

THE MASTER MAN

RUBY M. AYRES

Author of "The Phantom Lover," "The Girl Next Door," etc.

"For a sprained ankle" said Michael contemptuously. "I'll be dashed if I do. I shall be all right in the morning. I dare say I can manage to walk now I've got the boot off."

Mr. Philips looked on grimly as Michael dragged himself to an upright position, but in a moment he was back in his chair again, white to the lips with pain and furious because of his helplessness.

Mr. Philips telephoned for the doctor without further parley. Michael watched him with grim eyes.

"If you think you're going to keep me a prisoner here for a week," he began threateningly.

"A week! More like a month I should think," Mr. Philips answered. Michael swore.

"And what about Miss Rolf, in Heaven's name!" he demanded. "Who's going to find her if I'm tied here hand and foot?"

Mr. Philips' eyes were very kindly as he looked at the young man's agitated face.

"Well, I'll do my best," he submitted.

Michael muttered something unintelligible. He had a very poor opinion of Mr. Philips' best.

"How long have I got to sit here?" he demanded later of the doctor.

"How long? Well, it's impossible to say. A sprain's a nasty thing, you know," was the guarded reply.

"It's a conspiracy, that's what it is," Michael growled when he had gone. "There's something the matter with me—it's all rot."

When Mr. Philips had taken his departure he dragged himself to his feet again and tried once more to walk across the room, but the pain of the effort turned him deadly sick.

"Far better give it up, sir," his man advised sympathetically. "I've had a sprain like that and I know the only way to cure it is to lay up."

"I'd have given a thousand pounds rather than it should have happened now," Michael said savagely.

The thought of Patricia worried him doubly now he could no longer search for her—he wrote an imploring note to Mr. Philips before the lawyer had been gone an hour, urging him to do everything in his power to find her, and to spare no expense. Mr. Philips was at dinner when the note came—a journalist nephew was dining with him, and when he reached the end of Michael's desperate note a sudden idea flashed across his usually imaginative brain. "I suppose," he said deliberately, and with unconscious sarcasm, turning to his nephew, "that mistakes are sometimes made, even in your profession—people wrongly reported to have died, for instance, or to have met with a serious accident?"

Young Philips laughed. "Rather!" he said. "Didn't I tell you how I once killed and buried a man in an evening edition, and had a whole column of his obituary published, when he was as well as you and I are at this moment?"

Mr. Philips' face flushed excitedly. He leaned across the table and laid his hand on the young man's arm.

"How would you like to do something of the same sort again," he asked impressively, "to oblige me?"

When Michael Rolf's man came to call his master the following morning he found him already half-dressed and sitting on the side of the bed.

"It's no use arguing," Michael said crossly, when the man started talking about doctor's orders.

"I'm not going to stay here—not if the whole medical profession went on their bended knees and implored me not to get up. I've got business to do—urgent business—so lend me a hand, there's a good fellow, and shut up."

The man obeyed resignedly. Secretly he admired Michael's spirit. He helped him to finish dressing and got him into the next room by the fire.

Michael had had about enough of it then, whether he choose to admit it or not—his ankle ached unbearably, and he was glad to rest.

He made a pretense of eating breakfast, and took up the paper. An advertisement had appeared in it every day since Patricia had vanished, carefully worded by Michael himself so that she should understand for whom it was intended and by whom it had been inserted, but so far it had borne no fruit, and Michael scowled as his eyes rested upon it.

He turned over the sheet quickly, and his own name in a small paragraph caught his attention.

"Serious accident to Mr. Michael Rolf."

Michael blinked his eyes and stared. It could not be referring to himself, that was certain. There must be another Michael Rolf—another who—he read a highly-colored and incorrect account of his mishap with a sort of amused consternation. It did refer to him without a doubt, but who had inserted it, or known of it, he could not imagine. Nobody but Mr. Philips had heard of it. Who in the wide world, then, could be responsible for such a gross exaggeration of what had happened, and why should the public at large be supposed to take an interest in the doings of his obscure self?

