

SATAN'S HENCHMAN—

By
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Widely-Known Author

A Fast Stepping, Romantic Story Depicting the Operations of an Unscrupulous Crook

Theo Makes a New Enemy in Clarice Who is Jealous of His Love for Marcia.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE—

Theodore Ashton, tall, handsome, bronze ex-soldier and athlete, the idol of his widowed mother, has by hard labor, done much to build the success of the Negroian Life Insurance Company, and holds the responsible position of cashier. Theo is engaged to Clarice, the daughter of James O. Oliver, president of the insurance company. He admits to his mother that she has asked him to marry her.

Francis Bolton, a newcomer in the city, and suddenly popular because of his supposed wealth, calls with a friend at the office and applies for two twenty-five-thousand-dollar policies for himself and ward. President Oliver is enthusiastic over Bolton, but Theo wins Bolton's hatred by his insistence that the policies be handled in the regular way, and not be rushed through.

Theo had that morning received an anonymous letter warning him to be careful. Bruce, the bookkeeper, discovers a discrepancy in the records. Ethel, Oliver's second and young wife, hating Clarice, her step-daughter, makes advances to Theo.

At the end of the day, counting up the receipts with thousands of dollars in sight, Theo turns to face a gun in the hands of a bandit, and the command, "Stick 'em up." Theo knocks the bandit down and captures him.

Theo discovers he is being constantly shadowed. Harry Bruce, his friend, and the bookkeeper of the Life Insurance Co., informs Theo that a shortage of ten thousand dollars shows on the company's books.

Bolton is royally entertained by the Oliver's at dinner and the theatre.

While Theo and Harry visit Foo Chang's "Paradise," a notorious black and tan cabaret, they observe Edward Terry, Bolton's friend, in attendance with the released bandit captured at the attempted holdup of the company. Bolton arrives with Clarice and succeeds in getting Clarice partially intoxicated. The lights go out and Theo rescues Clarice and takes her home. The following day Theo visits Bolton's residence to investigate his applications for fifty thousand dollars insurance, and is preceded by Jenny Gilman, Bolton's housekeeper and mistress.

Theo enters and finds Jenny threatening death to a beautiful girl, but Jenny falls in a stupor from dope. The girl proves to be Marcia Anson, Bolton's ward, who has long admired Theo, and informs him of her love for him. As Theo is leaving, Edward Terry enters. Marcia seizes Theo in a closet, and Terry insists upon her fleeing with him. When she refuses, he attempts to attack her.

Theo springs out of the closet and knocks Terry out when the man attempts to attack Marcia. He then escapes out of the rear door as Bolton arrives.

Theo, leading the opposition, loses his fight to prevent the issuance of the Bolton policies. He also loses the fight to defeat Bolton's election to the board of directors. Bolton executes a shrewd coup by introducing Marcia, his ward, into society at a magnificent reception. But Theo is worried and puzzled. Jenny, Bolton's former housekeeper, has been replaced. Terry has disappeared and Bolton assumes the zenith of power in social and financial circles.

Theo is rejected by Clarice as her escort, but substitutes his mother as a companion at the debut reception, and he is practically ignored by Marcia during the festivities. In a despondent mood, he seeks a secluded haunts but is immediately joined by Ethel, President Oliver's wife, who again proposes a clandestine friendship which Theo rejects. Just as her husband appears and faces them, a heretofore unseen figure steps from the shadows to Theo's side.

The unseen figure proved to be Theo's mother, Mrs. Ashton, whose presence prevents a scene.

Theo is ignored by his fiancée, Clarice, and by Marcia, to whom he had given his heart, during her debut party.

A few days later, Bolton wishes the exchange of some securities after the time safe had been locked and insists upon Theo's holding the new ones until the following day. Working overtime that night and alone, Theo is watched and receives a call that the office is to be robbed. He discovers the wires have been cut, and he perverts an official looking packet and leaves. At the curbing he is kidnapped, put in a car and robbed of the packet.

Put out of the bandit car, Theo stumbles on Terry and Jenny Gilman, Bolton's confederate and his former mistress, sitting in the park, and overhears their plot against Marcia. He follows them and discovers the secret entrance to Foo Chang's dive. At the office the next morning Theo, in the presence of Oliver, relates the hold-up to the police.

When Bolton arrives he is informed of the robbery and holds Theo to blame for the theft of the bonds. Theo hands him the bonds that he had received and informs him that the packet of which he was robbed contained only blank envelopes, and that Bolton's bonds were still in his desk and were false documents.

Two detectives enter the office. After explaining how he had deceived the bandits and returning Bolton's fake bonds to him, Theo accompanies the detectives to Oliver's residence to interview Clarice. The bandit's car number turns out to be Oliver's car, and Clarice outstates that the car had been parked for several hours in front of a resort which she visited with Bolton. In the meantime the bandits had evidently used and returned the car.

At the company's annual charity ball and managerate, Theo is induced by a girl to enter a secluded nook, and discovers the

girl to be Marcia. She pleads for his loyalty, explaining her past conduct, and warns him that something is going to happen. As they separate from their short but renewed tryst, Theo is approached by police officers and arrested.

INSTALLMENT VII.

During the ride to the police station, Theo Ashton's mind revolved around the new developments of his affairs. He felt positively that his arrest was due to his recent activities in exposing some of Bolton's conduct. Certain it was Bolton's attempt to exchange his securities for false bonds, and at a time he knew the safe to be locked, had not appeared so well on the face of things. Then, too, the fact that the bandits had used Oliver's car while he visited in a resort with Clarice had not added to Bolton's credit.

whom were the same who had questioned Clarice, was attested to by the fact that they drove him past his home to enable him to change from evening clothes, and inform his mother. And again he was greatly encouraged by the manner in which she received the news of his arrest and faced the ordeal with such extraordinary fortitude.

in the county jail. But the sting had been removed by the resurrection of his faith in Marcia's love and fidelity.

On the second day of his incarceration, Theo was visited by his mother, who was accompanied by Harry Bruce. And again his confidence was restored by the absence of hysteria or fear in his mother's

comment and promises. "I tell you, Theo, you won't be here long, for bond is being arranged for you from more than one point. This last act has capped the climax, and a showdown is in sight. It's my opinion that your erstwhile enemy has over-reached his power and a climax is in sight."

For a week Theo languished in jail, suffering only from his inactivity.



Instead she found him jubilant and host to the most beautiful and sought after debutante in the city. Her total ignorance of any friendship existing between these two people with whom she had been so closely associated, vexed her beyond control.

"Why, Marcia Anson! What are you doing here?" Clarice exclaimed. "Why, Clarice, I'm here to receive the ring you have discarded," . . . Marcia commanded.

But Theo was cheerful and unmindful of the serious charge he faced. That he was held in very high esteem by the arresting officers, two of

Theo's first night in a cell proved a long dreary vigil. In the morning he was booked on a charge of embezzlement and transferred to a cell

attitude. She viewed the situation with a calm survey, and predicted its early and successful culmination, thus removing his worry over her welfare.

A Friendly Word

Harry was enthusiastic in his

From various sources he was bountifully supplied with every necessity and all the delicacies of the season were provided from a mysterious source. And yet he was fully cogni-

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