditch. Things have happened like that. Abby, don't make a camel's hair shirt out of your paint-brushes. What a pother about a singer! If it had been a great inventor, a poet, an artist, there would have been nothing more than a two-line paragraph. But an opera singer, one who entertains us during our idle evenings—ha! that's a different matter. Set instantly that great municipal machinery called the police in action; sell extra editions on the streets. What ado!"

"What the devil makes you so bitter?"

"Was I bitter? I thought I was philosophizing." Courtlandt consulted his watch. Half after four. "Come over to the Maurice and dine with me tomorrow night, that is, if you do not find your prima donna. I've an engagement at five-thirty, and must be off."

"I was about to ask you to dine with me tonight," disappointedly.

"Can't; awfully sorry, Abby. It was only luck that I met you in the Luxembourg. Be over about seven. I was very glad to see you again."

Abbott kicked a broken easel into a corner. "All right. If anything turns up I'll let you know. You're at the Grand?"

"Yes. By-by."

"I know what's the matter with him," mused the artist, alone. "Some woman has chucked him. Silly little fool, probably."

Courtlandt went down stairs and out into the boulevard. Frankly, he was beginning to feel concerned. He still held to his original opinion that the diva had disappeared of her own free will; but if the machinery of the police had been started, he realized that his own safety would eventually become involved. By this time, he reasoned, there would not be a hotel in Paris free of surveillance. Naturally, blond strangers would be in demand. The complications that would follow his own arrest were not to be ignored. He agreed with his conscience that he had not acted with dignity in forcing his way into her apartment. But that night he had been at odds with convention; his spirit had been that of the marauding old Dutchman of the seventeenth century. He perfectly well knew that she was in the right as far as the pistol-shot was concerned. Further, he knew that he could quash any charge she might make in that direction by the simplest of declarations; and to avoid this simplest of declarations she would prefer silence above all things. They knew each other tolerably well.

It was extremely fortunate that he had not been to the hotel since Saturday. He went directly to the war office. The great and powerful man there was the only hope left. They had met some years before in Algiers, where Courtlandt had rendered him a very real service.

"I did not expect you to the minute," the great man said pleasantly. "You will not mind waiting for a few minutes."

"Not in the least. Only, I'm in a deuce of a mess," frankly and directly. "Innocently enough, I've stuck my head into the police net."

"Is it possible that now I can pay my debt to you?"

"Such as it is. Have you read the article in the newspapers regarding the disappearance of Signorina da Toscana, the singer?"

"Yes."  
"I am the unknown blond. Tomorrow morning I want you to go with me to the prefecture and state that I was with you all of Saturday and Sunday; that on Monday you and your wife dined with me, that yesterday we went to the aviation meet, and later to the Odeon."

"In brief, an alibi?" smiling now.

"Exactly. I shall need one."

"And a perfectly good alibi. But I have your word that you are in no



When They Arrived at the Studio, Abby Telephoned Promptly.

wise concerned? Pardon the question, but between us it is really necessary if I am to be of service to you."

"On my word as a gentleman."

"That is sufficient."

"In fact, I do not believe that she has been abducted at all. Will you let me use your pad and pen for a minute?"

The other pushed over the required articles. Courtlandt scrawled a few words and passed back the pad.

"For me to read?"

"Yes," moodily.

The Frenchman read. Courtlandt watched him anxiously. There was not even a flicker of surprise in the official eye. Calmly he ripped off the sheet and tore it into bits, distributing the pieces into the various waste baskets yawning about his long flat desk. Next, still avoiding the younger man's eye, he arranged his papers neatly and locked them up in a huge safe which only the artillery of the German army could have forced. He then called for his hat and stick. He beckoned to Courtlandt to follow. Not a word was said until the car was humming on the road to Vincennes.

"Well?" said Courtlandt, finally. It was not possible for him to hold back the question any longer.

"My dear friend, I am taking you out to the villa for the night."

"But I have nothing."

"And I have everything, even foresight. If you were arrested tonight it would cause you some inconvenience. I am fifty-six, some twenty years your senior. Under this hat of mine I carry a thousand secrets, and every one of these thousand must go to the grave with me, yours along with them. I have met you a dozen times since those Algerian days, and never have you failed to afford me some amusement or excitement. You are the most interesting and entertaining young man I know. Try one of these cigars."