The day produced no solution of the mystery. Mr. Philips, interviewed on the telephone, professed entire ignorance of the matter, and Michael pushed it aside in exasperation.

After all, what did it matter? He only felt savagely sorry that the motor-lorry had not overtaken and finished him. He fell asleep during the afternoon by the fire, his injured foot resting on a chair, and only roused to the ringing of a bell and voices talking together outside the door.

Michael had been dreaming of Patricia—a silly confused dream in which he knew she had been crying, and he had been scolding her, so it did not seem altogether strange that he should open his eyes to the firelight room and still hear the sound of her voice.

He lay still for a moment, listening; then suddenly he sat up stiffly at attention, jerking his injured foot and causing himself an excruciating twinge of pain, for the voice was real—so real that Michael's heart began to thump suffocatingly against his ribs; and the next moment the door was opened softly, as if the intruder was afraid of disturbing him, and it was Patricia who entered.

CHAPTER XI

Michael did not move. He sat and looked at her across the firelight room, and she looked back at him with frightened, imploring eyes, then without any warning she burst in to tears.

"They said you were very ill," she sobbed.

"I thought you were dying. That hateful paper! Why did you let them put such things in—I've been so frightened—I thought—"and the tears and sobbing came again.

Michael dragged himself up from the chair leaning heavily against it, relief at seeing her and bitter anger with her for so calmly walking back into

his life after the torments he had suffered on her account, had kept him silent, but now he gave a short, hard laugh.

"I am flattered that you should be so concerned on my account—but I assure you that it's entirely unnecessary. I've sprained my ankle—nothing more! And as to that absurd paragraph in the paper—I know nothing whatever about it," he said, curtly.

Patricia reared her head—her face was all white and tear-stained, but Michael had no pity for her. In this sudden reaction he could only remember what he himself had endured for her sake. The sleepless nights and endless days of alternating hope and fear, and his eyes were hard as they searched her weary beauty of her face.

"Where have you been?" he asked, roughly.

She made a little hopeless gesture.

"I don't know. I've been trying to work. I sold programmes in a theater for two nights, but I hated it, and . . . and—"

He cut in almost rudely, it seemed.

"Why have you come back to me?"

Her lips moved, but she could find no words. Somehow she had never dreamed that she would receive her like this—she had been so sure that in spite of everything Michael would be glad to see her. The blank amazement and silence fanned his smouldering anger to passion.

"You're utterly selfish and inconsiderate," he broke out hoarsely. "And I've had enough of this infernal dancing about after you. It's ceased to be amusing or interesting. You may stay away for ever for all I concern it is of mine. I did my best for you, and this is how you treat me—rushing off from Kensington like that, leaving a ridiculous note."

Her cheeks flamed.

"You had been deceiving me all the time. You had arranged it all—that Mrs. Smith should write me, and that you should pay her to have me there. How dared you do such a thing?"

"I did it because you are not fit to be trusted to look after yourself. I suppose I was a fool, but I did it for your sake."

"If I had known I would rather have died than have gone there at all."

Michael laughed grimly.

"I'm afraid you will have to die this time then. I suppose you've got some idea in coming here to me, though why to me after what has happened God only knows. But it's too late, Patricia. You told me, to begin with, that I should never be able to master you, and you were right. I can't, and I no longer want to!"

He loomed helplessly towards the door.

"I'm afraid I must trouble you to ring for my man. I can't put my foot to the ground. He'll get you a taxi."

"To take me where?" Patricia asked with white lips. He would not look at her.

"You can go back to Mrs. Smith of Mrs. Flanagan—whichever you prefer," he said, hardily.

Patricia gave a stifled cry.

"I will never go back to either."

Michael went on as if she had not spoken.

"You owe Mrs. Smith an apology—running away like that. She has been very good to you, I know, and is one of the few people who is really disinterestedly fond of you. I thought you cared for her, but apparently you have not got it in you to care for anyone."

Patricia winced as if he had struck her. She moved towards the door uncertainly.

