

# HEARTS and MASKS

COPYRIGHT 1905 BY BOBBY HERRILL CO. BY HAROLD MACGRATH AUTHOR OF THE MAN ON THE BOX ETC.

"I'm hungry," she said, apologetically. "And plucky, too," I supplemented, admiringly. "Most women would be in a weeping state by this time."

"Perhaps I am waiting till it is all over." "You had better take off your mask."

In fact I felt positive that the sight of her exquisite face would act like a tonic upon my nerves.

"I am doing very well with it on. I can at least keep my face clean." She raised the curtain and took a liberal bite of the apple—so nonchalantly that I was forced to smile.

"Here's a box," said I; "lets sit down while we eat. We are safe enough. If any one had heard the



"Proceed. I have the courage to Trust to Your Guidance."

racket in the coal bin, the cellar would have been full of police by this time."

And there we sat, calmly munching the apples, for all the world as if the iron hand of the law wasn't within a thousand miles of us. It was all very amusing.

"Are—are you the man they are hunting for?" she asked abruptly. "I never stole anything more terrible than green apples—and ripe ones—with a nod toward the apple bin."

"Pardon me! I feel very guilty in asking you such a question. You haven't told me your name."

"Haven't I? My name is Richard Comstak. My friends call me Dicky." "Dicky," she murmured. "It's a nice name."

"Won't you have another apple?" I asked impulsively. "My appetite is appeased, thank you."

An idea came to me. "Hamilton said there were three tens of hearts that meant that only one was out of order. Where did you get your card?"

"That I shall tell you—later." "But are you really an impostor?" "I should not be in this cellar else."

"You are very mystifying." "For the present I prefer to remain so."

We tossed aside the apple cores, rose, and went on. It was the longest cellar I ever saw. There seemed absolutely no end to it. The wine cellar was walled apart from the main cellar, and had the semblance of a huge cistern with a door opening into it. As we passed it, the vague perfume of the grape drifted out to us.

"Let's have a bottle," I began. "Mr. Comstak!"

"By absent-treatment!" I hastened to add. "You will make a capital comrade—if we ever get out of this cellar."

"Trust me for that!" I replied gaily. "Be careful; there's a pile of empty bottles, yearning to be filled with tomato catsup. Give me your hand."

But the moment the little digits closed over mine, a thrill seized me, and I quickly bent my head and kissed the hand. It was wrong, but I could not help it. She never spoke nor withdrew her hand; and my fear that she might really be offended vanished.

"We are nearly out of it," I said exultantly. "I see the cellar stairs ahead. If only those doors are open!"

"Heaven is merciful to the fool, and we are a pair," she replied, sighing gratefully. "It seems strange that nobody should be in the cellar on a night like this. Hark! They are playing again up stairs in the ball room."

"And wondering a whole lot where that third ten of hearts has gone." "But, listen. How are we to get back to the trolley? We certainly can not walk the distance in these clothes."

"Oh, that carryall will come to our rescue. We are weary and are leaving early, don't you know. That part is simple; the complicated thing is to shake the dust of this cellar."

"What a big furnace!" she exclaimed, as we came into view of the huge heating apparatus. "And there's more coal!"

A man stepped out from behind the furnace and confronted us. A red bandage wrapped the lower part of his

face and his hat was pulled down over his eyes. But I recognized him instantly. It was the fellow with the villainous pipe! Something glittered ominously at the end of his outstretched arm.

"If you make any noise, sir, I'll have to plug you, sir," he said in polite but muffled tones. "The candle slipped from my fingers, and the three of us stood in darkness!"

### CHAPTER V.

There was a clicking sound, and the glare of a dark-lantern struck my blinking eyes.

"Pick up the candle, sir," said the tranquil voice from behind the light. I obeyed readily enough. Fate was downright cruel to us. Not a dozen feet away was liberty; and now we were back at the beginning again, with the end nowhere in sight.

"Shall I light it, sir?" I asked, not to be outdone in the matter of formal politeness.

"Yes, sir, doubtless you will need it." I struck a match and touched the candlestick.

