

"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.

CHAPTER XII
"G" went on Red enthusiastically, not appreciating the reason for Valentine's silence. "But that Kitty is a great kid! Ain't it funny how a kid like that will get hold of a tough old tramp like me?"

"See child," commented Valentine. He picked up the telegram and handed it to Red.

"Red read that," he said dully, as though discouraged.

"The other read in silence."

"Doyle! Good heaven!" he exclaimed.

"Doyle!" said Valentine. "It took him quite a while to uncover us didn't it?"

"But he's finally done it—got your name and everything?"

"Did you notice it wasn't signed?"

"Yes. Who do you suppose tipped you?"

"Doyle," was Valentine's amazing response.

"Doyle!" cried Red, starting back. The assistant cashier bent toward the watchman.

"Doyle sent that, Red. Don't you see he's not sure of me? But if I run away from the bank when that telegram came out of town for the afternoon he'd know he had me."

"Never thought. I'd have ducked," commented Red. "And now he'll turn me up too. I'm going." He fingered his hat nervously.

"You're not. He don't want you, and if you stay where you belong he won't see you."

Red nodded his head decisively.

"I'll stay closer to the bank than an emigrant to his tag. And you, Jimmy?"

Valentine smiled as the other barked off in his excitement into using his old name.

"Jimmy?" How natural that sounds, Red? he said to himself.

"Excuse me, I meant 'Mr. Randall,'" protested Red.

"No! It's all right, only don't by any chance use it before Doyle, because I'm going to alibi Doyle until he'll think he's lost his eyesight."

"Alibi?" repeated Red curiously. "I've heard of that before."

"Alibi, that's it, Red," replied Valentine. And he continued rapidly:

"You haven't forgotten the one greatest refuge of the crook, have you—our old friend the alibi? Something which proves you were not where you were when something happened. I was never Jimmy Valentine, Red. I was never in Sing Sing. I've been straight all my life and can prove it. I've been waiting for Mr. Doyle nearly three years, and I've got him beat. I never did that job in Springfield, Massachusetts. I was never there in my life. And if I've got to use the crook's tools to beat it I'm justified. I'm living straight and I'm going to, and all the gods are with me, Red."

He took a scrapbook from a drawer and opened it. "Look at that. For five years you will find clippings of Lee Randall when he lived in St. Paul. That man was my cousin. He went to Alaska and never came back. My name is also Lee Randall, and I defy Doyle to prove he ever saw me."

Valentine, out of breath owing to the long speech he had delivered at top speed, leaned back and gazed triumphantly at Flanagan. The latter stared amazedly at the assistant cash-

ier, trying to guess as to whether or not he was telling the truth. Well, there was a scrapbook. That would afford ready means of proving Valentine's words. Red picked up the book and swiftly skimmed the pages. His attention was held by one of the clippings. He read aloud:

"St. Paul News, March 12, 1906.—The speaker of the evening was Mr. Lee Randall. His subject was—"

"Look at that other one," interrupted Valentine, pointing. "See how they join up with the day I came here. And Avery has sent me something that will make Mr. Doyle's eyes blink like an owl."

Red laughed grimly. The telephone bell rang.

"Avery! Did you say Avery?" asked Red.

"Yes," picking up the receiver. Then to the operator: "Yes, send Mr. Cronin right in. There's a friend of his here who wants to see him." He looked significantly across at Red.

Flanagan glanced around the room, then at Valentine. "Say," he began.

"I'm the only one here in the room except you, and I don't want to see any 'Mr. Cronin.' Don't know him. Who is he?"

"Mr. Cronin," responded Valentine, "is the man who is going to save you and me from going back to state prison."

Valentine went on to recount to Red how Bill Avery, after he had said goodbye to his "pal" in Albany, had gone to the middle west and eventually married a sedate widow of middle age, whose son was an expert photographer, one who operated a large studio in St. Louis and employed men who specialized in covering important events for the newspapers and magazines.

"Avery?" ejaculated Red. "Avery working—absolutely on the square?"

"Yes, that's the truth, the awful truth," laughed Valentine whimsically. "But you say Bill—Bill Avery is married?" asked Red, completely overcome at the suggestion.

"Yes, it's all true, and Bill has proved a true friend to me—to us," answered Valentine.

"And he's really happy?" went on Red doubtfully. "Him as always had a stable of billies spendin' his coin. He's happy with one wife?"

The assistant cashier gave vent to a burst of glee at the astonishment of the watchman, who probably would have understood the process of reformation in any one but Bill Avery.

But a few minutes elapsed after Valentine answered the telephone call before the door opened, and in came a man whose iron gray hair curled beneath the rim of his high silk hat. Glaringly bright yellow kid gloves adorned his hands. His frock coat, of the latest make, was a bit worn on the edges, and it was for that reason that the secondhand dealer had made a reduction in price to Mr. Cronin.

The newcomer laid a handsome gold-headed Indian bamboo walking stick across a chair, took off his gloves and faced Valentine and Red.

"Mr. Randall?" he said.