"I will go—I am sorry I came." There was a touch of her old hauteur in her voice. "I should not have done so only I thought you were really ill. I thought you might be worried." Her voice broke in the most undignified way. "It only

shows how mistaken I was," she added, almost in a whisper. Michael's face flamed.

"Worried! Of course I was worried," he answered passionately. "Do you think it's been any pleasure to me to know that you've been racing about London when, if you'd chosen to behave like a rational woman, you could have been living down at Clayton, with everything you want in the world? Worried? Of course I was! And a lot you care. How ever—you've come back—for some reason best known to yourself, no doubt, and my worrying is over. You can do as you like in the future, and I promise not to interfere. Where are you going now?"

"I don't know; anywhere—away from you."

He laughed cruelly.

"You'd better go back to Mrs. Smith and ask her to forgive you for the way you've behaved," he said rather brutally. "After all you owe more to her than you do to me or anyone else."

"What do you mean?" Patricia faced him with flashing eyes. "I have never owed Mrs. Smith anything—I would never condescend to owe her anything. If she took me in, it was for the money you gave her, and for no other reason. I shall repay you that as soon as I can earn anything, you may be very sure—"

She broke off with a stifled scream. Michael had somehow dragged himself across the room to her and caught her by her shoulders—his face was white as he looked down into hers.

"Shall I tell you who Mrs. Smith is, my proud princess? He asked her with slow deliberation. "Would you like to know who she is, and why she has always been fond of you and put up with your insufferable pride?—shall I tell you who she is?"

She tried to free herself from him; there was a flash of fear in her eyes, and she trembled beneath the touch of his hands.

"Let me go, Michael—you're hurting me. I don't know what you mean—she isn't anything to me—how could she be; why . . ."

"She is your mother," said Michael.

There was a dreadful little silence; Patricia had fallen back from him, and was leaning against the door, her beautiful eyes fixed on his white face.

"My mother!—oh, how absurd—why . . ."

She broke off, only to cry out again, "It's not true! Michael, say it isn't true."

"It is true," said Michael curtly. "She told me herself, and Mr. Philips told me—ask him if you don't believe me. I suppose it hurts your pride to think that you came from simple people like that. I suppose you're Miss Rolf, of Clayton, pose you'd rather know that. Would, then, the daughter of ordinary Mrs. Smith." He laughed, the stunned pain in her eyes gave him an odd sort of pleasure.

"So now you see why you had better go back and ask her to forgive you," he went on more quietly. "Your home is with her, and I dare say, in spite of all that has happened, you will find that she is ready to take you back." His eyes softened ever so little as he broke out hoarsely: Hoven? you got a heart for anyone Patricia? Noe even for your own mother? You look as if you could care so much, and all the time I know there isn't a soul in the world who matters one hang to you."

He wanted to take her into his arms and kiss her disdainful face till it quivered into life and passion beneath the touch of his lips, but she looked so cold and unapproachable as she stood there that it gave him a bitter realisation of his own impotence.

What did she care that he loved her and had suffered for her? Mer master he had sworn he would be, and he had failed

(TO BE CONTINUED)

WORLD IS SEX MAD— Milwaukee—And it's not getting any better if you listen to Mrs. Susan Garlick, who recently celebrated her 88th birthday here. "You might just as well say that flour and milk, white sugar and eggs will make up into a fruit cake as that this sex mad, money mad, pleasure mad world is getting better," she says. "Nonsense; the materials aren't there to make it; nor are the materials in the young generation growing up now present to make the world better. The right ingredients are lacking. "You get sex at the movies, sex in your magazines, and sex at the theaters," she adds, "and the women are worse than the men."

Upward Trolley Rates. From Commerce and Finance. The decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Baltimore street car case that a return of 7.44 per cent on the present value of the company's property was not excessive is that august body's third important recent ruling in favor of utilities. This decision, coupled with those in the St. Louis and O'Fallon railroad case and the Los Angeles street car case, rounds out a trio which established precedents providing definite legal status with respect to rates favorable to these industries.

