

THE TEETH OF THE TIGER

BY MAURICE LEBLANC

TRANSLATED BY ALEXANDER TEIXEIRA DE MATOS

CHAPTER FIVE. (Continued.)

"And in this case?"

"In this case, Mazeraux, a man like myself, who knows Neuilly and the neighborhood of the Bois, is at once struck by those three letters, 'B. R. W.' and especially by the 'W.' a foreign letter, an English letter. So that in my mind's eye, instantly, as in a flash, I saw the three letters in their logical place as initials at the head of the words for which they stand. I saw the 'B' of 'boulevard,' and the 'R' and the English 'W' of Richard-Wallace. And so I came to the Boulevard Richard-Wallace. And that, my dear sir, explains the milk in the cocoanut."

Mazeraux seemed a little doubtful.

"And what do you think, chief?"

"I think nothing. I am looking about. I am building up a theory on the first basis I offers a probable theory. And say to myself . . . I say to myself . . . I say to myself, Mazeraux, that this is a devilish mysterious little hole and that this house—Hush! Listen—"

He pushed Mazeraux into a dark corner. They had heard a noise, the slamming of a door.

Footsteps crossed the courtyard in front of the house. The look of the outer gate grated. Some one appeared, and the light of a street lamp fell full on his face.

"Dash it all," muttered Mazeraux, "it's he!"

"I believe you're right."

"It's he, chief. Look at the black stick and the bright handle. And did you see the eye glasses—and the beard? What a one you are, chief!"

"Calm yourself and let's go after him."

The man had crossed the Boulevard Richard-Wallace and was turning into the Boulevard Maillot. He was walking pretty fast, with his head up, gaily twirling his stick. He lit a cigaret.

At the end of the Boulevard Maillot, the man passed the octroi and entered Paris. The railway station of the outer circle was close by. He went to it and, still followed by the others, stepped into a train that took them to Auteuil.

"That's funny," said Mazeraux. "He's doing exactly what he did a fortnight ago. This is where he was seen."

The man now went along the fortifications. In a quarter of an hour he reached the Boulevard Suchet and almost immediately afterward the house in which M. Fauville and his son had been murdered.

He climbed the fortifications opposite the house and stayed there for some minutes, motionless, with his face to the front of the house. Then continuing his road he went to La Muette and plunged into the dusk of the Bois de Boulogne.

"To work and boldly!" said Don Luis, quickening his pace.

Mazeraux stopped him.

"What do you mean, chief?"

"Well, catch him by the throat. There are two of us; we couldn't hope for a better moment."

"What! Why, it's impossible!"

"Impossible? Are you afraid? Very well, I'll do it by myself."

"Look here, chief, you're not serious!"

"Why shouldn't I be serious?"

"Because one can't arrest a man without a warrant."

"Without a warrant? A scoundrel like this? A murderer? What more do you want?"

"In the absence of compulsion, of catching him in the act, I want something that I haven't got."

"What's that?"

"A warrant. I haven't a warrant."

Mazeraux's accent was so full of conviction, and the answer struck Don Luis Perenna as so comical, that he burst out laughing.

"You have no warrant? Poor little chap! Well, I'll soon show you if I need a warrant!"

"You'll show me nothing," cried Mazeraux, hanging on to his companion's arm. "You shan't touch the man."

"One would think he was your mother!"

"Come, chief."

"But, you stick-in-the-mud of an honest man," shouted Don Luis

that it was I who found the scent. But don't be afraid. I shall keep in the background."

"Then hurry, chief. We're delivering the attack in 10 minutes."

"I'll be with you before that."

He quickly hung up the receiver and turned on his heel to leave the telephone box. The next moment he had flung himself against the farther wall. Just as he was about to pass out he had heard something click above his head and he but barely had the time to leap back and escape being struck by an iron curtain which fell in front of him with a terrible thud.

Another second and the huge mass would have crushed him. He could feel it whizzing by his head. And he had never before experienced the anguish of danger so intensely.

After a moment of genuine fright, in which he stood as petrified, with his brain in a whirl, he recovered his coolness and threw himself upon the obstacle. But it at once appeared to him that the obstacle was unsurmountable.

It was a heavy metal panel, not made of plates or lathes fastened one to the other, but formed of a solid slab, massive, firm, and strong, and covered with the sheen of time darkened here and there with patches of rust. On either side and at the top and bottom the edges of the panel fitted in a narrow groove which covered them hermetically.

He was a prisoner. In a sudden fit of rage he banged at the metal with his fists. He remembered that Mlle. Levasseur was in the study. If she had not yet left the room—and surely she could not have left it when the thing happened—she would hear the noise. She was bound to hear it. She would be sure to come back, give the alarm, and rescue him.

He listened. He shouted. No reply. His voice died away against the walls and ceiling of the box in which he was shut up, and he felt that the whole house—drawing rooms, staircases, and passages—remained deaf to his appeal.

And yet . . . and yet . . . Mlle. Levasseur—

"What does it mean? he muttered. "What can it all mean?"

And motionless now and silent, he thought once more of the girl's strange attitude, of her distraught face, of her haggard eyes. And he also began to wonder what accident had released the mechanism which had hurled the formidable iron curtain upon him, craftily and ruthlessly.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAN WITH THE EBONY WALKING STICK.

A group consisting of Deputy Chief Detective Weber, Chief Inspector Ancenis, Sergeant Mazeraux, three inspectors, and the Neuilly commissary of police stood outside the gate of No. 8 Boulevard Richard-Wallace.

Mazeraux was watching the avenue de Madrid, by which Don Luis would have to come, and began to wonder what had happened; for half an hour had passed since they telephoned to each other, and Mazeraux could find no further pretext for delaying the work.