"Burglar!" said I. (For all my apparent coolness, my heartbeats were away up in the eighties!) "The girl snuggled close to my side. I could feel her heart beating even faster than mine."

"Burglar!" I repeated. "Indeed, no, sir,"—reproachfully. "Mine is a political job."

"A political job?" thunderstruck. "Yes, sir; I am an inspector of cellars,"—grimly. "I couldn't get around to this here cellar earlier in the day, sir, and a fellow's work must be done."

Here was a burglar with the sense of humor. "What can I do for you?" I asked blandly.

"Firstly, as they say, you might tell me what you and this lady are doing in this lonesome cellar."

"Say 'sir,' when you address me." "Yes, sir."

"The lady and I were playing hide-and-seek."

"Nice game, sir,"—grinning. "Were you trying to hide under the coal?" "Oh, no; I was merely exploring it."

"Say 'sir,' when you address me." "Sir."

"You're a cool hand, sir."

"I am gratified to learn that our admiration is mutual. But what are you doing here?"

"I was ascertaining if the law was properly observed, sir," shaking with silent laughter.

"But what puzzles me," I went on, "is the fact that you could gather the gems in that garb." For I was positive that this was the Galloping Dick every one was looking for.

"I don't understand a word you say, sir. I'm an inspector of cellars, sir, not a jeweler. So you and the lady was playing hide-and-seek? Come, now, what is your graft? Is all the push here to-night?"

"That depends,"—cursing under my breath that I wore a gown which hampered my movements. For, truth to tell, I was watching him as a cat watches a mouse.

"Well, sir, we of the profession never interfere with gentlemanly jobs, sir. All I want of you is to help me out of here."

"I am not a burglar."

"Oh, I understand, sir; I understand completely. A gentleman is always a gentleman, sir. Now, you can return to that coal bin. I was just about to make for it when you lit that candle."

"Why not leave by the cellar doors?"

"I have my reasons, sir; most satisfactory reasons, sir. I prefer the window. Get along!"—his tones suddenly hardening.

I got along. "The lady may sit down, sir," he said courteously.

"Thank you, I will," replied the girl, plumping down on an empty winecase. (She afterward confessed that if she had not sat down on the box, she would have sat down on the cellar floor, as a sort of paralysis had seized her knees.)

I stepped into the coal bin and rested the candle on the little shelf for that purpose. I was downright anxious to see the fellow safely away. There wasn't room in that cellar for the three of us. His presence doubly endangered us and multiplied the complications. I was in no position to force the gems from him. A man who has ten thousand dollars' worth of jewels on his person doesn't stop at shooting; and I possessed a healthy regard for my skin. I opened the window and caught it to the ceiling by a hook I found there.

"There is a stout screen, my man." "Take this, sir, and cut it out,"—handing me a pair of wire clippers, holding his lanterns under his arm meanwhile. The muzzle of the revolver, during all this time, never wavered in its aim at my head.

In the Name of Sense, that good common sense of which all of us have a share, how can you continue to buy ordinary soda crackers, stale and dusty as they must be, when for 5¢ you can get

## Uneededa Biscuit

fresh from the oven, protected from dirt by a package the very beauty of which makes you hungry.

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

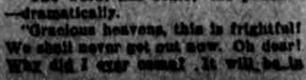
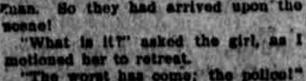
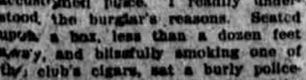
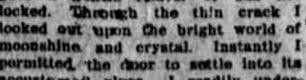
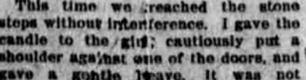
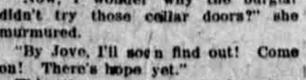
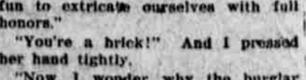
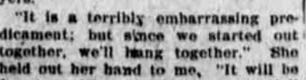
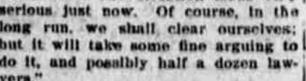
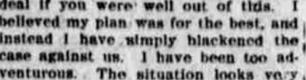
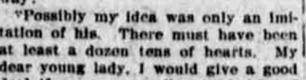
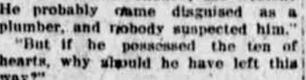
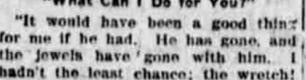
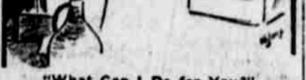
The girl laughed hysterically. "Now what?" The fun was beginning to pall on me.

