

## THE MAN ON THE BOX

BY HAROLD MacGRATH.

## SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Introduces the hero, Robert Warburton, a well to do West Point graduate on duty in Arizona. After being wounded by an Indian resigns his commission in the army and leaves for European tour.

CHAPTER II.—Introduces the heroine, Miss Anneley, a young daughter of a retired army officer living near Washington. A beautiful, representative young American girl, whom Warburton has seen in Paris, is smitten, and follows to New York. Seeks introduction on board steamer but is disappointed.

CHAPTER III.—Upon reaching New York Warburton locates hotel in which the Annesleys are guests and dines there in order to see Miss Anneley once more. Charged to see young Russian count whom he met on steamer bring Miss Anneley in to dinner. Next morning the Count and the Annesleys had disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.—Warburton goes to Washington to visit his relatives—a married brother, who holds a government position, and a sister engaged to an old school chum of his. Invited to accompany family to ball at British embassy, but declines. concocts a scheme to play a joke on his sister and sister-in-law.

CHAPTER V.—Warburton meets his sister's fiance whom he had not seen for eight years. Sees the folks off for the embassy ball and then proceeds to put his joke into execution. He is discovered himself as a companion and drives his sister and sister-in-law, who must return alone, from the embassy to their home.

CHAPTER VI.—Warburton in his disguise goes to British embassy and takes the place of his brother's coachman, whom he had substituted for his carriage number when called and gets the wrong passengers without knowing it. Drives frantically about the streets pursued by mounted policemen. When carriage comes to a stop he springs down and throws his arms about the first of his passengers to alight, who proves to be Miss Anneley instead of his sister.

## CHAPTER VII.

A POLICE AFFAIR. "Officers, arrest this fellow!" commanded the young woman. Her gesture was Didoesque in its wrath.

"That we will, ma'am!" cried one of the policemen, flinging himself from his horse. "So it's you, me gay buck? Thirty days for you, an' mebbe more. I didn't like yer looks from th' start. You're working some kind of a trick. What complaint, ma'am?"

"Drunkenness and abduction,"—rubbing the burning spot on her cheek.

"That'll be rather serious. You'll have to appear against him in th' mornin', ma'am."

"I certainly shall do so." She promptly gave her name, address and telephone number.

"Bill, you drive th' ladies home an' I'll see this bucko to th' station. Here, you!"—to Warburton, who was still dumb with astonishment at the extraordinary denouement to his innocent joke. "Git on that horse, an' lively, or, I'll rap ye with th' club."

"It's all a mistake, officer—"

"Close yer face and git on that horse. Y' can tell th' judge all that in th' mornin'. I ain't got no time t' listen. Bill, report just as soon as ye see th' ladies home. Now, off with y'. Th' ladies'll be wanting somethin' t' quiet their nerves. Git on that horse, me frisky groom; hustle!" Warburton mechanically climbed into the saddle. It never occurred to him to parley, to say that he couldn't ride a horse. The inventive cells of his usually fertile brain lay passive. "Now," went on the officer, mounting his own nag, "will ye go quietly? If ye don't I'll plug ye in th' leg with a chunk o' lead. I won't stan' no nonsense."

"What are you going to do with me?" asked Warburton, with a desperate effort to collect his energies.

"Lock ye up; mebbe throw a pail of water on that overheated cocoanut of yours."

"But if you'll only let me explain to you! It's all a joke; I got the wrong carriage—"

"Marines, marines! D' ye think I was born yesterdy? Ye wanted th' ladies' sparklers, or I'm a doughhead! The police are the same all over the world; the original idea sticks to them, and truth in voice or presence is but a sign of deeper cunning and villainy. Anyhow, ye can't turn around Washington like ye do in England, me cockney. Ye can't drive more'n a hundred miles an hour on these pavements."

"But, I tell you—" Warburton, realizing where his escapade was about to lead him, grew desperate. The ignominy of it! He would be the laughing-stock of the town on the morrow. The papers would teem with it. "You'll find that you are making a great mistake. If you will only take me to Scott Circle—"

"Where ye have a pal' with a gun, eh? Git ahead!" and the two made off toward the west.

Once or twice the officer found himself admiring the easy seat of his prisoner; and if the horse had been anything but a trained animal, he would have worried some regarding the ultimate arrival at the third precinct.

