The IRON CLAW

by ARTHUR STRINGER

AUTHOR OF "THE OCCASIONAL OFFENDER," "THE WIRE TAPERS," "GUN RUNNERS," ETC.

NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME

SYNOPSIS.

On Whidwand island Pallbot intrigues with Mrs. Manley to dispossess of her child, which causes Golden to capture and kill Pallbot. Golden escapes to sea after crippling his hand. Professor Lamont and Orba galore and floods the island and is the only survivor. Golden returns and rescues Orba's six-year-old daughter Mary. Twelve years later in New York a young woman is found in the "underworld of food" dancing at eighteen-cent-a-day from the cadet Canavanti, to whom John Manley has married her. Golden is found by the latter, now of Enoch Arden, millionaire, whom she is recognized by Lazar, Lazar's wife, Golden's former enemy, and Orba, now a secretary, acting fire to Golden's buildings, but escap-

THIRD EPISODE

THE COGNAC CASH

"Bring that woman in here!" commanded Enoch Golden as he flung open his library door. He stepped inside, the next moment, as the figure in black, ushered close between young Manley and Wilson, the butler, was piloted into the shadowy room.

"Sit down." he barked out at the silent and motionless figure with the heavy black veil still draping its face.

"Manley, is there any change of this woman being armed?" Golden demanded, out of his secretary!

"She's not armed, sir," was young Manley's quick reply, "I've searched a tussle before Wilson and I could get hold of her."

"Well," Golden said to the veiled figure in the chair, "what brought you spying and lurking about my home?"

That was a question which the woman apparently chose to leave unanswered.

"Do you intend to answer?" demanded the millionaire. "Or must I have you put out of this house without a hearing?"

"That seems to be a habit of which time has not deprived you," was the quiet-toned reply.

It was not the muffled sting in those words, nor the calm bitterness with which they were spoken, but more the voice itself, with its ghostly reminder of other days, that brought Golden up short.

"Who are you?" he repeated when he found his breath and the veiled woman were alone in the room. "And why are you here?"

"You will misjudge that," answered the woman as she threw back the heavy folds of her veil, "as much as you misjudged my actions of twenty years ago!"

"Why are you here?" repeated Golden, with unconcealed harshness in his voice.

"It was love for my daughter!"

The pugnacity went out of the grim face before the woman.

"What do you know about—about your daughter?" he demanded, not meeting her gaze.

"I know that she is in danger, in terrible danger."

"That means you know where she is, where she could be found?" was Golden's quick query.

"That is the one thing that made me brave enough, or cowardly enough, to come to you. I do not know where she is. But I know that she can be found."

"So you have a suspicion where she is?"

"Yet," acknowledged the patient-eyed woman.

"What are those suspicions founded on?"

"On certain words which I overheard, now nearly a year and a half ago."

"What is that man's name?"

"He is a one-armed man, named Lazar."

Golden leaned back from his chair.

"So old Lazar!" he cried, turning the blade of hate in his still open wound of pride.

Lazar and I never were comrades. For years I have kept a little restaurant for art students and shoppers. Just off Washington Square. It is near the Italian quarter there. Sometimes Lazar, the foreigner or two comes in, mostly by accident. But yesterday, when I was in the kitchen, three men came in a hurry. They had dodged under cover there to escape being seen by a plain-clothes man. I could hear their talk through the little kitchen slide through which we pass our dishes. And when I heard their voices I opened the slide a little, and I knew at once that one of the men was Pallidot, or Lazar, as he calls himself now. He was talking mostly to a man called Canavanti. Then—" Wait a minute," interrupted Golden, with his finger on the bell button. "I want my secretary to hear this."

The woman in black sat silent until Manley had reentered the room. Then Golden motioned for her to continue.

"I heard Lazar mention your name. she went on, still unmoved by the silent man's half-sneering incredulity. "Then he blamed Canavanti for some scheme that had failed, some scheme to degrade my Margery. But he had to get back, he said, and this time he'd expect Canavanti to do his part.

"Canavanti also said he wanted the woman for himself, and declared she'd come like a hungry cat when he'd finished with her. I knew then what he meant by 'love.' I knew what Lazar was hinting. It—it made me forget everything. I started for the table where they were. I tried to hold Lazar. I—I struck him. I pleaded for help. I clung to him as he staggered toward the door. But one of the men struck me. They escaped, then, for I was too dazed to do anything more.

It was Manley who spoke next, an eager light in his scowling young eyes.

"But where did they say the girl was?" he asked.

"They did not say. But one of them spoke of Oyster Joe, where dime-store cocks of old cognac. This man Joe, I knew, was awaiting the casks by another man named Old Eli to some place on the water."

"Old Eli!" repeated Golden, with his finger on the bell button. "I want my secretary to hear this."

The woman in black sat silent until Manley had reentered the room. Then Golden motioned for her to continue.

"I heard Lazar mention your name," she went on, still unmoved by the silent man's half-sneering incredulity. "Then he blamed Canavanti for some scheme that had failed, some scheme to degrade my Margery. But he had to get back, he said, and this time he'd expect Canavanti to do his part.

"Canavanti also said he wanted the woman for himself, and declared she'd come like a hungry cat when he'd finished with her. I knew then what he meant by 'love.' I knew what Lazar was hinting. It—it made me forget everything. I started for the table where they were. I tried to hold Lazar. I—I struck him. I pleaded for help. I clung to him as he staggered toward the door. But one of the men struck me. They escaped, then, for I was too dazed to do anything more.

