

# The Master Man

By Ruby M. Ayres

"Any damage, sir?" he asked cheerfully. "Narrow squeak that was."

Michael was rather pale. "I've sprained my ankle, I think," he tried to put his foot to the ground, but gave a stifled groan, clutching at the constable's arm helplessly.

Another man was coming along the path. He looked at Michael sharply, then came forward.

"My dear boy, what has happened?" he asked anxiously. It was Mr. Philips himself. Michael explained as best he could—he was in considerable pain.

"I was on my way to see you. I don't know how it happened. I shall have to have a taxi. Can you see me home?"

"Why, of course. It's most unfortunate—most unfortunate."

"Might have been worse, sir," the constable said stoically. "Gent was nearly run over."

They took Michael back to his rooms and found that he sprained his foot and ankle badly.

"You'll have to have a doctor," Mr. Philips insisted. "Nonsense! I say you must!"

"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 nothing 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.

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"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 chose 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 was inserted, but so far it had born 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 the highly-coloured and incorrect account of his mishap with a sort of amused consternation. It did refer to him without a doubt, but who could 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 to 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 firelit 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 firelit room, and she looked back at him with frightened imploring eyes, then without any warning she burst into 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 raised 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 the 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 theatre 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 he 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.

"Your 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 care, 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 to 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 looked helplessly toward the door.

"I'm afraid I must trouble you to ring for my man. I can't put my foot on 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 or Mrs. Flannagan—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 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 now at Clayton, with everything you want in the world? Worried! Of course I was! And a lot you care. However—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 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! she said in a whisper."

"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 so herself, and Mr. Philips told me. I suppose it hurts your pride to think you came from simple people like that. I suppose you'd rather know that you were Miss Rolf of Clayton Wood, than the daughter of an 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: "Haven't you got a heart for anyone, Patricia? Not 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 realization of his own impotence.

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

Patricia raised her eyes, and her lips curved into a tremulous smile as she read the struggle in his face.

"I suppose now you would like to shake me again," she said, with a ghost of her old mockery. "You so often said—Oh, Michael!"

He laid rough hands on her shoulders, hurting her with the grip of his fingers. For the moment he had lost himself in the sudden anger that surged through him, and he shook her as if she had been a child, till she fell away from him, trembling and crying like the child she felt herself at that moment to be.

"Oh, you hurt me," she said, sobbing.

"You deserved it," he said breathlessly.

He leaned his arm on the mantelshelf and stood staring down into the fire. He was trembling with the force of his own passion and the reluctant shame of what he had done.

He knew that his hands must have bruised her soft shoulders, and he was fiercely glad. Why should he care that he had hurt her, when she had hurt him so

much? Nothing that he could ever do to her would make up for the past fortnight of anxiety and suffering.

And he broke out suddenly, hoarsely:

"It's not fair—just because you're a woman—you think you can hurt me, and goad me, and laugh at me, and I shan't turn round on you because you're a woman. If I've hurt you, you drove me to it—Patricia."

She was standing leaning against the door, her face hidden, her whole slender body shaken with sobbing.

Michael's arms went out to her with hopeless longing; he fell again to his sides.

(Continued Next Week.)

Not in Shape To Advise.

From the Des Moines Capital.

Shortly after the British ambassador's criticism of Ellis Island was published, the London correspondent of the New York Tribune undertook an investigation of England's immigration station. He found that the British government contributes nothing toward the cost of operating the British "Ellis Island," which is located near Southampton.

The English station, which is used both from immigrants and emigrants, is owned and operated by steamship companies. In this building the emigrants bound for the United States are housed. No attempt is made at any kind of an examination. Hence many make the trip to Ellis Island and then have to return because they cannot meet the conditions laid down in the American immigration laws.

According to the New York Tribune's report from its London correspondent, England maintains an embargo against all immigration. The minister of labor has authority to admit immigrants upon the statement of employers to the effect that British workers cannot be obtained for the jobs which aliens seek. But on account of the unemployment in England the minister of labor is not issuing any such permits. In spite of this fact, immigrants come to the British "Ellis Island." They are immediately deported. The rule is that they must return the same day if possible. All expenses must be paid by the steamship companies.

In the light of this report, it would seem that England is not in a position to tell the United States how the very important government enterprise at Ellis Island ought to be managed.

THE INWARDNESS OF EVIL.

Out of the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders—Matt. 15:19.

We are often inclined to make the faults of our natures and dispositions the excuse for our misdeeds.

But truly, if anything could increase our unworthiness, it would be just this fact that our worst temptations come from within ourselves, and we are driven into wrong not by any outward tempters so much as by the force of our own impure and selfish passions.

