The Man Nobody Knew

By HOLWORTHY HALL

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"PERHAPS THEY COPIED THAT PICTURE TOO WELL."

Synopsis.—In a base hospital at [illegible] beyond recognition an American soldier [illegible] for a photograph to guide them in the task. [illegible] a picture of the doctor holding the child [illegible] making a remarkable likeness of the child. [illegible] Tim Harmon, New York broker, who [illegible] his remarkable fortune. The ex-soldier gives his name as Hilliard and he boards at Syracuse, New York. He left [illegible] against his former fiancee's last [illegible]. Harmon offers him a job.

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

—2—

The younger man glanced at the card. "My name is Hilliard. Well—is competition so keen you can afford to pay that high for business, or is the stuff just hard to sell?"

C'mon, who had begun to nod assent to my first question, looked rather blank at the second, but rallied quickly.

"Competition.. But there's money in it, and you'll get your share of it too—believe me! I've got a speaking suspicion that you and I can do business together. Want to consider it?"

"All this on such short acquaintance? Aren't you taking a fearful chance?"

Harmon saw that the young man's irises were extremely limpidness and clear; he leaned forward seriously. "I'm simply backing my hunch, son. In the long run it pays me—pays me well. I've sort of taken a fancy to you. As far as I know you may be the smartest salesman in the whole United States. I wouldn't hire your experience without some references, and maybe a surety company back of you; but I'd hire that face of yours, and your manner, and your voice offhand. I'd hire your front—not your past! And let you sell your past now, son. I never made a trade as fast as this before in my life. But there's something about you that . . . Well?"

The young man was thoughtful and unblinking.

"You're actually making me a proposition, are you?"

"Absolutely!—Harmon's fist on the table provided the exclamation point. "Here. I don't know you, and you don't know me, but if you're lonesome for a job you've found it. . . . . It's your next move."

The young man's lips parted in grave good humor; Harmon was spellbound at the effort.

"I'll try not to keep you waiting. This speed of yours rather entices me. Besides, it may force its way forward. I'd better find it out as soon as possible. This organization of yours is in New York city, isn't it?"

"My headquarters are, but I'd want you to work outside. I've got one special town in mind—up the state. That's where this list is. It's always been one of our hardest markets, and it's got money to burn. Can't swing it, somehow—they don't respond to any ordinary selling talk; they're too hide-bound conservative. You know the kind. Government bond crowd. And for a year or so they've been making war profits till you can't see 'em for dust. Manufacturing town. And I'd like mighty well to ship you up there for a month or two; give you time enough to get your bearings and turn you loose. You ought to do great work in a place like that. They need a chap like you—confound it!" He hailed abruptly and shook his head in great bewilderment. "I can't make it out at all! You've got the appearance of a . . . . well, a sort of a strait-laced youngster. If you know what I mean, and yet the way you say things. I—"

The young man gestured blandly.

"And the town you have in mind's—"Its Syracuse, New York."

"Syracuse?" The young man's chin was squared by a ruler, and noticeably thrust forward.

"Yes; know anybody there?"

Hilliard laughed nudgeonsally and resumed his former attitude.

"Why, it so happens," he said, biting the words off sharply. "That I was born and brought up in Syracuse, and if there's any one place in the world I care less about than any other place that's the one . . . . . I'm sorry, but I'm afraid we're at cross purposes from here on."

Harmon showed his vexation. "What's the matter? Haven't you kept on good terms with your old friends?"

"No."

Harmon frowned.

"Well, is it on bad you couldn't do any business there? How do they remember you?"

The young man regarded him stoutly for an instant; then gradually a far-away expression crept into his eyes; he started and caught his breath.

"I'll let you judge for yourself." He brought out a flat leather wallet from which he extracted a tiny photograph from an old passport. "What do you think of that?"

Harmon scanned it superficially.

"Nice looking boy. Who is he?"

"It was taken two years ago" said Hilliard, resting his elbows on the table. "You wanted to know how they remember me, so I'm showing you. That's a photograph of me, taken two years ago."

"Impossible!" Harmon snorted. It. "That doesn't look any more like you than . . . . than I do! Let's omit the comedy; I'm talking business."

"The young man's mouth curled. "Don't be mistaken, Mr. Harmon—there's very little joking in me when I ever mention Syracuse." Harmon shivered at the tone, but waved the photograph in scoffing accusation.

