

True Stories
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The Advocate

Clean Fiction
Human Interest
Features

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SATAN'S HENCHMAN—By ART NAYLOR Widely-Known Author

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

INSTALLMENT XI

Seized from behind, Theo struggled with his unknown adversary; and with his strength and skill as an athlete he succeeded in throwing his opponent over his shoulder, but before he could make use of his freedom he was attacked by another man. The dark hall made it impossible for him to fight with any advantage against the odds he now realized were against him.

the most difficult part of his task, and soon came to appreciate the suppleness and agility of his trained body. And he realized that only an athlete could accomplish the feat he must. Disregarding the pain and bruises caused by his effort, Theo lowered his hands behind him. Straining at the thongs which held his wrists, he squeezed and wiggled and finally forced his hips, legs and feet through, bringing his bleeding wrists up in front of him. In a few moments, by using his teeth, he stood completely liberated.

His next concern was an egress from his prison, which contained but one opening, a rather flimsy door with several cracks sufficient for him to observe that he must traverse an underground passage if successful in forcing the locked door. It was a crude dug-out affair, illuminated by an electric bulb some sixty feet distant.

As the young prisoner stood contemplating the best method of bursting in the door, he chanced to behold a reflection under the shadowy bulb. Then he recognized the figure of a man approaching, carrying a flash light. The unknown, evidently expecting to find the prisoner still safely bound, stopped at the door, inserted a key in the lock and entered the room fearlessly.

Clears the Way to Freedom

Reluctant always to take an unfair advantage over anyone, Theo was forced to lay aside all scruples. As the man stepped within and flashed his light, Theo struck him a terrific blow on the jaw, and he went down with a moan. Then the wary prisoner snatched the key and closed the door. With the same cords which had bound him, he secured his victim and a search of his clothes produced an automatic revolver. With this and the searchlight, Theo left the room, closed and locked the door, and advanced cautiously along the passage.

That he had been removed from Bolton's residence during his unconsciousness was evident to Theo. The man he had just surprised was a stranger to him. What his location was at the time was wholly unknown as he ventured forth.

At the end of the passage Theo discovered a longer and larger one which flanked the one he stood in. There were doors on either side of this corridor and some distance to the right a short flight of steps ascended to disappear in a turn. A short distance to the left the dug-out ended abruptly in a wall, against which was piled a stack of coal and several boxes.

To Foo Chang's Dive

Just as Theo turned his head he heard steps, followed by voices as a man dragged a girl down the steps and into view of the passage. The girl fought and cried, but her strength was no match for her companion, who opened the door and disappeared with his victim.

That he had been brought to Foo Chang's dive began to dawn upon Theo as a possibility, and this became a certainty when Jenny Gilman descended the steps and advanced along the walls toward the break where Theo stood. Back into the shadows he crept and saw the woman pass and enter a door to his left. Then came sounds from the steps and several masculine voices.

Quick to realize the danger of discovery, Theo hastened silently to the pile of coal and succeeded in secreting himself behind a box as Foo Chang appeared in the passage, accompanied by two other Chinese, one of whom was of very slight build. The three advanced to the door where Jenny entered, but only Foo went inside, while his companions entered a door just opposite. In a few moments Foo Chang re-appeared with Jenny, who argued hotly, but followed the wily Chinaman up the steps.

Mystified by the actions he had beheld, Theo surveyed his surroundings and discovered that he was evidently directly under a sidewalk or pave-

ment, for only a few feet above was a glass-studded lid, through which the coal was dumped. He recognized this as a possible avenue of escape, and was about to struggle up the coal pile when his movements were arrested by a screeching, grinding noise in the passage.

Another Captive

Theo Ashton stood stupefied by the sight which his eyes beheld, for there at the intersection of the two passages a portion of the ceiling was lowering into the space. Slowly but surely the overhead platform descended, bearing a large black automobile.

Down to the floor the makeshift elevator came to rest, with the auto's hood facing Theo. The driver of the car sprang from his seat and opened the door of the tonneau, as a woman's scream rent the cavern. Theo watched the performance as

one hypnotized. The purpose of this ingenious contrivance was easily conceived, and he would have returned to his attempt to escape had he not at that instant recognized the face of Terry, Bolton's chauffeur, as he struggled with and finally forced a girl from the car.

The girl stood against the crude wall paralyzed with fear, while Terry secured a couple of traveling bags from the car. Then he grasped the girl by her waist and laboriously pulled her toward the door from which Jenny and Foo had recently departed.

And then Theo's blood froze. Under the light he saw her pale face, the fear and loathing in her eyes and that pathetic look which he had come to love so dearly. It was Marcia, and her beauty seemed heightened by her distress. The elevating plat-

Continued on Page Two

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Theo is Knocked Out

For ten minutes the battle waxed warm, and Theo, backing little by little toward the door, hoped to gain a backing which would force his foes in front of him. But it was a losing fight. The odds were against him, and this was supplemented by the darkness. A crashing blow on the head with some blunt instrument, defeated the young ex-cashier, and he sank to the floor, unconscious.

When Theodore came to himself, he was lying bound hand and foot, and gagged, on a cement floor of a boarded up basement room. Slowly he struggled back to a full realization of what had happened, but the intense pain in his head and his aching muscles prevented his immediate attempt to free himself. The silence was intense, and he was unable to judge his location.

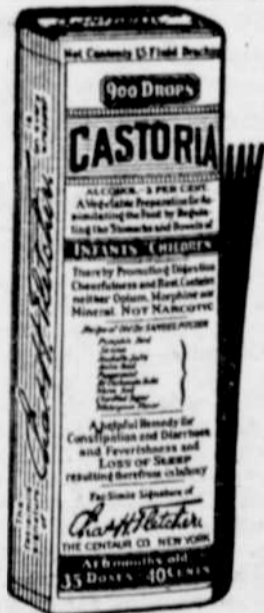
For several hours he lay thus, a prey to his mental torture rather than to his physical suffering. A conscious fear of some dire calamity spread over him, steeped him in despair for his carelessness. He tried to dissociate the effect of Terry's call and Bolton's instructions from any bearing upon the course he was pursuing, but it fanned his growing fears.

With an effort he managed to roll over in an attempt to relax his stiffened muscles. He drew his knees up and down and after several attempts, finally succeeded in gaining his feet in a standing position. The increased circulation of the blood gave him strength, and he was able to hop to a corner for support.

Theo Escapes His Bonds

It seemed an interminable period to Theo before he could accomplish his purpose. With his wrists tied together behind him, allowing his fingers but little freedom, he squatted and tugged with the cords that bound his ankles. But finally he succeeded, and the added relief gave him greater courage and hope. He faced

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