Precisely at the time Courtlandt stepped into the automobile outside the war office, a scene, peculiar in character, but inconspicuous in that it did not attract attention, was enacted in the Gare de l'Est. Two sober-visaged men stood respectfully aside to permit a tall young man in a Bavarian hat to enter a compartment of the second class. What could be seen of the young man's face was full of smothered wrath and disappointment. How he hated himself, for his weakness, for his cowardice! He was not all bad. Knowing that he was being watched and followed, he could not go to Versailles and compromise her, uselessly. The devil take the sleek demon of a woman who had prompted him to commit so base an act!

"You will at least," he said, "deliver that message which I have intrusted to your care."

"It shall reach Versailles tonight, your highness."

The young man reread the telegram which one of the two men had given him a moment since. It was a command which even he, wilful and disobedient as he was, dared not ignore. He ripped it into shreds and flung them out of the window. He did not apologize to the man into whose face the pieces flew. That gentleman red-

dened perceptibly, but he held his tongue. The blare of a horn announced the time of departure. The train moved. The two men on the platform saluted, but the young man ignored the salutation. Not until the rear car disappeared in the hazy distance did the watchers stir. Then they left the station and got into the tonneau of a touring car, which shot away and did not stop until it drew up before that imposing embassy upon which the French will always look with more or less suspicion.

### CHAPTER V.

#### The Bird Behind Bars.

The most beautiful blue Irish eyes in the world gazed out at the dawn which turned night-blue into day-blue and paled the stars. Rosal lay the undulating horizon, presenting to burst into living flame, transmitting the dull steel bars of the window into fairy gold, that trick of alchemy so futilely sought by man. There was a window at the north and another at the south, likewise barred; but the Irish eyes never sought these two. It was from the east window only that they could see the long white road that led to Paris.

The nightingale was truly caged. But the wild heart of the eagle beat in this nightingale's breast, and the eyes burned as fiercely toward the east as the east burned toward the west. Sunday and Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday, today; and that the five dawns were singular in beauty and that she had never in her life before witnessed the creation of five days, one after another, made no impression upon her sense of the beautiful, so delicate and receptive in ordinary times. She was conscious that within her the cup of wrath was overflowing. Of other things, such as eating and sleeping and moving about in her cage (more like an eagle indeed than a nightingale), recurrence had blunted her perception.

"Oh, but he shall pay, he shall pay!" she murmured, striving to loosen the bars with her small, white, helpless hands. The cry seemed to be an aria, for through all these four maddening days she had voiced it—now low and deadly with hate, now full-toned in burning anger, now broken by sobs of despair. "Will you never come, so that I may tell you how base and vile you are?" she further addressed the east.

She had waited for his appearance on Sunday. Late in the day one of the jailers had informed her that it was impossible for the gentleman to come before Monday. So she marshaled her army of phrases, of accusations, of denunciations, ready to smother him with them the moment he came. But he came not Monday, nor Tuesday, nor Wednesday. The suspense was to her mind diabolical. She began to understand; he intended to keep her there till he was sure that her spirit was broken, then he would come. Break her spirit? She laughed wildly. He could break her spirit no more easily than she could break these bars. To bring her to Versailles upon an errand of mercy! Well, he was capable of anything.

She was not particularly distressed because she knew that it would not be possible for her to sing again until the following winter in New York. She had sobbed too much, with her face buried in the pillow. Had these sobs



"Oh, but He Shall Pay, He Shall Pay."

been born of weakness, all might have been well; but rage had mothered them, and thus her voice was in a very bad way. This morning she was noticeably hoarse, and there was a break in the aria. No, she did not fret over this side of the calamity. The sting of it all lay in the fact that she had been outraged in the matter of personal liberty, with no act of reprisal to ease her immediate longing to be avenged.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## KILLED MOUNTAIN LION

### HORSE MORE THAN A MATCH FOR Foe IN FAIR FIGHT.

Had Opportunity to Run, But Bravely Stood His Ground and Crushed the Skull of His Enemy in the Last Round.