"You're not trying to sit there and tell me—"

"I told you I was in hospital for nearly a year, I believe," said Hilliard icily. "It was shrapnel—across the face. As a matter of fact I didn't have much of any face left. But the surgeons, they're pretty clever. Yes—they're clever!" Hilliard's eyes were needle points. "They make a man over from his own photograph. In my own case I preferred it differently. So when they asked me for something to use as a pattern in remodeling me I gave em this!" He tossed out a pale, time postcard, soiled and frayed. "Well, that's where the trouble began. They cursed me up and down for a . . . . still that part of it won't interest you!" His eyes were blazing now, and his voice shook with passion. "Naturally I hoped they'd make it as good looking as all that . . . . but they had me under other before I could help myself . . . . and they went through with it . . . . and cursed me some more afterward . . . . They couldn't help it exactly, of course, but they did the best they could. . . . Gloated over it! Took infinite pains to make it perfect . . . . and sneered at me while they did it! Sneered and laughed . . . . Well, you've got the results in front of you. That's what I was—and that's what I am! What's your opinion now?" The last sentence came snarling through set teeth.

The broker's pupils had dilated grossly; his eyes wandered vacantly from the photograph to the postcard where lived the Hilliard's face. His whole imagination was plunged down and crushed; he swore softly under his breath and wet his lips.

"It's a . . . . a miracle," he stammered. "A miracle! . . . . "

"The photograph," said Hilliard harshly. "Is the way they remember me up in Syracuse. Do you think they'd ever recognize me now?"

"It's a miracle . . . . it's marvelous! . . . . It makes me swallow! I'd never have looked twice twicefully at that time-worn postcard. "There's so much difference . . . . nobody'd ever think of it without knowing . . . . up when you see the original! . . . . It's . . . . it's . . . . so full of hope! . . . . It's suggestive! . . . . They didn't do that to you! . . . . I've got to have a drink."

Hilliard noticed irrelatively, but his tip of tongue was slowly going down his lip of ridge was slowly going down. "There's no miracle about it, my kid. It was good plastic surgery. If they'd sent me out looking as I used to you wouldn't call it a miracle, would you? No. It's only what they did to that makes it staggering. But it's clever—oh yes, clever! . . . And you can see for yourself how few marks of it there are." He drew a long breath and managed to smile again; but the effect was shocking for while his features were composed and kindly his eyes were venomous. "Well, I certainly never intended to go to Syracuse again for pleasure, but if there's enough compensation to pay for the risk I'm not afraid to try it on . . . . business." His accent sent cold chills coursing down Harmon's spine. "In fact now, that I think of it, it ought to be rather amusing!"

The broker was striving to pull himself together.

"But why on earth didn't you have 'em use your own picture for a copy . . . . If they're as clever as . . . . oh!" He stopped short and his chin dropped. "Oh! Is that the answer?"

"Yes" said Hilliard, reclaiming the two photographs. "That's the answer. I didn't mind starting over again only . . . . He sucked and inhaled much. It. "Only take my advice, Mr. Harmon, and don't lose your temper just before an operation."

Harmon breathed more freely, but he was still in violent intellectual distress. His round face was vagid with wave, and he was tongueing his lips in constant nervousness; for the complete possibility of the situation was creeping over him.

"If that's the case," he ventured, "why . . . . they surely weren't recognize your name either, Mr. Hilliard, need they? I mean, if you had any idea of going back to your home town incognito, as it were—"

"They wouldn't recognize anything about me!" said Hilliard drily. His teeth showing at the moment, were white and regular as a young wolf's. "We won't discuss that side of it just now, though. But if I go back I'm incognito, and don't make any mistake about it. Is that quite clear?"

Harmon swallowed again.

"They'd recognize your voice, wouldn't they?"

"I had to get used to this one myself. Something went wrong with my vocal cords, and the nitrium no bel . . . . Bles was lost; it seemed to have an effect like changing a sounding board."

"So!" And you used to be darker in the face, didn't you? How about your general size, and so on?"

"I've taken on twenty-five pounds; my face is a lot thinner, but there's a reason. It hasn't grown on me; it was manufactured incidentally, while I think of it my stride's shortened six inches. That's another identification gone. Bullet in my knee. I don't exactly limp, but—"

Harmon was beaming now, and flushed with excitement.

"That's great. Oh! that's wonderful! Wonderful! Nobody'll know you from Adam! Thunder and lightning, what a chance—what a change! How'd one—how well do you know the big men in Syracuse? Well enough to know what their weak points are? Well enough to know how to approach you? Know Collins? Know the Barnes? Know Lindrey and McLachlan and Cooke? Know—?"

