

# The Master Man

By Ruby M. Ayres

"Her—mother!" he echoed. "But I thought—I always understood—good Heavens, do you mean that she does not know!" Mrs. Smith shook her head.

"I know it all sounds very impossible and perhaps absurd," she said, in a voice broken with emotion. "I know that her life and mine are far apart as they well can be, but she is my daughter all the same."

"And my father—did he know—but, of course, he must have done?"

"Oh, it has been my thoughts so often," she said. "It was my voice. I have blamed myself so often for ever consenting, but at the time it seemed such an opportunity for Patricia—"

She looked at Michael apologetically. "I should like to tell you all about it if it will not be worrying you too much."

"I am immensely interested. I never had any idea—I always thought Patricia was an orphan when my father adopted her."

Mrs. Smith sat down in the armchair and clasped her hands in her lap to hide their trembling.

"It's all so long ago," she began agitatedly.

"Patricia was only seven—and, though she is my daughter, she was the prettiest child you can imagine, Mr. Rolf."

"I am sure she was," Michael agreed readily. He walked away to the window and stood looking out into the dingy street.

There was a queer feeling of apprehension in his mind. How would it effect Patricia when she knew the truth he wondered. He turned eagerly again to Mrs. Smith.

"Yes, please go on."

"My husband had just died—and I was very poor. I had hardly any money, and I was living in a little cottage in the country with my two children, trying to manage as best I could, when one afternoon your father came to the house—he had lost his way. It was then that he saw Patricia."

"He asked her to go and sit on his knee, but she stamped her foot and refused, and he laughed and said he liked her spirit. I noticed that he kept staring at her a great deal, and when he got up he said: 'How much will you take for your little Spitfire there!' I thought it was only a joke, but he assured me he was quite serious. 'I'll give you a good price for her,' he said. You know his way, Mr. Rolf!"

Michael nodded.

"Of course, I said that nothing could ever induce me to part with her, and he went away. But he came back many times afterwards and renewed his offer. 'Well, things went on, and then I fell ill. Very ill I was, and my little bit of money began to dwindle, and then—oh, I need not tell you how it all happened, but in the end your father got his way, and I gave Patricia up to him.'

"Directly it was all agreed I knew I must have been mad. Mr. Rolf gave me £1,000, and made me sign a paper to the effect that I would never try to see her again. He wanted her to forget me, he said! Oh, he was very frank! He promised that she should have everything she wanted—always, and I suppose he kept his word, but he never told me that he was going to turn her into a selfish, arrogant girl."

Michael made a swift movement of objection, but he said nothing, and Mrs. Smith went on bitterly:

"At any rate, she very easily forgot me. I kept my share of the bargain faithfully for twelve years, and then one day I had the feeling that I must see her and speak to her. I found an excuse and an opportunity. I wrote and asked if I might be allowed to do some work for her—I am clever with my needle. She sent for me to go to Clayton, and after that I often saw her."

"And my father knew!"

"He found out after a time, and was furious, but he could not do much, otherwise I should simply told Patricia the whole truth."

"And Patricia! You say that she did not know you! And still does not?"

"She has no idea. She has always been kind to me in her own way—helping me and giving me presents, but—oh, Mr.

Rolf, if you knew how I have suffered all these years—and all through my own fault—and she broke down into bitter sobbing.

Michael laid his hand on her shoulder.

"But everything will be all right now," he said cheerily, because, of course, Patricia must be told the truth."

Mrs. Smith sat up agitatedly. "She must not—I refuse to allow it. It would spoil her life; she would get to hate and despise me. She is so proud. Oh, Mr. Rolf, you must promise that you will not tell her."

Michael looked perplexed. "But if she comes to live here—"

"—" he objected.

"She would never come if she knew the truth," Mrs. Smith answered.

"Very well, then, she shall not know, for the present at all events," Michael agreed.

"I have set my heart on Patricia coming here, so all you have to do is to write and offer her a home—and leave the rest to me."

Mrs. Smith started up agitatedly.

"I suppose you are despising me very much," she submitted humbly.

"You know quite well I am doing nothing of the sort," he answered vehemently. "I am very glad to have met Patricia's mother—"

He held out his hand, and she laid hers in it.

