

HEARTS AND MASKS

By HAROLD MacGRATH Author of "The Man on the Box," etc.

With Drawings by Harrison Fisher

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CHAPTER VI.—Continued.

"What is it you think I have done?" I demanded. "You have, or have had, several thousand dollars' worth of gems on your person to-night."

"Mr. Haggerty, you are making a stupid mistake. You are losing time, besides. I am not the man for whom you are hunting. My name is Richard Comstalk."

"One name or another, it does not matter."

"Plenty of gall," murmured one of the minions of the law, whom I afterward learned was the chief of the village police.

"The card by which you gained admittance here," demanded the great Haggerty truculently.

"I surrendered it. A crowd had by this time collected curiously about us. I could see the musicians on the stage peering over the plants."

"The thief you are looking for has gone," said I. "He escaped by the coal window." By this statement my feet sank deeper still.

"What did I tell you?" cried Haggerty, turning to his men. "They had an accomplice hidden in the cellars."

"I beg to inform you that you are making a mistake that will presently cost you dear,"—thinking of the political pull my uncle had in New York. "I am the nephew of Daniel Witherpoon."

"Worse and worse!" said the chief of police.

"I request Mr. Hamilton to be called. He will prove to you that you are greatly mistaken." Everything looked pretty black, I can tell you.

"You will see whom you please, but only after you are safely landed in the lockup. Now, Madame,"—turning swiftly upon the Blue Domino, "what is your part in this fine business?"

"It certainly has no part in yours,"—lively.

Haggerty smiled. "My skin is very thick. Do you know this fellow?" She shook her head. He stood undecided for a space.

"Let me see your card." "I decline to produce it,"—haughtily. Haggerty seemed staggered for a moment. "I am sorry to annoy you, but you must be identified at once."

"And why?"—proudly. "Was it forbidden to go into the club cellars for such harmless things as apples?"

"Apples! I looked at her admiringly. "Apples?" repeated Haggerty. "Couldn't you have sent a servant for them?"

She did not reply. "You were with this clever gentleman in the cellars. You may or may not be acquainted with him. I do not wish to do anything hasty in regard to yourself, but your position is rather equivocal. Produce your card and be identified—if you really can."

"I refuse!" "Then I shall ask you to accompany us to the room up stairs till the police patrol arrives."

"I will go,"—quietly. "Nonsense!" I objected. "On my word of honor, I do not know this lady. Our presence in the cellar was perfectly harmless. There is no valid reason for detaining her. It is an outrage!"

"I am not going to stand here arguing with you," said Haggerty. "Let the lady produce her card; let her disclose her identity. That is simple enough."

"I have already given you my determination on that subject," replied the girl. "I can very well explain my presence here, but I absolutely decline to explain it to the police."

"I didn't understand her at all. She had said that she possessed an alibi. Why didn't she produce it?"

So the two of us left the gorgeous ball-room. Every one moved aside for us, and quickly, too, as if we had had the plague. I looked in vain for Hamilton. He was a friend in need. We were taken into the steward's office and the door was shut and locked.

The band in the ball-room went galloping through a two-step, and the gaiety was in full swing again. The thief had been rounded up! How the deuce was it going to end?

"I can not tell you how sorry I am to have mixed you up in this," I said to the girl.

"You are in no manner to blame. Think of what might have happened had you blown up the post-office!"

She certainly was the least embarrassed of the two of us. I addressed my next remark to the great Haggerty.

"Did you find a suitable pistol in Friard's?"

"A man in my business," said Haggerty mildly, "is often found in such

places. There are various things to be recovered in pawnshops. The gentleman of this club sent me the original ten of hearts, my presence being necessary at such big entertainments. And when I saw that card of yours, I was so happy that I nearly put you on your guard. Lord, how long I've been looking for you! I give you credit for being a clever rascal. You have fooled us all nicely. Not a soul among us knew your name, nor what you looked like. And but for that card, you might still be at large. Until the lady submits to the simple process of identification, I shall be compelled to look upon her as a traitress as an accomplice. She has refused the offer I have made her, and she can not blame me if I am suspicious, when to be suspicious is a part of my business." He was reasonable enough in regard to the girl.

He turned to the chief of the village police, who was sitting at the desk ordinarily used by the club steward.

"No reporters, mind you." "Yes, sir. We'll see that no reporter gets wind of the capture."

The telephone bell rang. One of the police answered it.