"Yes, Mr. Cronin."

"Cronin be blowed," cried Red, starting forward. "It's Bill Avery. How about you, old pal?"

Avery, pleased at the enthusiastic welcome and at the sight of both of his old friends, shook hands with each. Then he drew back and looked

from one to the other. "THINK OF US



"MR. CRONIN" FACED VALENTINE AND RED, three being left alone together like this in a real bank," he said significantly, and his two hearers could not restrain laughter at the thought of what the circumstances would have meant to them in days now put behind them.

"Did you get the picture?" asked Avery of Valentine. "You told me to send it, but I wanted to see you. That double negative is a wonder."

Valentine looked understandingly at him. He rose from his chair, picked up the telegram from his desk and extended it to Avery.

"Yes; it's all right," he said. "And it came just in time. Today is the day I'll need it," pointing to the telegram. "Read that!"

Avery read the message. The pallor of unnerving fear came upon him. His head dropped forward and he glanced apprehensively about him.

His hand trembled as he laid the paper on the desk. He sank hopelessly into a chair. "Doyle," the old man choked. "Doyle! He said he'd slough me, and now he'll do it—or else he'll make me pay blackmail. You never can tell how much a copper wants for keepin' quiet."

"Oh, don't get blue," encouraged Valentine. "He doesn't want you fellows. It's me that he is after." He examined a large photograph which Avery had sent him. It showed the tables and guests at a large banquet in a luxuriously appointed restaurant.

"Yes, I think this saves me," he remarked. He held it before Red, asking, "What's this?"

"Flashlight of a banquet."

"Who is this on the right of the toastmaster?" pointing at a face in the picture.

"You."

"Pipe the date," went on the assistant cashier. "Feb. 9, 1903. Do you remember where I was on that date?" He gazed curiously at Red. Avery watched the proceeding with rare interest.

The watchman became thoughtful. At last a puzzled wrinkle marked his forehead. "Why—why—you were—in—Sing Sing—prison—on—that—date," he replied confusedly.

Valentine and Avery laughed in their superior knowledge.

"No, no," protested Valentine, "this photograph proves I was at a banquet in St. Paul. I'll beat Doyle and I'll make him like it."

"You can't," was Avery's pessimistic comment.

"You said we couldn't go square, any of us, and we all have," was Valentine's rejoinder. "And if we can beat the thing inside of us that calls we can beat one man that hunts."

A clerk knocked at the door and entered to ascertain if he should now bring in a trayful of cash which Valentine was to count. He was ordered to do so at once, and Avery's face became a study as the young man soon re-entered with a tray on which new banknotes of large denominations were piled among glistening rows of gold coin.

"Great snakes, what a chance!" exclaimed the one time thief, looking from Valentine to the watchman. "This is no place for me. Oh, just for one grab and the quick getaway!" He mopped his wrinkled brow. "I'm sweating like a polar bear on the Fourth of July."

"Haven't got it out of your blood yet, eh?" asked Valentine.

"Not the craving for real money. I learned to let the wheat in the grain elevator alone after a month or two, but coarse money like that—wow!" The old man stared fascinatedly at the enticing tray.

"Well, we watched each other for awhile," commented Red, pointing to his chief.

"And ain't neither of you ever snatched even one bundle?" asked Avery incredulously.

"No."

(To be Continued)

That Rascal Pat

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Pat McNeggerty..... R. M. Cain
Major Puffjacket..... J. F. Wesely
Charles Livingstone..... John Sticha
Laura..... Miss Birdella Brenner
Nancy..... Miss Agnes Cain

SYNOPSIS OF PLAY

Mr. Charles Livingstone is in love with Laura, who returns his affection but cannot secure the consent of Major Puffjacket a crusty old bachelor, to their union. Charles leaves his servant Pat McNeggerty, a good natured and blundering Irishman, at a fashionable watering place hotel, cautioning him not to leave the house until Charles' return. Major Puffjacket and his niece happen to be staying in the same house unknown to Charles, and the Major offers to take Pat into his service, to which proposition, Pat, thinking to turn a few honest dollars during his master's absence, assents. Charles returns unexpectedly and Pat, in trying to serve two masters, accidentally changes a pocket-book in the Major's coat for a picture-case in that of Charles, and to explain the mistake he tells the Major that the picture-case was given him by his late master, on his death bed, much to the grief of Laura, who recognizes it as the picture she had given to Charles. Then Pat explains the presence of the pocket-book to Charles by saying a gentleman had given it to him to hold, and Charles finding the pocket-book to contain his own letters to Laura, supposes the Major whom he had never seen, a rival, grossly insults the latter and challenges him to mortal combat. After a comical series of complications all the parties meet and explanations ensue. Laura discovering that Charles is not dead, pleads for forgiveness which the Major finally grants, together with his consent to their marriage. And though deeply incensed at Pat, he concludes that as the latter is about to marry Laura's maid and can thereby easily serve both his old and his new master, the best thing he can do is to retain in his service "That Rascal Pat."

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