"At one time," said Hilliard, with a calm tragedy in his eyes, "all those people were my best friends and were about the closest friends I had in the world."

"Well, if you've got nerve enough to try to pass yourself off as a stranger, why—"

"Just a moment!" The young man's gesture, although calm, was never more commanding. "Now listen! I lived in Syracuse twenty-six years! If I ever had any friends there I've lost 'em now. I—"

"Whose fault was it?"

"Whose fault? Don't make me laugh! The point is that my friends and I aren't on speaking terms."

"Go ahead" said Harmon, satisfied. "Do they know you went to France?"

"They don't know anything. I left between two days. I've never written anybody so much as a line since I was over on a tramp. A French town found got me into the army, and I didn't give a d— n whether I got killed or not—and then I got this." His hand was on his cheek, where a long scar crossed it. "And for over a year I've been hoping that somehow, some time, I could get back at a few of those men . . . . principally Collen and Durant and McLachlan. Get back hard, you understand? Perhaps this suggestion of yours will give me the opening. Perhaps it will. That's what I'm wondering. I'm thinking it over." That's all."

Harmon controlled himself; his voice when it came, was low and seductive.

"Well," he said, "could you get back on them at people who haven't treated you right than by going back up there and making good? By putting something over on you—something big, you understand—and making those fellows look cheap? That's better than using a club on 'em, isn't it? Cools a fire mighty, cools of fine? Show 'em what you can do and take your satisfaction in that. Don't fight your enemies; you don't have to. Make a profit out of 'em! And then . . . . oh well, I don't care what you do after that . . . . but I'm sure glad I gave you the chance or not, just as you like. Could anything be a better little come back than that? More sort of Biblical and thorough? Poetic justice? Could it?"

Hilliard was still alert and rigid.

"There's a good selling argument! And something good to sell!"

"As straight as a shoestring—and as sure as you're a foot high. And if you can't do business on this basis, you couldn't sell good eggs for a dollar apiece! That's flat!"

"So I could go back—and honestly make good? All the way? Prove what I can do? And not have any backfire in it?"

"And have a chance" said Harmon nodding. "To put yourself in right again. That's what my whole idea was. If you're going to cash in on your hard luck, boy, you've got to speak up. That's my policy. Cash in on this thing the doctors did for you! Let's play it together, son. If it's a sort of whitewashing you want, I'm help you. I don't care a continental what you did to get in wrong in Syracuse—it's success that counts. Nothing else but success. Is it a bargain?"

Hilliard shut his teeth tight; relaxed, yielded abruptly.

"It's a bargain," he said. "I'm with you!"

"Good! Now—"

"One moment! Let's be frank with each other. Don't get any impression that I've done anything thief."

"Mr. Hilliard, you don't have to talk like that to me! I've had you sized up from the start, haven't I?"

"Yes, but I wanted you to know—"

"But I do know, son! Wild oats, sort of. Am I right, or am I wrong? That's why I'm banking on you. I've got a notion I'm good judge of character. Let you go back and make good, and I'm a big winner. Let you go back and fail, and I'm a big loser. Let you go back and make a mess of it, and I'm a criminal—see? . . . . It's a big gamble. I'm betting on you. Understand that? Well, how about it?"

"It . . . . why, I don't see what you're dealing at."

"Because" said Harmon, "you're worth more than I thought you were. How do I know? I've watched your eyes son. Your going into Syracuse with the finest opportunity I've ever dreamed of in all my life! And besides that, you've got a face that even I couldn't give you . . . . How are you fixed for money?"

"I'm not fixed at all. I'm broke."

Harmon fished for his fat book, and folded two notes into a small compass.

"Here! Bind the bargain. Don't worry. It's an advance. I know who I can trust—that's my longest suit, son. Give me a receipt if you like. Better not speak to me again until we land. Never know who's aboard that train. See you later. Come to my office at ten o'clock the morning after we've decided. And . . . He laughed in patent relief. "You know, son," he said "I'm a pretty wonderful kind, and there's not much that fools me, but I'm mighty glad I picked out a winner. I wasn't quite sure whether would take that job or not. If the surgeon that mended you could only have doctored your eyes, son—if he could only have doctored your eyes . . . . When? . . . . He stared again at Hilliard, and nodded slowly. "Well, that's the most wonderful," he said, fascinated. "When you smile at me like that. I sort of feel as though I ought to get up and take off my hat and genuflexate to you. And I'm damned if I know what for."

