

NO HERO

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649658060

No Hero by E. W. Hornung

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

E. W. HORNING

NO HERO

No Hero

No Hero

By E. W. Hornung

OWNED BY THE
MANHATTAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
NEW YORK CITY

NEW YORK LIBRARY
NEW YORK
M 322086

Charles Scribner's Sons

New York 1903

51m



CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. A Plenipotentiary	1
II. The Theatre of War	29
III. First Blood	45
IV. A Little Knowledge	60
V. A Marked Woman	75
VI. Out of Action	86
VII. Second Fiddle	96
VIII. Prayers and Parables	109
IX. Sub Judice	128
X. The Last Word	142
XI. The Lion's Mouth	161
XII. A Stern Chase	179
XIII. Number Three	199

MERCANTILE LIBRARY
NEW YORK.

No Hero

CHAPTER I

A PLENIPOTENTIARY

Has no writer ever dealt with the dramatic aspect of the unopened envelope? I cannot recall such a passage in any of my authors, and yet to my mind there is much matter for philosophy in what is always the expressionless shell of a boundless possibility. Your friend may run after you in the street, and you know at a glance whether his news is to be good, bad, or indifferent; but in his handwriting on the breakfast-table there is never a hint as to the nature of his communication. Whether he has sustained a loss or an addition to his family, whether he wants you to dine with him at the club or to lend him ten pounds, his handwriting at least will be the same, unless, indeed, he be offended,

No Hero

when he will generally indite your name with a studious precision and a distant grace quite foreign to his ordinary caligraphy.

These reflections, trite enough as I know, are nevertheless inevitable if one is to begin one's unheroic story in the modern manner, at the latest possible point. That is clearly the point at which a waiter brought me the fatal letter from Catherine Evers. Apart even from its immediate consequences, the letter had a *prima facie* interest, of no ordinary kind, as the first for years from a once constant correspondent. And so I sat studying the envelope with a curiosity too piquant not to be enjoyed. What in the world could so obsolete a friend find to say to one now? Six months earlier there had been a certain opportunity for an advance, which at that time could not possibly have been misconstrued; when they landed me, a few later, there was another and perhaps a better one. But this was the last summer of the late century, and already I was beginning to get about like a lamp-lighter on my two sticks. Now, young men about town, on two walking-sticks, in the

A Plenipotentiary

year of grace 1900, meant only one thing. Quite a stimulating thing in the beginning, but even as I write, in this the next winter but one, a national irritation of which the name alone might prevent you from reading another word.

Catherine's handwriting, on the contrary, was still stimulating, if indeed I ever found it more so in the foolish past. It had not altered in the least. There was the same sweet pedantry of the Attic ϵ , the same superiority to the most venial abbreviation, the same inconsistent forest of exclamatory notes, thick as poplars across the channel. The present plantation started after my own Christian name, to wit "Dear Duncan!" Yet there was nothing Germanic in Catherine's ancestry; it was only her apologetic little way of addressing me as though nothing had ever happened, of asking whether she might. Her own old tact and charm were in that tentative burial of the past. In the first line she had all but won my entire forgiveness; but the very next interfered with the effect.

"You promised to do anything for me!"