"For you, Mr. Haggerty," he said. Haggerty sprang to the telephone and placed the receiver to his ear.

"What?" we heard him exclaim. "You have got the other fellow? A horse and carriage at once!"

"Take mine," said the chief excitedly. "What is it?"

"My subordinate at the railway station has just landed the fellow with the jewels. Mighty quick work. I must hustle in to town at once."

Hamilton looked at the Blue Domino.

"Madame, will you do me the honor to raise your mask?"

She did so; and I saw Hamilton draw in his breath. Her beauty was certainly of an exquisite pattern. He frowned anxiously.

"I never saw this young woman before," he admitted slowly.

"Ha!" cried the chief, glad to find some one culpable.

"Did you receive your invitation through the proper channels?" asked Hamilton.

"I came here to-night,"—coldly, "on the invitation of Mrs. Hyphen-Bonds, who sailed for Europe Wednesday."

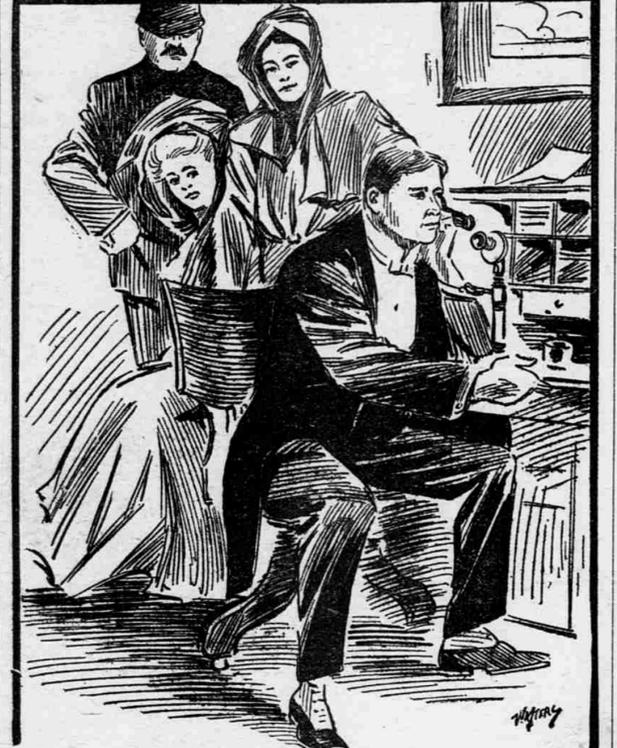
Here was an alibi that was an alibi! I was all at sea. Hamilton bowed; the chief coughed worriedly behind his hand. The girl had told me she was an impostor like myself, that her ten of hearts was as dark-stained as my own. I could not make head or tail to it. Mrs. Hyphen-Bonds! She was a law in the land, especially in Blankshire, the larger part of which she owned. What did it all mean? And what was her idea in posing as an impostor?

The door opened again. "The patrol has come," said the officer who entered.

"Let it wait," growled the chief. "Haggerty has evidently got us all balled up. I don't believe his fashionable thief has materialized at all; just a common crook. Well, he's got him, at any rate, and the gems."

"You have, of course, the general invitation?" said Hamilton.

"Here is it,"—and she passed the engraved card to him.



"What?" We Heard Him Exclaim.

There'll be plenty of time to attend to these persons. Bring them to town the moment the patrol arrives. The gems are the most important things just now."

"Yes, sir. You can rely upon us, Mr. Haggerty. Billy, go down with Mr. Haggerty and show him my rig."

"Good!" said Haggerty. "It's been a fine night's work, my lads, a fine night's work. I'll see that all get some credit. Permit no one to approach the prisoners without proper authority."

"Your orders shall be obeyed to the letter," said the chief importantly. He already saw his name figuring in the New York papers as having assisted in the capture of a great thief.

Haggerty departed. A silence settled gloomily down on us. Quarter of an hour passed. The grim-visaged police watched us vigilantly. Half an hour, three-quarters, an hour. Far away we heard the whistle of an outgoing train. Would I had been on it! From time to time we heard faint music. At length there was a noise outside the door, and a moment later Hamilton and two others came in.

When he saw me, he stopped, his eyes bulging and his mouth agape.

"Dicky Comstalk?" he cried helplessly. "What the devil does this mean?"—turning to the police.

"Do you know this fellow, Mr. Hamilton?" asked the chief.