Perhaps you'd like to see the article . . . . copied from picture to well . . . . why does you look at me like that? . . . . ?"

CHAPTER III.

According to the Eric schedule the journey from New York should have taken about six hours; as a matter of fact it took nine, and yet Hilliard who had been in Syracuse previously, felt no impatience at the delay. He was preoccupied with the problem of his reappearance in his native town, but he was not troubled by it on account of any fear of being recognized, and partly because he was coming back to a town temporarily relieved of its most fine judgment whether of their superior or anti-social elements.

"Now, whatever you do, son," Harmon had told him, "don't talk to the story! First last and always—you stick to the story! It's your own business, in a way, and in another way, it's my business, but you keep your head clear and don't let anybody shake you on the facts and we're both all right. Of course, you're startling out by lying—but it's a good lie. You're justified. As far as the rest of the world's concerned, you're a new man. You're just born. Well, you've got a perfect right to be whatever you want to be. Nobody can prove you aren't what you say you are. Just remember these three things: One, capitalize your experience, and fill 'em full of war talk—they'll love it; two, capitalize your position, and stick to your story—they'll swallow it whole, and never dream of the answer; three, capitalize your face, and smile, man, smile!" Here he had planted his hand between Hilliard's shoulder blades with a thump which was meant to be fraternal and heartening. "And well both make good until the cows come home and I think I hear 'em coming. Don't forget—they can't stop you! It's your second shot at life, and you've got the cards stacked the way you want 'em."

"The only thing?" Hilliard had said as he . . . . the story?"

"It . . . . is it Hilliard what's the matter with you? Aren't you satisfied?"

"Yessss, but so much of it sounds unnecessary to me—every now and then. I wish we could have thought up something else, that's all."

"Well, did we?"

"No but—"

"Then don't be a rank quitter! It was your own idea, and I say it's damned clever; stand up to it. You will, won't you?"

"Oh, I'll do that Mr. Harmon. I've got to."

"Yes, you've got to. And just keep smiling, son; that's all. That's what I hired you for—start off smiling, and that carries half the battle. . . . . That's it! Keep your nerve, son!"

Hilliard had kept his nerve. He had suggested Hilliard be sent to a locality between the two cities of his birth and saving him rent by also the fine work and good pay.

On the observation platform, Hilliard had leaned forward behind a cinder and a cigar and tried to hold his emotions and his imagination in check. His purpose, now that it was crystallized, brought him no alternative of chance for what he was about to do. He was committed, not only in respect to what he had done already, long ago, and his nervousness was due merely to his fear that he might fail in his purpose.

After all, what was there to discourage him? He had worked up a system of campaign as clear, as definite and as inexorable as any field-marshal could ever hope to devise—and perfect. He was simply bringing home one vital principle of trench fighting to rely on indirect fire. That was it—to fight! To fight for reputation lost, and to defend his new advantage gained. The end would amply justify the means, or if the . . . . any chance proved to be disastrous, why, there was another principle he must remember—no quarter given or asked for.

"That's All I Want—Time!"

"Play fair, you," he said mumblingly as she tripped under the ropes. "Don't be afraid to make good or not? I mean—time! That's all I want—time!"

At the depot among the private cars and taxicabs a motor omnibus force on its side the notice of the newest hotel, which was his immediate objective, but for reasons which he couldn't have explained, he avoided it, and signaled to a taxi. As the car came to a standstill at the motor entrance to the hotel, he managed to greet exercise of will-power to maintain his mood of arrogant conquest, and it was imperative for him to maintain it, inasmuch as his first ordeal was so soon to come. More than that, he had an ancient grudge against this hostelry, for it had successively declined to continue his credit, refused to honor his checks and, toward the last, had politely suggested that he refresh himself somewhere else. One of his most galling memories was connected with this very entrance; his cheeks grew hot as he fought the vision down.

"Now," said Hilliard, on the outer threshold.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A stranger in his home town.

SET OUT FROM GREENLAND

Immense Masses of Ice So Dangerous to Ocean Vessels All Have Their Origin There.

If one looks at an ordinary map one is surprised to find that Greenland is considerably bigger than South America. Which illustrates the distortion of the Mercator projection. In reality as South America is actually about six times as large as Greenland. All, of course, Greenland is the biggest island in the world and once upon a time it must have been a pleasant place to live in. Plant fossils found there prove that indirectly it had a tropical climate.