"It's time to make a move," said Weber. "The housekeeper is making signals to us from the window: the joker's dressing."

"Why not nab him when he comes out?" objected Mazeraux. "We shall capture him in a moment."

"And if he cuts off by another outlet which we don't know of?" said the deputy chief. "You have to be careful with these beggars. No, let's beard him in his den. It's more certain."

"Still—"

"What's the matter with you, Mazeraux?" asked the deputy chief, taking him on one side. "Don't you see that our men are getting restive? They're afraid of this sportsman. There's only one way, which is to set them on him as if he were a wild beast. Besides, the business must be finished by the time prefect comes."

"Is he coming?"

"Yes. He wants to see things for himself. The whole affair interests him enormously. So, forward! Are you ready, men? I'm going to ring."

The bell sounded, and the housekeeper at once came and half opened the gate.

Although the orders were to observe great quiet, so as not to alarm the enemy too soon, the fear which he inspired was so intense that there was a general rush; and all the detectives crowded into the courtyard, ready for the fight. But a window opened and some one cried from the second floor:

"What's happening?"

The deputy chief did not reply. Two detectives, the chief inspector, the commissary, and himself entered the house, while the others

remained in the courtyard and made any attempt at flight impossible.

The meeting took place on the first floor. The man had come down, fully dressed, with his hat on his head; and the deputy chief roared:

"Stop! Hands up! Are you Hubert Lautier?"

The man seemed disconcerted. Five revolvers were levelled at him. And yet no sign of fear showed in his face; and he simply said:

"What do you want, monsieur? What are you here for?"

"We are here in the name of the law, with a warrant for your arrest."

"A warrant for my arrest?"

"A warrant for the arrest of Hubert Lautier, residing at 8 Boulevard Richard-Wallace."

"But it's absurd!" said the man. "It's incredible! What does it mean? What for?"

They took him by both arms, without his offering the least resistance, pushed him into a fairly large room containing no furniture but three rush bottomed chairs, an armchair, and a table covered with big books.

"There," said the deputy chief. "Don't stir. If you attempt to move, so much the worse for you."

The man made no protest. While the two detectives held him by the collar, he seemed to be reflecting, as though he were trying to understand the secret causes of an arrest for which he was totally unprepared. He had an intelligent face, a reddish brown beard, and a pair of blue-gray eyes which now and again showed a certain hardness of expression behind his glasses. His broad shoulders and powerful neck pointed to physical strength.

"Shall we tie his wrists?" Mazeraux asked the deputy chief.

"One second. The prefect's coming; I can hear him. Have you searched the man's pockets? Any weapons?"

"No."

"No flask, no phial? Nothing suspicious?"

"No, nothing."

M. Desmalions arrived and, while watching the prisoner's face, talked in a low voice with the deputy chief and received the particulars of the arrest.

"This is good business," he said. "We wanted this. Now that both accomplices are in custody, they will have to speak; and everything will be cleared up. So there was no resistance?"

"None at all, Monsieur le Prefet."

"No matter, we will remain on our guard."

The prisoner had not uttered a word, but still wore a thoughtful look, as though trying to understand the inexplicable events of the last few minutes. Nevertheless, when he realized that the newcomer was none other than the prefect of police, he raised his head and looked at M. Desmalions, who asked him:

"It is unnecessary to tell you the cause of your arrest, I presume?"

He replied, in a deferential tone:

"Excuse me, Monsieur le Prefet, but I must ask you, on the contrary, to inform me, I have not the least idea of the reason. Your detectives have made a grave mistake which a word, no doubt, will be enough to set right. That word I wish for, I insist upon—"

The prefect shrugged his shoulders and said:

"You are suspected of taking part in the murder of Fauville, the civil engineer, and his son Edmond."

"Is Hippolyte dead?"

The cry was spontaneous, almost unconscious; a bewildered cry of dismay from a man moved to the depths of his being. And his dismay was supremely strange; his question, trying to make them believe in his ignorance, supremely unexpected.

"Is Hippolyte dead?"

He repeated the question in a hoarse voice, trembling all over as he spoke.

"Is Hippolyte dead? What are you saying? Is it possible that he can be dead? And how? Murdered? Edmond, too?"

The prefect once more shrugged his shoulders.

"The mere fact of your calling M. Fauville by his Christian name shows that you knew him intimately. And, even if you were not concerned in his murder, it has been mentioned often enough in the newspapers during the last fortnight for you to know of it."

"I never read a newspaper, Monsieur le Prefet."

"What! You mean to tell me—?"

(Continued Next Week.)

A Russian inventor living in Michigan has obtained a patent for a motion picture theater contained in a railroad car so that it can be moved around the country.

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"Say, listen!" uttered Claudine of the rapid-fire restaurant. "The fortune teller told me last night that I was going to be married next month."

"Gee!" breathed Heloise of the same establishment. "Who to?"

"Aw, I didn't think it was just exactly proper to ask his name. You see, I ain't got my divorce from Silver yet."

—Kansas City Star.

LEMONS DO MAKE THE SKIN WHITE

HOW TO MAKE A CREAMY LEMON BEAUTY LOTION AT HOME FOR A FEW CENTS.

Your grocer has the lemons and any drug store or toilet counter will supply you with three ounces of orchard white for a few cents. Squeeze the juice of two fresh lemons into a bottle, then put in the orchard white and shake well. This makes a quarter pint of the very best lemon skin whiter and complexion beautifier known. Massage this fragrant, creamy lotion daily into the face, neck, arms and hands and just see how freckles, tan, sallowness, redness and roughness disappear and how smooth, soft and white the skin becomes. Yes! It is harmless, and the beautiful results will surprise you.—Adv.

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"My husband always makes a fuss when I tell him I need a little money."

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"See! an attack of liquid fire."

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