

"Alias Jimmy Valentine"



Novelized by
FREDERICK R. TOOMBS
From the Great
Play
by **PAUL ARMSTRONG**

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JIMMY VALENTINE, WARDEN HANDLER AND ROSE LANE.

such adorable eyes ever have com-
mitted a crime greater than the pilage of
his grandmother's jam closet. Yes,
he was the victim of some strangely
terrible plot, of heinous machinations
like those of the French revolution or
of the Spanish Inquisition.

The lieutenant governor continued to
press Valentine.

"But once convicted," he went on,
"it seems to me that you would have
made an application for a new trial."
"My lawyer is working on that now,
sir."

Rose Lane pressed her uncle's hand
and looked pleadingly at the state of-
ficial as though supplicating his fur-
ther aid for the prisoner. The lieuten-
ant governor was responsive to the
fair young girl's influence, and after
a pause he spoke the words that were
to fill with a new hope the tortured
soul of Jimmy Valentine.

"Tell your lawyer to apply for a
pardon. I promise you he shall have
every possible assistance in his effort
to secure it."

"Thank you, sir; thank you," mur-
mured the prisoner gratefully, but his
eyes turned involuntarily to those of
the girl, who he well knew was really
responsible for his new opportunity.

"And you can thank my niece, too,"
added Fay.

"I thank her most deeply."
"That's all," said Fay, moving away
and beckoning to Rose.

Valentine started as though to go
through the door leading to the cell



"MY TRUE NAME IS LEE RANDALL."

corridor where Handler was pacing
restlessly up and down. Suddenly the
prisoner reconsidered. He took a step
toward the girl, who stood watching
him with an expression of pity in her
eyes. He bent over as though to grasp
her hand; then with a stoical effort he
mastered himself and straightened
back.

"Words are fickle things sometimes,"
he said in a low, gentlemanly voice,
with perfect pronunciation and intona-
tion. "But I—"

"Yes, we know that," put in the lieuten-
ant governor.

Rose Lane was deeply touched by
the struggle that even her little burden
of knowledge of the world told her
was going on in the prisoner's breast.

"Goodby, Mr. Valentine," she said
softly.

The prisoner replied in a half whisper.

"I would rather you called me by
a name that is not disgraced. My true
name is Lee Randall."

"Goodby, Lee Randall," said the girl.

"Goodby, God bless you," was the
convict's trembling response as he
turned slowly away to be led back to
his cell and to Warden Handler.

"Rose," called the lieutenant gov-
ernor.

"Yes," said the girl, going to him.

"Is he innocent?"

"Why, certainly."

"That's your intuition?"

"Yes, and that's all a girl has in
judging men. Don't you think he is
innocent, uncle?"

"I don't know, but I think he might
be honest were he given the chance."

"And you are going to give it to
him?"

"We will go to the governor. The
matter rests entirely in his hands."

Rose threw her arm around her
uncle's neck and kissed him fondly.

"The warden is very angry, and the
man is helpless," she said fearfully.

"Why, they might even kill!"

"Oh, no, Rose, not that."

"But you realize—"

"Yes, but I don't think they would
dare—"

"But I am in a chill of fear. The
warden's manner—"

"Most wardens are bullies, Rose,
and I don't think this Handler an ex-
ception; I think a few words from me
might—"

At this juncture Handler stormed
into the office. He glared angrily at
his visitors. At Fay's direction Rose
went out into the waiting room.

"Finished your star chamber ses-
sion, governor?" he asked sneeringly.

"Mr. Handler," sternly, "let me say
something to you for your own bene-
fit. You are an employee of the state.
Employees have been removed, even
wardens, for a speech no more dis-
courteous than the one you have just
made. When Valentine gets out—and
I hope it will be soon—I am going to
ask him how he was treated, and if he
tells me you treated him any worse
after today than before I came I
promise you a little polite h—l. Good
day, sir."

The lieutenant governor followed
Rose.

Smith had come in with the ward-
en. The latter turned to his secre-
tary as Fay departed and snarled vi-
ciously, his teeth protruding like yel-
low fangs. "Valentine, eh? Get him!"

Smith, his face gravely set, obedi-
ently went out of the room.

CHAPTER V.

AS his secretary left the room to

procure Valentine Warden

Handler glowered darkly at

the door that closed behind

him and through which No. 1289 was

to be unwillingly brought. He would

show this man who had dared to talk

to the lieutenant governor that Billy

Handler was the boss of Sing Sing

prison and no one else, even lieutenant

governors to the contrary. Discipline

must be preserved. Yes, that was it—

the old explanation that always held

good when a prisoner who offended

the warden in any way was meted

out the vengeance that the warden

would not be denied. Once there was

a thin chested, cough racked little

election inspector "doing three" for

crooked work at the polls who had

had his front teeth kicked down his

throat because he would not shine the

warden's shoes. As for this slick Mr.