"Know him? Of course I know him," answered Teddy; "and I'll stake my last dollar on his honesty."

(Thanks, Teddy!) I began to breathe.

"But—" began the chief, seized with sudden misgivings.

"It is impossible, I tell you," interrupted Hamilton. "I know this gentleman is incapable of the theft. There is some frightful mistake. How the dickens did you get here, Dicky?"

And briefly I told him my story, my ass's ears growing inch by inch as I went along. Hamilton didn't know whether to swear or to laugh; finally he laughed.

"If you wanted to come, why didn't you write me for an invitation?"

"I shouldn't have come to your old ball, had I been invited. It was just the idea of the lark."

"We shall have to hold him, nevertheless," said the chief, "till everything is cleared up. The girl—"

"I beg a thousand pardons!" said Hamilton humbly. "Everything seems to have gone wrong."

"Will you guarantee this man?" asked the chief of Hamilton, nodding toward me.

"I have said so. Mr. Comstalk is very well known to me. He is a retired army officer, and to my knowledge a man with an income sufficient to put him far beyond want."

"What is your name?" asked the chief of the girl, scowling. It was quite evident he couldn't understand her actions any better than I.

"Alice Hawthorne," with an oblique glance at me.

I had been right! "What is your occupation? I am obliged to ask these questions, Miss."

"I am a miniature painter,"—briefly. Hamilton came forward. "Alice Hawthorne? Pardon me, but are you the artist who recently completed the miniature of the Emperor of Germany, the Princess of Hesse, and Mrs. Hyphen-Bonds?"

"I am. I believe there is no further reason for detaining me."

"Emperor of Germany?" echoed the now bewildered chief. "Why didn't you tell all this to Mr. Haggerty?"

"I had my reasons."

Once again the door opened. A burly man in a dark business-suit entered. His face was ruddy and his little grey eyes sparkled with suppressed ire. He reminded me of Vautrin, the only difference being that Vautrin was French while this man was distinctly Irish. His massive shoulders betrayed tremendous strength. He was vastly angry about something. He went to the chief's desk and rested his hands upon it.

"You are a nice specimen for a chief of police, you are!" he began.

"And who the devil are you?" bawled the chief, his cholera rising.

"I'll tell you who I am presently." We all eyed him in wonder. What was going to happen now?

"Which of you gentlemen is Mr. Hamilton?" asked the new-comer gruffly.

Hamilton signified that he was the gentleman by that name.

"Some ladies at your ball have been robbed of their diamonds I understand?"

"About ten thousands dollars' worth." To be Continued.

Heinrich Conried.



Director of the Metropolitan Opera company in New York city, whose recent production of "Salome" created such a furore in the metropolis that he was forced to abandon the contemplated run.

CLAIM STRANGE GIFT.

BELIEVERS ASSERT THEY CAN SPEAK ALL LANGUAGES.

Power Can Only Be Used for Purpose of Exhortation—When Holy Ghost Came Church Members Fell Down and Winds Roared.

Denver, Col.—This city has been the home of strange religions and some bizarre manifestations of religious belief. The Schlatter incident of 1895 still causes people to talk and wonder, and the Sun Worshipers of two years ago are not forgotten. But the strangest claim yet made by any body of believers is that of the Christian Assembly church members, who say they have been granted the Apostolic gift of many tongues, and that they can speak all kinds of languages, which they have never before heard.

They claim that the distinctive mark of this power is the fact that no one receiving the gift can use it for any other than purposes of exhortation. Frequently the inspired person speaks in a language totally unknown to himself, they say, and makes an exhortation understood only by some one of a foreign nationality who happens to be in the audience.

Occasionally one of the members will speak in a language unknown to any one present. As a result of this wonderful power they expect to send abroad missionaries to China and India.

The case regarded as the most remarkable among the believers is that of Miss Mabel Smith, a girl of 18, whose home is in Galveston, Tex. To her has been given the power to speak 18 languages, one for every year of her life, and they think that as she adds years she will acquire languages.

Another notable case is that of Miss Evelyn Schippie, 17, who speaks altogether in the Chinese language. She has never previously been able to speak this language, and has never heard it spoken.

WOMAN SERVES AS JUROR.

Miss Hilda Smith First to Be Impaneled Under Colorado Law.

Denver.—"Hilda Smith!" As the clerk in Judge McCall's division of the county court called the name the other afternoon, a young woman with golden hair and blue eyes stepped forward, and Colorado's first woman juror was ready to answer truthfully all questions touching upon her "qualifications to sit as a fair and impartial juror."