The Baltimore case ruling confirms and expands the court's decision in the famous O'Fallon case. In the case of the Los Angeles railroad against the California Railroad commission, the court held that the city had no authority to enter into five-cent fare contracts with the company operating the street car system and that therefore the company was not bound by such agreements.

On the basis of these decisions, there seem to be no legal barriers to prevent traction companies from increasing their fares. They must use discretion, however, in the rates asked, lest they lose their customers.

A study of the 297 traction companies operating in 280 cities of the United States having populations of 25,000 or more showed a distinct trend from 5-cent to 10-cent fares from 1917 to 1929. In 1917 there were 271 companies of 297 with 5-cent cash fares, the only higher fares being 6 cents for 24 companies according to the American Electric Railway association. There was one 7-cent fare and there were zone fares in one other case. The 7 and 8-cent fares appeared in 1918, and the 9 and 10-cent fares in 1920 and 1919 respectively. In 1921 68 companies were using a 7-cent cash fare, 64 an 8-cent cash fare and 49 a 10-cent cash fare. In August, 1929, the number of companies charging 10-cent fares had increased to 118, while the number of concerns with 7-cent fares had dropped to 59, with 8-cent fares to 46 and with 5-cent fares to 33. There were also 24 zone fares, 14 6-cent fares and three 9-cent fares at that time.

The trend toward higher fares has been due almost entirely to a decline in riding on street cars or failure to increase the number of passengers, which in either case has made it difficult to provide sufficient funds for replacement of obsolescent equipment. The difficulty in obtaining new capital mounted as the growth of the property ceased or was replaced by a decline.

Social Czar at Washington. From Philadelphia Public Ledger. Who will sit, where and why at White House functions hereafter will be decided by a master of social etiquette in the person of Warren Delano Robbins, minister to Salvador.

Mr. Robbins will operate under the title of director of ceremonies. He will have a desk in the White House and will officiate as a court of last resort on all delicate questions bearing upon social precedence and other problems of similar character.

Mr. Robbins will be the first officer of this grade. Hitherto all matters connected with social affairs at the White House were handled by an attaché of the protocol division of the state department. James Clement Dunn, who has been directing ceremonies at the White House, will return to the state department for the purpose of making a study of affairs in Haiti.

Dunn generally was understood to have prepared the ruling made by Frank B. Kellogg as secretary of state that Mrs. Dolly Gann, sister of Vice President Curtis, did not—as official hostess for the vice president—rank the wives of ambassadors.

This ruling precipitated the controversy which finally was settled by Mrs. Gann being accorded by the diplomatic corps at the White House the rank which would be received by the wife of the vice president.

Washington is inclined to view the change in status of the ceremonial officer as indicative of a new era of more rigid formality at the White House. Meanwhile, Salvador will have to get along as best it may without a minister from this country until the end of the present social season.

Q. How long are some of the railroad nonstop runs? E. R. A.

A. One of the longest nonstop runs was over the Canadian National Railway from Montreal to Vancouver, a distance of 2,937 miles in 67 hours. This was a test run and although the train made several stops, the engine in the car did not once stop running. The motive power was a Diesel-Electric car. However, the London Midland and Scottish railroad has the longest daily nonstop run in the world, being from Euston to Carlisle, 299 1/2 miles.

Sure Sign. From Tit-Bits. "Did you hear that McGregor fell into the water while he was fishing and was drowned?" "Are you sure he's dead?" "Oh, he's dead right enough. When they got him out they went through his pockets and he didn't move."

Don't Mind the Fags. From Answers. Father: "Don't like to see our daughter lighting cigars?" Modern mother: "Oh, don't be old-fashioned, John."

Father: "It isn't that. She's too young to be playing with matches."

Insures Your Complexion. Some Women Are Always Admired. You see want to be lovely and admired. You can have a radiant complexion and the charm of youth if you use MARCELLE Face Powder. MARCELLE Face Powder quickly matches your complexion and brings out the sweet charm that every woman has. MARCELLE Face Powder makes your skin feel younger and you yourself look younger. Then people will admire you and say—"What lovely skin you have!" Popular size packages at 25c and 50c. all shades—at all dealers. Send for free liberal sample and complexion chart. MARCELLE LABORATORIES, C. W. BRUCE, 303 W. 4th St., Chicago, Illinois. Beautifying the American Woman for Half a Century.