The following, among hundreds of similar incidents, seems to be well authenticated:

Some years ago a hunter in Wyoming territory was camping under the Wind river, well up in the mountains. He had a horse of fine breed, and had selected a small bunch of cottonwood trees for his camp, while, at a little distance, under an unusually large tree of the same kind, and apart from all the others, he stabled his stallion.

It could hardly be called stabling—for the horse was picketed, and the tree formed his shelter.

One night the hunter was aroused from a sound sleep by a neigh from his horse, which sounded rather like rage than alarm. American horses are often quick to detect the approach of Indians, as well as beasts of prey, and the hunter was soon upon his feet, and looking in the direction of his horse.

The animal was standing in the full light of a bright moon, and seemed to be staring at an object in the branches of the tree. As the hunter looked the branches were violently agitated, a dreadful yelling scream was heard, and a dark object, which was a mountain lion, landed on the back of the horse. The latter sprang into the air, with a mad scream, little inferior in shrillness and rage to that of his enemy.

He returned to the ground with a great concussion, but failed to shake off the mountain lion, so closely did the latter cling to his prey. Blood began to appear on the horse's neck and shoulders, and the lion was tearing his way to his jugular, to let out the gallant beast's life.

Apparently realizing his full danger, before his master could do anything, the horse snapped the picket rope and sprang into a dense tangle of boughs, and the mountain lion was torn from his seat and hurled back with great violence. The stallion passed through the thicket and then turned to confront his enemy in the open space, never offering to run away.

The lion, quickly recovering himself, and mad with the taste of blood, sprang once more into the branches of the big tree and made another leap toward the horse, but missed his aim.

Then he began a series of circles around the horse, getting nearer and nearer each time, and at last made another leap.

But the brave horse was ready for him, and with the rapidity of thought changed front and his hind feet struck the lion full in the breast.

The animal rolled over and over, with yells of pain and rage, but then came to again.

This time he came to his death, for the horse's heels struck him fairly between the eyes, and crushed his skull clean across. He gave a few convulsive struggles and then stiffened in death, while the triumphant stallion stood neighing and pawing the ground in token of victory.

#### Cutting and Polishing.

The Rev. Holman Black was congratulated in Denver by a reporter, after an eloquent sermon, on his mastery of pulpit oratory.

"What is your secret, sir?" the reporter asked.

"Well," was Dr. Black's smiling answer, "a preacher should always remember that while there are sermons in stone, the more precious a stone is, the more carefully it must be cut and polished."

#### Chicken Hawk in Flight.

Saw chicken hawk in flight, which suggests the motion of a motorcar. No flapping, no soaring, but a series of quick, explosive beats of the wings, each sending the bird forward in a leap of several yards. The flicker gives five strokes, then a jump.—From "A Farmer's Notebook."

#### Positive Proof.

The Counsel—"How do you know this night letter was forged by a man and not written by the woman whose name is signed to it?" The Expert—"Because it contains just 48 words, and a woman would have used two more to get her money's worth."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

#### Woman's Great Power.

Woman is the salvation or destruction of the family. She carries its destinies in the folds of her mantle.—Amliel.

#### Outward Bound.

"Have you an opening here for me?" asked the assertive young man. "Yes," answered the capitalist. "It's right behind you."



### KEEP IN MIND WHEN WRITING

If One Would Be Classed as a Welcome Correspondent These Must Be Remembered.

Be yourself, strive for the expression of your own thoughts, write with all the force of your personality, and you will be projecting your mind on the mind of the friend who is to draw delight from your letter. Write with the conscious wish to express truthfully and well that which you have to say, abjure slovenly makeshift, and just as strongly, the self-consciousness which keeps one eye on the purpose in hand and one on effect.

Remember always that there is the possibility of publicity for your letter, and if you have malice, cruelty, or uncharitableness in your mind, at least see that you do not commit your feelings to paper, to your possible confounding at some later date, when kindness has replaced your former harsh judgment.

Remembering all these things, you will have no need for the services of a complete letter writer. Guided by sincerity and truth, you may proceed to give your thoughts the given permanence of writing.

Charity begins at home and is usually too weak to travel.