"Then it's all settled," Michael went on in a relieved tone. "You write to Patricia at once—I'll give you her address."

He moved over to the desk in the window and scribbled it on one of his own cards, then he filled in a cheque for ten pounds, and left them both lying there together.

Mrs. Smith followed him to the door.

It was only just as he was leaving the house that she said: "There is one thing I would like to ask you, Mr. Rolf—perhaps you may not think it is my business—but—there used to be a Mr. Chesney, who was very fond of Patricia. Perhaps you know him? I have so often wondered why she never married him."

Michael frowned.

"Because she didn't care for him, in all probability," he answered rather shortly.

"Yes, I know Chesney well, but I hardly think he was the man for Patricia."

"I thought she always seemed very fond of him," Mrs. Smith answered wistfully. "I only saw them together once or twice, but he was such a gentleman. I used to hope Patricia would marry him."

Michael did not answer, and presently he was walking quickly away from the house. Chesney suited to her indeed! Surely the girl's own mother should have known better than that.

He took a taxi at the corner and was driven back to Mrs. Flannagan's. It was nearly five o'clock then—Patricia would probably be back.

Patricia was back! So Mrs. Flannagan informed him in a stage whisper. "But it's not shure I am that she'll see ye!" she added.

"If you'll not mind waiting I'll just find out!"

Michael stepped past her into the narrow hall.

"Thank you," he said coolly. "I'll find out for myself."

CHAPTER VII

Patricia was crouching over the fire in an attitude of the deepest dejection when Michael entered the room.

She had taken off her hat, but she still wore her coat, and there was something hopelessly dispirited in the droop of her shoulders and the despondent manner in which her graceful head rested on her hands.

She was sore and angry and miserable. She was sure that Michael had deliberately missed his appointment with her; even the fact that he had turned up late did not mollify her. She only shrugged her shoulders when Mrs. Flannagan drew an elaborate picture of his deep distress when he found that she had gone.

She had not had any lunch, and the tray of unpretentious cold meat and potatoes which Mrs. Flannagan had hurriedly brought stood unappetisingly

on the table behind her.

"You can take it away, Mrs. Flannagan," Patricia said, without turning as Michael entered. "I don't want anything—I'm not hungry. You can bring me a cup of tea, if you like."

"It's not Mrs. Flannagan," said Michael. He came in and shut the door behind him, looking at her with a little uncertain smile.

Patricia rose to her feet, angry waves of colour beating into her pale cheeks.

"I told Mrs. Flannagan I would not see you. Who said you could come in?"

"Nobody; I just came." He moved forward. I am more sorry than I can say about being late this morning. I met Bernard Chesney, and could not get rid of him."

"And naturally you did not wish to bring him to see me," she retorted. "I suppose one could hardly expect you to be proud to admit you know anyone living in a house like this."

"You are quite right about my not wishing him to see you," Michael answered calmly.

"But as far as the house goes, if it's good enough for you, it's a thundering sight too good for him. But we won't argue. I hope you accept my apology."

"There is no need to apologise. I did not expect you to keep your word."

"That, said Michael, 'is not the truth. You did expect me—you were very angry and disappointed when I did not come.'"

"How dare you!" Michael smiled.

"Come, Patricia, don't be childish. I thought we were going to be friends. I was angry and disappointed, too. I had a horrible lunch."

He stood looking down at her reflectively.

"Look here," he said suddenly, "you'd be much easier to talk to if you wouldn't look so determinedly uncomfortable. Take off your coat and let me fetch you a cushion."

He drew the coat from her shoulders and fetched the best cushions the room could muster; then he went down on his knees and banked up the smoky fire.

"Have you given Mrs. Flannagan notice?" he asked.

"Of course, I haven't; I've got nowhere to go."

"Nowhere? With all the many friends you must have?"

The ready tears sprang to her eyes.

"You seem to like taunting me about my friends," she said bitterly. "I am beginning to wonder if I ever really had any."

"I am not speaking of people like Effie Shackle," said Michael gently.

Patricia looked at him.

"You don't know Effie Shackle."

