

THE MIND READER

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ILLUSTRATIONS by J. N. MARCHAND

(For Synopsis of Part I, see page 17)

PART II.

AT THAT instant the boy King and his Queen Mother, herself still young and beautiful, and cloaked with a dignity and sorrow that her robes of mourning could not intensify, appeared in the doorway.

"Go back, sir!" warned Philip. "He means to kill you!"

At the words and at sight of the struggling men, the great lady swayed helplessly, her eyes filled with terror. Her son sprang protectively in front of her. But the danger was past. A second policeman was now holding the maniac by the wrists, forcing his arms above his head; Philip's arms, like a lariat, were wound around his chest; and from his pocket the first policeman gingerly drew forth a round, black object of the size of a glass fire grenade. He held it high in the air, and waved his free hand warningly. But the warning was unobserved. There was no one remaining to observe it. Leaving the would-be assassin struggling and biting in the grasp of the stalwart policeman, and the other policeman unhappily holding the bomb at arm's length, Philip sought to escape into the Ritz. But the young King broke through the circle of attendants and stopped him.

"I must thank you," said the boy eagerly; "and I wish you to tell me how you came to suspect the man's purpose."

Unable to speak the truth, Philip, the would-be writer of fiction, began to improvise fluently.

"To learn their purpose, sir," he said, "is my business. I am of the International Police, and in the secret service of your Majesty."

"Then, I must know your name," said the King, and added with a dignity that was most becoming, "you will find we are not ungrateful."

Philip smiled mysteriously and shook his head.

"I said in your *secret service*," he repeated. "Did even Your Majesty know me, my usefulness would be at an end." He pointed toward the two policemen. "If you desire to be just, as well as gracious, those are the men to reward."

He slipped past the King and through the crowd of hotel officials into the hall and on into the corridor.

The arrest had taken place so quietly and so quickly, that through the heavy glass doors no sound had penetrated, and of the fact that they had been so close to a possible tragedy those in the corridor were still ignorant. The members of the Hungarian orchestra were arranging their music; a waiter was serving two men of middle age with sherry; and two distinguished looking, elderly gen-

tleman seated together on a sofa were talking in leisurely whispers.

One of the two middle-aged men was well known to Philip, who as a reporter had often, in New York, endeavored to interview him on matters concerning the steel trust. His name was Faust. He was a Pennsylvania Dutchman from Pittsburgh, and at one time had been a foreman of the night shift in the same mills he now controlled. But with a roar and a spectacular flash, not unlike one of his own blast furnaces, he had soared to fame and fortune. He recognized Philip as one of the bright young men of the *Republic*; but in his own opinion he was far too self-important to betray that fact.

Philip sank into an imitation Louis Quatorze chair beside a fountain in imitation of one in the apart-



"Run!" he commanded. "Get out of here! Tell him he is to sell!"

ment of the Pompadour, and ordered what he knew would be an execrable imitation of an American cocktail. While waiting for the cocktail and Lady Woodcote's luncheon party, Philip, from where he sat, could not help but overhear the conversation of Faust and of the man with him. The latter was a

German with Hebraic features and a pointed beard. In loud tones he was congratulating the American many-time-millionaire on having that morning come into possession of a rare and valuable masterpiece, a hitherto unknown and but recently discovered portrait of Philip IV. by Velasquez.

Philip sighed enviously.

"Fancy," he thought, "owning a Velasquez! Fancy having it all to yourself! It must be fun to be rich. It certainly is hell to be poor!"

The German, who was evidently a picture-dealer, was exclaiming in tones of rapture, and nodding his head with an air of awe and solemnity.

"I am telling you the truth, Mr. Faust," he said. "In no gallery in Europe, no, not even in the Prado, is there such another Velasquez. This is what you are doing, Mr. Faust, you are robbing Spain. You are robbing her of something worth more to her than Cuba. And I tell you, so soon as it is known that this Velasquez is going to your home in Pittsburgh, every Spaniard will hate you and every art collector will hate you, too. For it is the most wonderful art treasure in Europe. And, what a bargain, Mr. Faust. What a bargain!"

To make sure that the reporter was within hearing, Mr. Faust glanced in the direction of Philip and, seeing that he had heard, frowned importantly. That the reporter might hear still more, he also raised his voice.

"Nothing can be called a bargain, Baron," he said, "that costs three hundred thousand dollars!"

Again he could not resist glancing towards Philip, and so eagerly, that Philip deemed it would be only polite to look interested. So, he obligingly assumed a startled look, with which he endeavored to mingle simulations of surprise, awe and envy.

The next instant an expression of real surprise overspread his features.

Mr. Faust continued. "If you will come upstairs," he said to the picture dealer, "I will give you your check; and then I should like to drive to your apartments and take a farewell look at the picture."

"I am sorry," the Baron said, "but I have had it moved to my art gallery to be packed."

"Then, let's go to the gallery," urged the patron of art. "We've just time before lunch." He rose to his feet, and on the instant, the soul of the picture-dealer was filled with alarm.

In actual words he said: "That picture is already boxed and in its lead coffin. No doubt by now, it is on its way to Liverpool. I am sorry." But, his thoughts, as Philip easily read them, were: "Fancy my letting this vulgar fool into the Tate street workshop! Even he would know that old masters are not found in a half-finished state on Chelsea-made frames and canvases. Fancy my letting him see those two half-completed Van Dycks, the new Halz, the half-dozen Corots. He would even see his own copy of Velasquez next to the one exactly like it—the one Mac-Millan finished yesterday, and that I am sending to Oporto, where next year in a convent, we shall 'discover' it."

Philip's surprise gave way to intense amusement. In his delight at the situation upon which he had stumbled, he laughed aloud. The two men, who had risen, surprised at the spectacle of a young man laughing at nothing, turned and stared. Philip also arose.

"Pardon me," he said to Faust, "but you spoke so loud I could n't help overhearing. I

think we've met before, when I was a reporter on the *Republic*."

The Pittsburgh millionaire made a pretense of annoyance.

"Really!" he protested, irritably, "You reporters

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