Marcelle Complexion Requisites

Don't Speculate! "I lost \$30 and 1 cent yesterday." "How?" "I offered Dora a penny for her thoughts."

"Well?" "She was thinking that I ought to take her out for the evening."

FAMILY DOCTOR LEARNED THIS ABOUT CONSTIPATION



Dr. Caldwell loved people. His years of practice convinced him many were ruining their health by careless selection of laxatives. He determined to write a harmless prescription which would get at the cause of constipation, and correct it.

Today, the prescription he wrote in 1885 is the world's most popular laxative! He prescribed a mixture of herbs and other pure ingredients now known as Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin, in thousands of cases where bad breath, coated tongue, gas, headaches, biliousness and lack of appetite or energy showed the bowels of men, women and children were sluggish. It proved successful in even the most obstinate cases; old folks liked it for it never gripes; children liked its pleasant taste. All drugstores today have Dr. Caldwell's Syrup Pepsin in bottles.

For Galled Horses Hanford's Balsam of Myrrh

All dealers are authorized to refund your money for the first bottle if not suited.

Lucky Fellow "A knot in your handkerchief?" "To remind me to get tickets for the theater and meet my wife there tonight."

"Which theater?" "Bother—I have forgotten!"—Lustige Sächse.



Brought Back My Strength

"My little daughter was born on a homestead in northern Alberta. I had four other children and I worked so hard that I suffered a nervous breakdown. The doctor's tonic did not seem to help me and when a friend told me about Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, I began to take that instead. I kept on until I felt well again. It brought back my strength. Today I can do anything, thanks to the Vegetable Compound." —Mrs. William Parent, 2415 W. 62nd Street, Seattle, Washington.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. Lydia E. Pinkham Med. Co., Lowell, Mass.

New Auto Records. From Chicago Journal of Commerce. With about 3,000,000 cars and trucks already built and delivered to dealers, the automobile industry is obviously in the midst of its greatest year. Last year, at the halfway mark, the number was 1,926,569 cars. The proportion this year to last is 3 to 2. If the same proportion continues for the rest of the year, the number of cars and trucks sold this year will be close to 6,000,000. It is highly doubtful, however, whether the same proportion will continue. Last year, with 4,601,130 cars and trucks built and sold, was the record year of the industry. The preceding year, with 3,580,380, was subnormal, largely because of the Ford shutdown. The year before that—1926—had broken all records, with 4,505,661 cars and trucks built and sold. Concurrent with the increase in the industry's production has been the increase in the replacement demand. In 1927 this crossed the 2,000,000 mark for the first time. The number of cars and trucks sold for replacement purposes that year was 2,110,223. The number in 1928 was 2,450,000. Sanguine as forecasters were at the beginning of this year, few of them seriously believed that 3,000,000 cars and trucks would be built

and sold by July 1. The vast demand has a twofold cause. First is the general prosperity. Second is the fact that a given amount of money will buy a better car or truck today than ever before. It is little realized that the actual value of cars and trucks produced in 1928 was less than the value of the production of 1926, and almost the same as the value of the 1925 production. This was true although the 1928 production was larger than that of any earlier year, and contained a larger proportion of 6's and 8's, as well as more refinements. In other words, in 1928 a larger number of cars, with a higher average of power and a greater de-

gree of comfort and elaborateness was sold for less than a smaller number of cars, with a smaller average of power and a lesser degree of comfort and elaborateness was sold for in 1926. Constantly giving better value for the money the automobile industry is constantly inducing the people to buy more cars than ever before.

Yes! From Tit-Bits. "Would you say 'Yes' if I asked you to marry me?" he asked cautiously. "If I should say 'Yes,'" she replied, with equal caution, "would you ask me?"