"I do. I met her on the road near Clayton one night—the very night before you ran away. I think it was. Something had gone wrong with her car and it was getting late and so I drove her home, and they asked me to stop to dinner."

"Yes, they would—if they knew who you were."

"They didn't know, till I told them—and I don't think Miss Effie liked it when she knew."

"I should have thought she would have been delighted."

A little smile crept into Michael's eyes as he recalled the dismay his announcement had caused.

Patricia was watching him with faint jealousy.

"Have you ever been there again?" she asked. "Not that I care," she hastened to add.

"I never supposed you would care," Michael answered, still intent on his fire building. "But I have not been, though they gave me a pressing invitation and a formal one came by post this morning for dinner to-night."

He rose from his knees and, turning, faced her.

"Shall I go?" he asked.

Patricia tried to laugh unconcernedly.

"Please yourself—it is no business of mine."

"That's what you say," Michael answered coolly. "And all the time you know you don't want me to go—you know you hate the idea of my going—at least ... I hope you do," he added.

Patricia sprang to her feet.

"How dare you! As if I care—as if."

Mrs. Flannagan's "foine parcel" turned out to be violets.

"Floors they are, by the smelling of them," she insisted, taking a good sniff at the wrappings before she laid them down in Patricia's lap.

Patricia looked at the little hamper.

"There is no one at all likely to send me flowers," she said, but she cut the string rather eagerly, and gave a little cry of delight when she saw the mass of violets.

She looked up at Michael.

"You sent them!" she said, breathlessly.

"I plead guilty," he answered. He was pouring out the tea and wondering why he felt so happy and at home in this not very comfortable room. Patricia bent her face to the flowers.

"My favourites," she said. "How kind of you!"

"Not at all. Do you take sugar?" He added a second knob to her cup absent-mindedly. You know there are lots of little things I could do for you, if you'd only be sensible and let me."

He brought the tea over to her. "It seems to me that you're uncommonly extravagant with valuable time," he added smilingly. "Look at the good times we might have had together already! Why, we might have got so fond of each other that you even have consented to come and live at Crayton—if I'd asked you," he added, audaciously.

Patricia did not smile.

"If you still think that you're going to be clever and manage me—"

she began, slowly.

"Bless your heart, I don't!" Michael drained his cup and sat it down. "I've given that idea up—given it up so completely that if you'd like me to tell Chesney where he can find you I'll go straight off when I leave here and give him your address—there?"

Patricia bit her lip.

"You mean that you want to be rid of all responsibility of me?"

"I mean that I hate to see you unhappy, and to know that in your heart you are blaming me for it."

She sat very still. The scent of the violets filled the room and made her think of Clayton Wold, and the gardens, and the woods, and life as she had known it there, and she felt as if desolating miles lay between her and it—miles to which this man was adding with every word he uttered.

He wanted to be rid of her—he wanted her to marry Chesney and settle down, and yet not so long ago he had urged her against this very thing—had told her that she would not be happy as Chesney's wife.

"Thank you," she said, coldly.

"But I am quite capable of sending for Mr. Chesney if I should ever want him, which is not very likely after all that has happened."

"That disposes of Chesney," Michael said cheerily. "And now I've got another brilliant idea—that we forget all that's happened, and you come back to live somewhere near Clayton, and let me make you an allowance."

"Thank you, but of the two I would sooner marry Bernard Chesney."

Michael went over to the window; the drizzling rain had begun again, and the narrow street, with its rows of houses that were all alike, save for slight variations of curtains, looked depressingly dreary.

This was no place for Patricia, he told himself angrily; and yet—what could he do for her!

"And there is nobody—no real friend, I mean," he said rather abruptly; "with whom you would rather live than—with Mrs. Flannagan?"

"There is nobody that you would approve of; not that I care if you approve or not..."

"You mean that there is somebody?"

"There is somebody I thought of this morning—when you did not come..."

"When I came late, you mean," he corrected her.

"Very well, when you came late," she raised her dark eyes to his face with a queer little smile in them.

"And who is this—someone?" Michael asked.

"She used to make some of my frocks—she used to come to Clayton sometimes and work for me."

"A dressmaker!" said Michael. He purposely spoke disparagingly; he knew Patricia well enough to know that the way to drive her to do a thing

was to appear to wish to prevent it.