"Step out of the bin and stand aside. Sit down by the lady. Maybe she's a bit frightened."

I obeyed him to the letter. "Thanks!" With the agility of a cat he leaped up and wrinkled through the window. He turned. "Good night, sir. Sometime maybe I'll do the same for you, sir."

"Go to the devil!" I snarled. "My, my! What a temper, sir! I wouldn't have thought it of you, and a nice lady in speaking distance!"

He disappeared. The girl laid a hand on my arm. "You have acted very sensibly, Mr. Comstak. If you had not, it is quite certain he would have shot you."



the papers, with horrid pictures. We ought not to have left the ball room. Our very actions will tell heavily against us. Awful!"

"Now, don't you worry. They will not take any notice of you, once they set eyes upon me. Homo sum! They are looking for me. There's only one superfluous ten of hearts. I have it."

"But I shall be found with you, and the stupid police will swear I am an accomplice." She wrung her hands.

"But no jewels will be found upon us," I argued half-heartedly.

"They will say we have already disposed of them."

"But the real burglar—" "They will say that he came into the cellar at our bidding."

This girl was terribly reasonable and direct.

"Hang it! I know Teddy Hamilton the M. P. H. He'll go my bail, and you, too, for that matter. Come let's not give up. There must be some other way out."

"I wish I might believe it. Why did I come?"—a bit of a wall stealing into the anger in her voice.

"This is Tom Fool's Night, and no mistake," I assented ruefully.

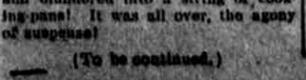
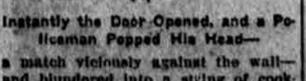
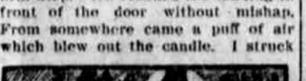
"But I am a bigger fool than you are; I had an alibi, and a good one."

"An alibi? Why on earth, then, did you follow me? What is your alibi?" "Never mind now. We should still be in this miserable cellar,"—breathless. "What a night! I am so ashamed! I shall be horribly compromised."

"I'll take the brunt of it all. I'm sorry; but, for the love of Heaven, don't cry, or I shall lose what little nerve I have left."

"I am not crying!" she denied emphatically. "My inclination is to shriek with laughter. I'm hysterical. And who wouldn't be, with police officers and cells staring one in the face? Let us be going. That policeman outside will presently hear us whispering if we stand here much longer."

"There was wisdom in this. So, once again I took the candle, and we marched back. There wasn't a single jewel left in my whole system, and it didn't look as if there was ever going to be another supply. We took the other side of the furnace, and at length came to a flight of wooden stairs, leading somewhere into the club. It was our last chance, or we should be obliged to stay all night in some bin; for it would not be long before they searched the cellars. If this flight led into the kitchen, we were saved, for I could bluff the servants. We paused. Presently we ascended, side by side, with light but firm step. We reached the landing in front of the door without mishap. From somewhere came a puff of air which blew out the candle. I struck



## HUMOROUS

### The Right Symptom.

Senator Burrows of Michigan is given credit for the following story:

On one occasion when Mr. Burrows was running for office, he was called upon to address a crowd of farmers who only the day before had listened to a stump speech from Mr. Burrows' opponent.

"Of course," remarked the Senator, with a smile, "it would be very unbecoming to me to say anything about my friend who was here yesterday, but you all know what an eloquent speaker he is, and what an extremely loud voice he possesses. It reminds me of a couple of girls I heard talking in Kalnazo the other day, the conversation running thus:

"Well, Martha, how is your husband to-day?"

"Porely, Miss, quite porely. He's got another dose of at cre exclamationary rheumatism."