Half a dozen times Warburton was of a mind to make a bolt for it, but he did not dare trust the horse or his knowledge of the streets. He had already two counts against him, disorderly conduct and abduction, and he had no desire to add uselessly, a third, that of resisting an officer, which seems the greatest possible crime a man can commit and escape hanging. Oh, for a mettlesome nag! There would be no police-station for him, then. Police-station! Heavens, what should he do? His brother, his sister: their dismay, their shame; not counting that he himself would be laughed at from one end of the continent to the other. What an ass he had made of himself! He wondered how much money it would take to clear himself and at the same moment recollects

that he hadn't a cent in his clothes. A sweat of terror moistened his brow.

"What are ye up to, anyway?" asked the policeman. "What kind of booze have ye been samplin'?"

"I've nothing to say."

"We speak clear enough. So much th' worse, if ye ain't drunk. Was ye crazy t' ride like that? Ye might have killed th' women an' had a bill of man's death brought against ye."

"I have nothing to say; it is all a mistake. I got the wrong number and the wrong carriage."

"Th' devil ye did. An' where was ye goin' to drive th' other carriage at that thunderin' rate? It won't wash. His honor'll be stone-deaf when ye tell him that. You're drunk or have been."

"Not to-night."

"Well, I'd give me night off t' know what ye were up to. Don't ye know nothin' about ordinances an' laws? An' I wouldn't mind havin' ye tell me what ye threw yer arms around th' lady an' kissed her,"—shrewdly.

Warburton started in his saddle. He had forgotten all about that part of the episode. His blood warmed suddenly and his cheeks burned. He had kissed her, kissed her soundly, too, the most radiantly beautiful woman in the world. Why, come to think of it, it was easily worth a night in jail.

Yes, by George, he had kissed her, kissed that blooming cheek, and but for this policeman, would have forgotten! Whatever happened to him, she wouldn't forget in a hurry. He laughed. The policeman gazed at him in pained surprise.

"Well, ye seem t' take it good and hearty."

"If you could only see the humor in it, my friend, you'd laugh, too."

"Oh, I would, hey! All I got t' say is that yer nerve git's me. An' ye stand a pretty good show of bein' rounded up for more'n 30 days, too. Well, ye've had yer joke; mebbe we have th' price t' pay th' fiddler. Turn here."

The rest of the ride was in silence, Warburton gazing callously ahead and the officer watching him with a wary eye to observe any suggestive movement. He couldn't make out this chap. There was something wrong, some deep-dyed villainy—of this he hadn't the slightest doubt. It was them high-toned swells that was the craftiest an' most daring. Handsome is that handsome does. A quarter of an hour later they arrived at the third precinct, where our hero was registered for the night under the name of James Osborne. He was hustled into a small cell and left to himself.

He had kissed her! Glory of glories! He had pressed her to his very heart, besides. After all, they couldn't do anything serious to him. They could not prove the charge of abduction. He stretched himself on the cot, smiled, arranged his legs comfortably, wondered what she was thinking of at this moment, and fell asleep. It was a sign of a good constitution and a decent white conscience. And thus they found him in the morning. They touched his arm, and he awoke with a smile, the truest indication of a man's amiability. At first he was puzzled as he looked blinkingly from his jailers to his surroundings and then back at his jailers. Then it all returned to him, and he laughed. Now the law, as represented and upheld by petty officers, possesses a dignity that is instantly ruffled by the sound of laughter from a prisoner; and Mr. Robert was roughly told to shut up, and that he'd soon laugh on the other side of his mouth.

"All right officers, all right; only make allowances for a man who sees the funny side of things." Warburton stood up and shook himself, and picked up his white hat. They eyed him intelligently. In the morning light the young fellow didn't appear to be such a rascal. It was plainly evident that he had not been drunk the preceding night; for his eyes were not shot with red veins nor did his lips lack their usual healthy moisture. The officer who had taken him in charge, being a shrewd and trained observer, noted the white hands, soft and well-kept. He shook his head.

"Look here, me lad, you're no grouch, not by several years. Now, what th' devil was ye up to, anyway?"

"I'm not saying a word, sir," smiled Warburton. "All I want to know is, am I to have any breakfast? I shouldn't mind some peaches and cream or grapes to start with, and a small steak and coffee."

"Ye wouldn't mind, hey?" mimicked the officer. "What d'ye think this place is, th' Metropolitan club? Ye'll have yer bacon an' coffee, an' be glad t' git it. They'll feed ye in the mess-room. Come along."

Warburton took his time over the coffee and bacon. He wanted to think out a reasonable defense without unmasking himself. He was thinking how he could get word to me, too. The "duffer" might prove a friend in need.

"Now where?" asked Warburton, wiping his mouth.

"T' th' court. It'll go hard with ye if ye're handed over t' th' grand jury on th' charge of abduction. Ye'd better make a clean breast of it. I'll speak a word for yer behavior."