"And what if she is a dressmaker!" Patricia flashed out at him.

"She was always kind to me, and I know she really liked me, no matter how strange it may seem to you that anyone could like me! And she is a lady, anyway—much more of a lady than your friend Effie Shackle."

Michael turned away to hide the smile in his eyes.

"Miss Shackle is not a friend of mine," he said calmly. "And, as to this other lady..."

"Her name is Mrs. Smith," Patricia broke in defiantly. "I suppose you will say the name is common. She is quite poor, certainly; so poor that I used to send her my old clothes. If you've got anything to say against her..."

"My dear child! how can I possibly have? I am sure, if she is a friend of yours, that she is everything that is good and charming, but as to whether you would really be happy living—with her! Well, that's another question."

"I don't suppose she would like to have me, anyway," said Patricia dispiritedly. "She's only written to me once since Mr. Rolf died. I suppose, like the rest of the world, she thinks I'm of no use now I haven't any money."

(Continued Next Week.)

Mrs. Oliver Belmont says: "For 20 centuries men have made a muddling job of this world and its government. Quite true, not only 20 centuries, but 100 centuries."

But if Mrs. Belmont could realize how much men have improved in the centuries, she would have a more kindly feeling for the inferior male sex.

For instance, in Rochester, at the edge of the canal, a new born naked male baby is found dead. Eight detectives are put on the case.

Two thousand years ago it was legal to leave new born babies, dead or alive, scattered around anywhere. If dogs didn't eat them, anybody that found them could bring them up as slaves.

The Christian teaching that unbaptized babies can't go to heaven, which seems harsh to those that don't know how it began, saved the lives of thousands of infants.

The mothers, taught that they were jeopardizing an immortal soul by not having it baptized, stopped exposing the babies.

Unions As Newspaper Owners.

From Editor and Publisher.

With British labor unions reported ready to unsholder the burden of their London Daily Herald, their fellow organizations in New York have undertaken the business of conducting the New York Call, long a Socialist daily, as a union organ. Over 300,000 union members are reported as having subscribed for stock of the new organization in which the old ownership retains a 15 per cent. interest.

For fifteen years the Call has been conducted, in the main by able newspaper men, as the only Socialist daily in the city printed in English. It has advocated what its editors believed to be the interests of their party and its sincerity has not been questioned. Its presentation of labor news has been partial, of course, but it has been complete, and the paper was read closely by employers to whom knowledge of their workers' viewpoint was vital. Yet, its most consistent cry across the decade and a half has been for funds with which to continue publication.

Under its new ownership, the Call can hardly longer be considered as a newspaper. It is a quasi "house organ" a medium for dissemination of information with a limited appeal. Of somewhat similar nature is the weekly paper called Labor, which, under the management of the railroad crafts has built up a weekly circulation of 300,000 and carries no commercial advertising. Labor is openly and avowedly a medium for presentation of information of special interest to a large, but nevertheless limited, group. Oftentimes it gives space to news that the daily press has overlooked or estimated as of insufficient interest for publication. Sometimes it has been a source of undiscovered news vital to the public.

That the new Call can also be, but its new owners will probably find that expense exceeds income for an uncomfortably long time in the process.

It cannot supplant the dailies printed in English and other tongues for its readers will not be satisfied with a diet of pure labor news, that lacks mental "vitamines." It can supplement these newspapers and it can correct them if they fall in an important presentation of industrial affairs as they have at times in the past. Those failures are less frequent now than they were twenty or even five or ten years ago, and the fewer they become the better for the country. Newspapers devoted to the creation and maintenance of industrial class interest, be it for or against capital or labor, as those terms are loosely used, are not healthy influences in American life.

When Lincoln was a boy, a healthy black man, unable to read but strong enough to handle a hoe, was worth \$1,000. The average inhabitant of earth a great deal more than three times that today.

One single IDEA might be worth \$300,000,000,000—for instance, an idea supplying men with unlimited free power from sun or tides.

There are many times 300,000,000,000 worth of wealth below the earth in mines, oil, gas, coal, and in the earth's thin crop producing carpet of soil.