Never plead your natural disposition as an excuse for evil deeds.

Be for the deeds the disposition would not have become confirmed.

It is as base to love lying as it is to lie.

It is as bad to have a murderous temper as it is to kill.

It is the evil nature which God condemns.

Let us make it not a cloak for sin, but a reason for penitence and a strong plea for help to overcome it.

When a man really wishes to reform and do better, he should go to the root of the matter. His prayer should be:

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Spanish Johnny.

The old West, the old time,  
The old wind singing through  
The red, red grass a thousand miles  
And, Spanish Johnny, you,  
He'd sit beside the water-ditch  
When all his herd was in,  
And never mind a child, but sing  
To his mandolin.

The big stars, the blue night,  
The moon-inchanted plain:  
The olive man who never spoke,  
But sang the songs of Spain,  
His speech with men was wicked  
talk—  
To hear it was a sin;

But those were golden things he sang  
To his mandolin, each marriage  
license, "ten rules to insure happy  
married life." Here is a sample:  
"Keep up the courtship period.  
Go 50-50 on the money and 50-50 on  
the love. Don't live with relatives,  
or keep boarders. Don't be a tight-  
wad."

Such rules mean little. Every man  
knows that one drop of salt water,  
patently studied will tell you all about  
the Pacific ocean, which is simply  
a collection of so many drops.

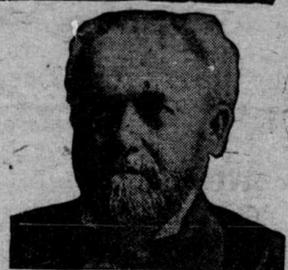
Marriages would last longer if men  
realized that each woman is to all  
women what a drop of salt water is  
to the ocean. Study and so interest  
yourself in the women that the Lord  
has assigned to you. One is enough  
and has within her, if you look for  
it, everything that you would find in  
10,000.

Scientists are going to Knechow,  
mysterious remote region of China,  
to hunt for a monkey with a forked  
tail. This isn't a joke, but a serious  
enterprise.

An old Chinese writer alleges that  
the natives know when it is going  
to rain because "Rhineptheus Bre-  
lich" thrusts the forks of its tail into  
its nostrils before a storm.

This monkey is so nervous and exci-  
table that it sometimes knocks its  
brains out, dashing against the trees.  
If captured, it ought to find a place  
in modern European diplomacy.

Democrats forget that Ford's chief  
plank tells of the wonderful things to  
be done for the south at Muscle  
Shoals. Ford would draw farmers  
from the republican party, but he  
might also break up the solid south  
and leave Messrs. Coolidge and Mc-  
Adoo wondering what happened.



## CHARACTER TELLS THE STORY!

People throughout this country are giving more thought to hygiene and to the purity of remedies on the market, but no one doubts the purity of Doctor Pierce's vegetable medicines, for they have been so favorably known for over fifty years that everyone knows they are just what they are claimed to be. These medicines are the result of long research by a well-known physician, R. V. Pierce, M. D., who compounded them from health-giving herbs and roots long used in sickness by the Indians. Dr. Pierce's reputation as a leading and honored citizen of Buffalo, is a sufficient guarantee for the purity of that splendid tonic and blood purifier, the Golden Medical Discovery, and the equally fine nerve tonic and system builder for women's ailments, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. Send 10c. for trial pkg. tablets to Dr. Pierce's Invalids Hotel, Buffalo, N.Y.

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SPOHN MEDICAL CO. GOSHEN, IND. U.S.A.

More people like to be in a crowd than complain of it.

## GIRLS! A GLEAMY MASS OF BEAUTIFUL HAIR

35-Cent "Danderine" So Improves Lifeless, Neglected Hair.

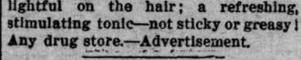
An abundance of luxuriant hair full of gloss, gleams and life shortly follows a genuine toning up of neglected scalps with dandrubs "Danderine."

Falling hair, itching scalp and the dandruff is corrected immediately. Thin, dry, wispy or fading hair is quickly invigorated, taking on new strength, color and youthful beauty. "Danderine" is delightful on the hair; a refreshing, stimulating tonic—not sticky or greasy! Any drug store.—Advertisement.

Any fool can spend money; it takes a genius to invest it wisely.

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Don't wonder whether you can dye or tint successfully, because perfect home dyeing is guaranteed with "Diamond Dyes" even if you have never dyed before. Druggists have all colors. Directions in each package.—Advertisement.

It is during her first engagement that a girl ties up her love letters with baby blue ribbon.

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6 BELLANS Hot Water Sure Relief

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