"You mean 'inflammationary' rheumatism, Martha. 'Exclamationary' means to cry out."

"Dat's it, mum, dat's it, porely. He don't do nothing 'cept holler."

The Lesson in It

"The trouble with you ladies of the W. C. T. U. is," said a man to a member of that organization, "that instead of opposing the christening of a vessel with champagne, you ought to encourage it and draw from it a great temperance lesson."

"Why, how can we?" asked the "white ribboner."

"Well," was the reply, "after the first taste to wine the ship takes to water and sticks to it ever after."

It was Mary's Own Idea

"Did you mail my letter, Mary?" asked her mistress. "It was an important one, you know."

"Yes, mum, indeed I did."

"But why have you brought back the two cents I gave you for the stamp?"

"Sure, I didn't have to use it, mum," replied Mary. "I slipped th' letter into th' box whin nobody was lukin'."

A Devotional Turn of Mind

As the new minister of the village was on his way to evening service he met a rising young man of the place whom he was anxious to have become an active member of the church.

"Good-evening, my young friend," he said solemnly, "do you ever attend a place of worship?"

"Yes, indeed sir; regularly, every Sunday night," replied the young fellow with a smile. "I'm on my way to see her now."

Warding Off a Catastrophe

A fat woman entered a crowded street car and, seizing a strap, stood directly in front of a man seated in the corner. As the car started she lunged against his newspaper and at the same time trod heavily on his toes.

As soon as he could extricate himself he rose and offered her his seat.

"You are very kind, sir," she said, panting for breath. "Not at all, madam," he replied; "it's not kindness; it's simply self-defense."

Of Course

The morning class had been

## How's Your Liver?

It will pay you to take good care of your liver, because, if you do, your liver will take good care of you. Sick liver puts you all out of sorts, makes you pale, dizzy, sick at the stomach, gives you stomach ache, headache, malaria, etc. Well it or keeps you well, by purifying your blood and digesting your food. There is only one safe, certain and reliable liver medicine, and that is

## Theford's Black-Draught

For over 60 years this wonderful vegetable remedy has been benefiting thousands of homes, and is today the favorite liver medicine in the world. It acts gently on the liver and kidneys, and does not irritate the bowels. It cures constipation, relieves congestion, and purifies the system from an overflow of bile, thereby keeping the body in perfect health. Price 25c at all druggists and dealers. Test it.

duly instructed and enlightened upon the subject of our national independence. Feeling sure she had made a real and lasting impression with her explanations and black-board illustrations the young teacher began with the usual round of questions:

"Now, Sammy Smith, where was the Declaration of Independence signed?"

Sammy, with a shout of glee: "At de bottom, ma'am—that's what you said!"

They Come High—But—

A stranger in New York asked a newsboy to direct him to a certain bank, promising him half a dollar for it. The boy took him about three doors away and there was the bank. Paying the fee, the man said, "That was half a doll or easily earned, son."

"Sure," said the boy; "but youse mustn't forget that bank directors is paid high in Noo Yawk."

Enthusiasm Squelched

An enthusiastic citizen, about to visit Europe, was rejoicing over the fact and the pleasures to come.

"How delightful it will be," he said to his wife, "to tread the bounding billow and inhale the invigorating oxygen of the sea, the boundless sea! I long to see it! To breathe in great drafts of life-giving air. I shall want to stand every moment on the prow of the steamer with my mouth open—"

"You probably will; dear," interrupted his wife encouragingly. "That's the way all the ocean travelers do."

For Lung Troubles

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral certainly cures coughs, colds, bronchitis, consumption. And it certainly strengthens weak throats and weak lungs. There can be no mistake about this. You know it is true. And your own doctor will say so.

"My little boy had a terrible cough. I tried everything I could hear of, but it was no use until I used Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. The next night he was better, and he steadily improved until he was perfectly well."—Mrs. J. A. B. Allen, Ill.

Made by J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass. Sole Manufacturers: SARGENT & WELLS, BOSTON.

Ayer's

Keep the bowels regular with Ayer's Pills and thus hasten recovery.