There are many times 300,000,000,000 worth of nitrogen in the air above us. This is a rich country, but we need more people and instead of encouraging them to come in, we foolishly keep them out.

## LLOYD GEORGE SEES HOPE IN HUGHES' PLAN

### Favors Proposal to Have Commission Fix Amount of Reparations

BY JAMES R. NOURSE  
Universal Service Correspondent

Montreal, Que., Oct. 8. David Lloyd George was asked Monday night for an opinion regarding the statement attributed to President Coolidge that it is not too late for the nations of the world to give consideration to the Hughes plan for adjusting the German reparations payments. He made the following statement:

"I regard this as extremely important. In my opinion, this plan is not too late for consideration, and it is absolutely the best hope of the settlement of reparations. Of course, since the plan was first broached, the ability of Germany to pay is much less. The greater the delay the closer the situation approaches chaos."

"I hope that serious consideration of Mr. Hughes' plan may be taken up, even at this late date, and I repeat that it is the best hope of a successful settlement."

#### Calls for Commission

The Hughes plan, proposed by the secretary of state in a speech at New Haven, Conn., a year ago, suggested the formation of an international commission of economic experts to fix the amount of reparations which Germany should be called upon to pay.

Lloyd George's message to Canada, delivered before an audience of 7,000 here Monday afternoon was a plea for unity of action among all races of the world to end war.

Describing the horrors of the late conflict, and pointing to his own whitened locks as an example of what war does to men who have a part in it, the great leader of Britain's war forces declared it is the destiny of civilized nations to prevent war in the future.

"No man can tell now what that war will mean to the human race," he said. "The future is in the fog rising from the foras of war, and I cannot tell, no man can tell, what is going to happen. But this I do know, that the war altered the destiny of mankind for generations, aye for centuries to come."

War is a crucible that tests the courage, the determination, the loyalty and the readiness to sacrifice of all those who participate in it, the speaker added.

"It is a terrible business at best: it is a rending business, a shattering business, a ruinous business," he said.

#### Little Faith in Treaty

The former premier held out little hope that the Versailles treaty would settle any of the problems of the war.

"The treaty is now in the testing," he said, "it may succeed, or it may fail. No one can tell."

The former premier was at his best in delivering the speech. He was humorous, he was stern, he was eloquent and forceful. At times he had his audience in uproars of laughter, and again slight formed women in black, whose sons were given to the war, could be observed silently weeping.

It was a great speech, and it brought to Canada from England the expression of the empire's gratitude for the 400,000 sons of the dominion who went abroad to fight on the fields of France. It lasted exactly one hour.

For the first time, Lloyd George spoke into the receiving end of a set of amplifiers suspended above his head. His voice was so well carried and he liked the apparatus so much that he intends to have them supplied to him when he makes his next campaign tour in England. This would increase, by many thousand, the audiences who would hear him.

#### Divine Talks Back

Once he got too close to the microphone, and his voice became indistinct. He backed suddenly away, exclaiming: "I got too near it; it is talking back to me insolently!"

As his speech was the first delivered in Canada, Lloyd George devoted himself almost entirely to reviewing Canada's part in the war, and praising the work of the Canadian expeditionary forces, whose commander, Gen. Sir Arthur Currie, acted as chairman of the meeting. He told of the saving of the channel ports when they were threatened by the German armies, and gave credit to the untiring Canadian fighters for saving control of the ports to the allies. An incident of the battle, when the Canadian boys leaped over the trenches to attack the enemy, he described as the finest bluff ever put up.

In a touching sentence summarizing Canada's part in the war, the former premier declared: "The Maple Leaf was embrodered forever on the silken folds of the banner of human liberty."

Of the united action by all parts of the British empire, he said they all came without thought of race, or color, or religion, adding:

"Every religion is good. It is only no religion that is bad."

The former premier had something to say about the reparations.

#### CLAIMS OF VETS RAPIDLY BEING PAID.

Des Moines, Ia., Oct. 8.—Iowa world war veterans have been paid approximately \$16,428,000, in soldier bonus claims, it is declared at the auditor of state's office. A total of 1,400 warrants were mailed out last week, bringing the aggregate number to date to 83,900. About 19,000 claims remain to be disposed of.