Miss Smith was impaneled in an open venire in the trial of the divorce case of Harvey H. Fretz against Hatie F. Fretz. She sat in the juror's box beside five men, with no outward sign of trepidation.

"Gentlemen of the jury,—and Judge McCall paused in his instructions when he glanced at the smiling face of the girl juror, "and lady of the jury," he added, gallantly, and then proceeded.

The jury found in favor of the plaintiff and gave him a decree on the ground of desertion. Miss Smith collected \$1.50, and resumed the work with which she is more familiar—that of gathering news.

"It is not hard work," said Miss Smith, "but I have no desire to become a professional juror."

Animals' Ablutions.

A cat always carries about with it a clothes brush, for its tongue is rough, and it cleans its glossy coat just as a lady brushes her furs. Foxes, dogs and wolves, on the other hand, do not use their mouths when they "need a wash and brush up," but scratch themselves vigorously with their front and back paws and are as fresh as ever. Field mice comb their hair and whiskers with their hind legs in the same way as dogs, and the fur seal spends as much time in making herself look smart as a woman does. Although elephants appear to be thick-skinned and callous, as a matter of fact they take the greatest care of their skins, and are constantly having shower baths by the aid of their portable trunks. After the bath they roll themselves in a "toilet preparation" of dust, which keeps the flies off. It is the crocodile, however, who makes his toilet in the most luxurious fashion, for the Egyptian plover acts as his valet.

Execution Scene in the Congo.



From stereograph, copyright, by Underwood & Underwood, N. Y. The above photograph shows how condemned men are put to death in Congoland. The doomed man is bound to stakes driven in the ground and his head tied to a young sapling as illustrated. The executioner then beheads the victim with a swift stroke of his peculiar knife. The head is allowed to remain on the treetop as a warning to wrongdoers.

Explaining Matters.

The Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, D. D., of the Channing club dinner the other evening, apologizing for a slight huskiness in his voice (he had been making speeches daily for more than a week) told a story on himself, says the Boston Herald. About two years ago he went to

Miss Mary Botroff, a woman well and favorably known in this city for her charitable work, says that she uses both Chinese and Arabic fluently. In a recent address made in a mission meeting she spoke five different languages so that they could be understood by representatives of five different nationalities in the room at that time.

This power has also been granted to the pastor of the church, Rev. Gilbert E. Farr, and his wife. "There is nothing new in this," he says. "We simply believe and have proved conclusively that the power of the apostles reaches down to the present time. We are now living in the Gospel age, and everything inaugurated by the apostles in their age holds good in the present. We are not a sect nor a cult. We simply believe in the whole Gospel, and in this thing along with all the rest of it."

Mr. Farr furnishes this description of how the gift came:

"Last August a body of Christian people was holding a camp meeting in this city, and during the meetings two Christian women came to us from Los Angeles. They said they were going to Jerusalem to preach the Gospel in Arabic, as God had given them that gift and also the gift of other languages. Many of our members began to seek it for themselves. After the public meetings closed we all went into a separate room and waited for the Lord to do to us as He did to the apostles at Pentecost, when He gave them the gift of languages.

"The first manifestation of the presence of the Holy Ghost was when people began to tremble and fall down and then there came a rushing of great winds. This is just the same thing that happened according to the Bible on the day of Pentecost. Very soon several of our members began to speak in different languages and others interpreted what they said. No less than 40 people, men, women and children, have received this wonderful gift.

"As for myself, I cannot tell anything more about my receiving the gift than this: My throat began to swell and I was compelled to remove my cravat. While I opened my mouth under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, I began to speak in a foreign language which I had never studied or heard spoken, and I have spoken under this wonderful power many times since."

Learned Scholar Dead.

The man who in our times has had the widest acquaintance with the literature of the time of Shakespeare died a few days ago in London. He was Mr. W. F. Craig. His learning was marvelous and his scholarship profound. He had made extensive preparations for an exhaustive Shakespeare Lexicon, with illustrations from all the literature of that period. But the finest fruit of a life devoted to study was his work on the Dowden edition of Shakespeare, in the general editorship of which he was associated with Prof. Edward Dowden, of Trinity college, and in which he edited personally with supreme success King Lear. It will be difficult to find a worthy successor to Mr. Craig for the superintendence of the several volumes in the edition which remain to be printed.