Valentine, he was altogether too inde-
pendent, too, and the warden would
give him the lesson of his life. He
would—

The door opened, and in came Smith,
holding Jimmy Valentine by the arm.
The warden stood at his desk.
"Bring him over here!" he cried
hoarsely, pointing to the space in front
of his desk.

The secretary slipped his hand up
behind the prisoner's neck and with a
violent heave flung Valentine forward
so that he was barely able to prevent
himself from falling flat on his face.
Gritting his teeth, No. 1289 straightened
himself and finally succeeded in
suppressing the impulse that surged
within him to spring at his cowardly
assistant's throat. Probably it was
the realization of the fact that he
knew himself to be more than an
equal for Smith in a hand to hand
conflict that enabled him to restrain
himself—the contempt of a strong,
confident man for an ignoble inferior.

Smith was larger and heavier, yes,
but the man who had hip locked the
burglar Cotton and had thrown him
headlong to his death from the win-
dow of a rushing railway train was
not one to be trifled with. Besides, no
less a personage than George Bothner,
the world's lightweight wrestling cham-
pion, had taught Valentine the mys-
teries of the "grapevine," the "cross
buttock," the "Cornwall heave," the
"flying mare," the "back heel," the rib
crushing "scissors," the wrist and
crotch holds and even the tortures of
the deadly strangle holds, front and
rear.

Handler bent over his desk, resting
both his hands upon it, and sneered
at Valentine.

"Why didn't you smash him when
he hit you, you coward?" he asked
the helpless prisoner in purposely ag-
gravating tones. "You're losing your
nerve in this little boarding house of
mine; that's what's the matter with
you. You haven't any manhood left
in you. And, say, Valentine, when we
have had you here as our guest two
years more you'll be whining around
like a puppy with the pink eye; that's
what you're coming to. It's bound to
get you—this life—just like it gets all
the rest of you thin skinned guys.
Only a bum can live this life and keep
his mind and his manhood."

The cruel words of the warden sank
deeply into Valentine's soul, as Han-
dler well knew they would. But the
prisoner was determined that he would
show no signs of weakening before the
two men who hated him.

"I didn't hit him because I'll square
myself when I get out," answered Val-
entine defiantly, "and there are a few
little things that I will square with
you, too, Mr. Warden Handler. You
know you have me in your power, and
so do I. But, Handler, you're going to
like me better from now on because,
realizing my position, I have dared go
against you."

But Valentine had mistaken his
man. The respect that one fighting
man has for another who fights him
squarely found no place in the craven
heart of Billy Handler. Valentine had
yet something to learn of the psy-
chology of jail wardens. Handler's
face took on a malignant expression.
"Oh," he sneered, "so I'm going to
like you, am I? Well, just watch me
I'll burke you, you!"

Handler lunged around the corner
of his desk at the prisoner.

"Don't burke me!" cried Valentine
desperately.

Eyes gleaming with his vengeful-
ness, with hands outstretched, the
warden came headlong at Valentine,
who braced himself to withstand the
shock of the oncoming body. Crouch-
ing, the prisoner primed himself to
clutch one of the warden's thumbs,
which was carelessly extended out-
ward from his hand—a trick Bothner
had shown him. Once securing this
thumb, it could be pulled back or
twisted to the breaking point if nec-
essary to cause an opponent to yield,
or by drawing the outstretched arm
over his shoulder, wheeling his back
to his foe as he did so, Valentine
could bend sharply forward and throw
his assailant helplessly over his head
and on to the floor in a heap with the
disconcerting "flying mare."

But midway in his rush the warden
stopped short. He had caught him-
self just in time. About to throw
himself blindly at his intended victim,
a thought (an inspiration he after-
ward considered it to be) flashed
through his brain. The warden halt-
ed, much to the amazement of his
secretary, Smith, who had been watch-
ing the proceedings with unconcern
born of experience in like happenings.
Then Handler turned away, rested one
hand on his desk and with the other
stroked his heavy, square chin reflect-
ively.

"God!" he pondered. "Suppose the
lieutenant governor should get on to
those deals in the contracts for sup-
plies? He might, and then I'd need
him to be my friend."

Handler reached out, picked up a box
from the desk and extended it to the
now thoroughly thunderstruck convict,
who was slowly recovering from the
mental strain of the last few moments.
"Have a cigar," smiled the warden
graciously, with a sweeping bow. "Also
permit me to offer you a chair, Mr.
Valentine."

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