But it must have been a very long time ago, for today nearly the whole of Greenland is covered by an ice sheet with an average thickness of 1,000 feet. From a mountain range 2,000 miles high most of the great glaciers have descended and westward to Baffin bay and Davis strait, and so the ice sheet is continually moving in that direction.

Off the west coast are numerous islands and as the ice sheet forces its way between them, it is forced to pieces. Huge fragments drop off, forming what we call icebergs, and are set afloat in the sea. An average specimen is eight or ten times the size of the capitol at Washington.

What happens to an individual iceberg after that depends upon accidental circumstances. It may run ashore on Baffin island (the west side of Davis strait) or on the coast of Labrador farther south. If it escapes this fate, its passage southward through the strait will be very slow because it must plow its way through field ice nine feet thick.

"But Why on Earth Didn't You Have Them Use Your Own Picture?"

The lucky iceberg is the one that manages to keep in the main channel and is carried southward by the Labrador current into the north Atlantic. Once arrived in that region of open sea it may drift about for many months before going to pieces. Large bergs have on occasions got as far as the Azores which are slightly south of the latitude of Philadelphia.

A sloughing berg may have nearly 100 walls feet high with pinnacles towering to twice or thrice that elevation. Often these floating mountains of ice have very fantastic shapes. It is not at all safe for a ship to go too close for loose fragments some times falling off and the unexpected for an iceberg suddenly to turn upside down.

A few years ago the United States cruiser Birmingham, voyaging in a fog, unexpectedly found herself between two enormous icebergs. As a result of the collision the cruiser proceeded to bombard them with her heavy guns. The performance did not seem to bother the bergs much but the projectiles broke off quite a lot of ice and this commodity being needed on board the cruiser, boats were lowered to fetch it aboard.

Our government, after the disaster to the Titanic which was destroyed by collision with an iceberg in 1912, received from the other maritime nations a promise to warn ships for such perils in the region of the grand banks and elsewhere where we have regularly maintained what is called an "ice patrol" in those waters. The period of greatest danger from icebergs is April May and June.

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However, if you wish first to test this great preparation send ten cents to Dr. Kilmer & Co., Binghamton, N. Y., for a sample bottle. When writing be sure and mention this paper.—Adv.

Happiness and Dirt.

Happiness . . . . dirt.

Matching Him.

He—I am a cripple in his own house. She—I came caught for that.

SIMPLY NO DEMAND AT ALL

Comment Made by Pretty Girl Seemed to Explain the Situation Very Thoroughly.

The man shortage, due to the horrible slaughter of the world war, led President Lewis of the United Mine Workers to say in Indianapolis:

"If we licked the Germans the world was to be a better place to live in but it seems to become a worse place every day.

"Take the shortage of young men—and the young men that are left can't marry on account of the profiteer. Why millions of pretty girls all over the world are never going to get married.

"A crowd of pretty girls were taking tea the other afternoon when a rag man passed.

"'Old rags!' he yelled. 'Old rags, old bones old iron!'

"And then as he trudged slowly along the street he yelled again:

"'Old copper! Old tin! Old bottles! old papers! Old shoes!'

"At the prettiest girl in the group made a dramatic gesture of despair.

"'Girls,' she said, 'he wants everything but old mates!'"

Forbidden.

He—Will you have some cafe au lait?

She—Won't we be pinched if we try it?

IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

Colored Soldier Just at That Time Was Not Living Up to His Announcement.

The company had fallen out for a rest on the hike into the Argonne. Nearby negro workers drowsed in the sun. A burly six foot Nimidian driving a big army mule have into sight on his way to replenish the water supply at the front. For a whip he carried a five-pounder.

"Hey, there, Sam, where yo' goin' wid dat new fangled whip?" called one of the roadside loafers.

"Fer on mah way to build me a bungalow on de Hindenburg line," retorted the other without a smile.

Just then a shell exploded a few yards from the road. The mule instantly turned tail and proceeded to break all records in getting back where he came from, his driver hanging on for dear life.

"Man alive," mused a darky. "Dat ain't no way to arrive at the Hindenburg line. Dat baby's done gone toward the Cunard line."—The Home Sector.

Ostentation.

"Money talks," remarked Mr. Dustin Stay.

"Yes," replied Miss Cayenne. "And sometimes it makes its audience suffer."

Hard Work Tires

muscles and nerves, and then to whip them with coffee, with its drug caffeine, makes a bad matter worse.

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