It was Manley who spoke next, an eager light in his scowling young eyes.

"But where did they say the girl was?" he asked.

"They did not say. But one of them spoke of Oyster Joe, where dime-store casks of old cognac. This man Joe, I knew, was awaiting the casks by another man named Old Eli to some place on the water."

"Old Eli!" repeated Golden, with his finger on the bell button. "I want my secretary to hear this."

"Manley, were those names known to you?" he asked, when the butler had withdrawn.

"Wait a minute," interrupted Golden, with his finger on the bell button. "I want my secretary to hear this."

"Manley, who had taken the roll of bills from the wallet, was quite as much startled as he handed the money to the squalid, veiled, bedraggled woman. Yet the shadow of a smile played about his lips as he watched the change in the figure in black disappear from sight. Then he turned back to the library.

There he found Golden pacing back and forth, pudding grotesquely about the floor pocket to pocket.

"Manley, my waiter's gone!" was the financier's cry.

"Was there any money in it?" inquired the secretary.

"What d' you suppose I'd keep in the waiter for?" was the impatient demand. "Cash powder? Of course there was money in it—four hundred odd bills in greenbacks!"

Manley shook his head in mock sorrow.

"This, sir, looks like very grave larceny," he suggested.

"It looks like very grave thievery to me," slapped the elder man.

* * *

The Emissary in Oak.

Midway between that portion of New York harbor, known as the Upper bay, and the open reaches of the sea that touch the sands of Manhattan beach, lay Oyster Joe's floating dive, a barge decommissioned as the State's land.

One of the least savory of the many boats adorning that forgotten anchorage was the ruinous boathouse known as Oyster Joe.

And Oyster Joe, the river pirate, knew the past. The unctuousness of his still muscular limbs, the looseness of his swollen lips, the unkemptness of his entire surroundings, all united to proclaim him a lover of cognac that can cheer and at the same time inebriate. This fact, indeed, was further evidenced by the earnestness with which Oyster Joe, himself making his way into the sail loft, lifted a worn tarpaulin aside and studied a row of cognac casks.

To Oyster Joe his study of this wealth of joy to be that he saw and heard nothing of a slender-built young stranger who quietly approached his side, seized it, and stood there stupefied by what he saw. What made this intruder start and stare was the fact that the cask that across the upper part of his face he wore a narrow strip of court plaster.

The movements of this mysterious stranger were marked by caution. When his investigations, in fact, were suddenly interrupted by a sound which drew Oyster Joe himself making his way into the sail loft, lifted a worn tarpaulin aside and studied a row of cognac casks.

To Oyster Joe his study of this wealth of joy to be that he saw and heard nothing of a slender-built young stranger who quietly approached his side, seized it, and stood there stupefied by what he saw. What made this intruder start and stare was the fact that the cask that across the upper part of his face he wore a narrow strip of court plaster.

The movements of this mysterious stranger were marked by caution. When his investigations, in fact, were suddenly interrupted by a sound which drew Oyster Joe himself making his way into the sail loft, lifted a worn tarpaulin aside and studied a row of cognac casks.

"I Could Hear Their Talk Through the Little Kitchen Slide."

"I Was Too Dazed to Do Anything More."

room. Margery Golden no longer engaged at the cost of their existence.

Canavanti, walking over to her, leered at her face in the light. He grinned at it tragedy, from half-closed eyes.

"Margery," he said, "you're worthy, who had remained at the door to warn his brother in case of danger, but immediate members of their band, like the spray in the gale, was as black as a sheepskin.

Then, suddenly, he dodged in through the door.

"Joe, chief, there's an outsider tryin' to butt in here!"

Then he promptly wheeled about and made for somewhat disconcerting quarters.

"Who is he?" was Lazar's quick query.

"As of both wit' a barl o' brandy and a bag o' gold," was Oyster Joe's reply.

Lazar looked relieved. Canavanti looked disappointed.

"That's all right. It's Old Eli. Help him in with it. But see that nobody else gets near that outside door!" Lazar ordered his lieutenant. Canavanti, in a case like this," proclaimed the muffled Leger as he hitch-stuck seed old figure in bottle-green coat and flowered hat relieved the cask of liquor through the opened door. The cask, which looked for suddenness like one of ivy vase, was already close to the floor when Canavanti caught sight of it.

Margery watched the suddenly clamorous group as they clustered about the open barrel. Her heart sank as glasses were refilled and the clamor, instead of diminishing, grew insistent and louder.

Then, even as she stood depressed troubled by this thought, a soft hand was laid on her arm. She turned the terrified face of Lazar's waterpigs quarters, to see that a few steps behind her stood a tall, white-whiskered old man in the best tradition of the sea, who had come up to the door of the Owl's nest.

"Tell me, gimme a hand with this barr!" that bewhiskered driver commanded.

"What have you got this time?" inquired Margery, wearily.

"I was benchod enough to have me wrong cask with the chief! Bring him with thirty gallons of 'cocking Brandy' when I was after wanting the rechot."

"And what's that?" demanded the

He Directed His Course Toward the Owl's Nest.

"I Was Too Dazed to Do Anything More."

"I Could Hear Their Talk Through the Little Kitchen Slide."

"I Was Too Dazed to Do Anything More."

"I Could Hear Their Talk Through the Little Kitchen Slide