"Aren't you a little curious?"

"It's a part of me business,"—gruffly.

"I'll have my say to the judge," said Warburton.

"That's yer own affair. Come."

Once outside, Warburton lost color

and a large part of his nonchalance; for an open patrol stood at the curb.

"Have I got to ride in that?"—disgustedly.

"As true as life; an if ye make any disturbance, so much th' worse."

Warburton climbed in, his face red with shame and anger. He tied his handkerchief around his chin and tilted his hat far down over his eyes.

"Proud of meetin' some of yer swell friends, hey? Ten t' one, yer a swell an' was runnin' away with th' wrong woman. Mind. I have an eye on ye."

The patrol rumbled over the asphalt on the way down-town. Warburton buried his face in his hands. Several times they passed a cigar-store, and his mouth watered for a good cigar, the taste of a clear Havana.

He entered the police-court, not lacking in curiosity. It was his first experience with this arm of the civil law. He wasn't sure that he liked it.

It wasn't an inviting place with its bare benches and its motley, tawdry throng. He was plumped into a seat between some ladies of irregular habits, and the stale odor of intoxicants, mingling with cheap perfume, took away the edge of his curiosity.

"Hello, pretty boy; jag?" asked one of these faded beauties, in an undertone. She nudged him with her elbow.

"No sweetheart," was the reply, smiling in spite of himself.

"Ah gowan! Been pinching some one's wad?"

"None!"

"What are you here for, then?"

"Having a good time without anybody's consent. If you will listen, you will soon hear all about it."

"Silence, there, on the bench!" bawled the clerk, whacking the desk.

"Say, Marie," whispered the woman to her nearest neighbor. "Here's a boy been selling his master's harness and got pinched."

"But look at the sweet things coming in, will you! Ain't they swell, though?" whispered Marie, nodding a skinny, feather toward the door.

Warburton glanced indifferently in the direction indicated, and received a shock. Two women—and both wore very heavy black veils. The smaller of the two inclined her body, and he was sure that her scrutiny was for him. He saw her say something into the ear of the companion, and repeat it to one of the court lawyers. The lawyer approached the desk, and in his turn whispered a few words into the judge's ear. The magistrate nodded. Warburton was conscious of a blush of shame. This was a nice position for any respectable woman to see him in!

"James Osborne!" called the clerk.

An officer beckoned to James, and he made his way to the prisoner's box. His honor looked him over coldly.

"Name?"

"James Osborne."

"Born here?"

"No."

"Say 'sir'."

"No, sir."

"Where were you born?"

"In New York State."

"How old are you? And don't for get to say 'sir' when you reply to my questions."

"I am 28, sir."

"Married?"

"No, sir."

"How long have you been engaged as groom?"

"Not very long, sir."

"How long?"

"Less than 24 hours, sir."

Surprise rippled over the faces of the audience on the benches.

"Humph! You are charged with disorderly conduct, reckless driving, and attempted abduction. The last charge has been withdrawn, fortunately for you, sir. Have you ever been up before?"

"Up, sir?"

"A prisoner in a police-court."

"No, sir."

"Twenty-five for reckless driving and ten for disorderly conduct; or 30 days."

"Your Honor, the horses ran away."

"Yes, urged by your whip."

"I was not disorderly, sir."

The officer declares that you had been drinking."

"Your Honor, I got the wrong carriage. My number was 17 and I answered to 71." He wondered if she would believe this statement.

"I suppose that fully explains why you made a race-track of one of our main thoroughfares?"—sarcastically.

In the morning the women of the district sell wool; from 11 o'clock until noon wheat is sold, and in the afternoon between the "deur" and the "Moghreb," from 4 till 7 o'clock, slaves are disposed of.

Slavery is openly carried on in Morocco. The slaves are negroes and negroesses. They are recruited at Taflet. The caravans coming from Touat and the Soudan sell the slaves to merchants. The slaves sold at Fez pass through Marrakesh. Others come from El-Ksar, where they are sold cheap.

High functionaries, like Amili

Monstafad and Mohit Asib, buy at Mekhnes, El-Ksar, and Sefrou, in order to sell at Fez, through intermediaries.

A negro is worth from \$10

to \$100, a woman from \$100 to \$400.

The sale is by auction, and the customers examine the "merchandise."

However, the market is not a flourishing one, some days there being only six or eight negroes sold.

Men are judged by the company they keep, but it isn't as easy to size up a woman by her hat. Judge her by the amount of Hollister's Rocky

Mountain Tea she takes. 35 cents, Tea or Tablets. For sale by A. G.

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