

**THE BRAND OF
SILENCE: A
DETECTIVE STORY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649272587

The brand of silence: a detective story by Harrington Strong

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

HARRINGTON STRONG

**THE BRAND OF
SILENCE: A
DETECTIVE STORY**

The Brand of Silence

A DETECTIVE STORY

By HARRINGTON STRONG



CHELSEA HOUSE
79 SEVENTH AVENUE NEW YORK CITY

1919 0-254

The Brand of Silence

Copyright, 1919 by STREET & SMITH

(Printed in the United States of America)
All rights reserved, including that of translation into foreign
languages, including the Scandinavian.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. IN THE HARBOR	11
II. THE GIRL ON THE SHIP	21
III. SOME DISCOURTESIES	28
IV. A FOE AND A FRIEND	39
V. THE COUSIN	48
VI. MURK—AND MURDER	56
VII. EVIDENCE	68
VIII. LIES AND LIARS	79
IX. PUZZLED	90
X. ON THE TRAIL	99
XI. CONCERNING KATE GILBERT	112
XII. BATTERED KEYS	122
XIII. A PLAN OF CAMPAIGN	131
XIV. MORE MYSTERY	140
XV. A MOMENT OF VIOLENCE.	149
XVI. MURK RECEIVES A BLOW	157

2138265

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	MURK IS TEMPTED	162
XVIII.	A WOMAN'S WAY	170
XIX.	COADLEY QUILTS	182
XX.	UP THE RIVER	188
XXI.	RECOGNITION	198
XXII.	AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR	209
XXIII.	A STARTLING STORY	219
XXIV.	HIGH-HANDED METHODS	230
XXV.	AN ACCUSATION	238
XXVI.	THE TRUTH COMES OUT	248

THE BRAND OF SILENCE

CHAPTER I

IN THE HARBOR

NOW the fog was clearing and the mist was lifting, and the bright sunshine was struggling to penetrate the billows of damp vapor and touch with its glory the things of the world beneath. In the lower harbor there still was a chorus of sirens and foghorns, as craft of almost every description made way toward the metropolis or out toward the open sea.

The *Manatee*, tramp steamer with rusty plates and rattling engines and a lurch like that of a drunken man, wallowed her way in from the turbulent ocean she had fought for three days, her skipper standing on the bridge and inaudibly giving thanks that he was nearing the end of the voyage without the necessity for abandoning his craft for an open boat, or remaining to go down with the ship after the manner of skippers of the old school.

Here and there showed a rift in the rolling fog, and those who braved the weather and lined the damp rail could see other craft in passing.

A giant liner made her way past majestically, bound for Europe, or a seagoing tug clugged by as if turning up her nose at the old, battered *Manatee*.

Standing at the rail, and well forward, Sidney

Prale strained his eyes and looked ahead, watching where the fog lifted, an eager light in his face, his lips curved in a smile, a general expression of anticipation about him.

Sidney Prale himself was not bad to look at. Thirty-eight he was, tall and broad of shoulder, with hair that was touched with gray at the temples, with a face that had been browned by the weather. Sidney Prale had the appearance of wearing clothes that had been molded to his form. He had a chin that expressed decision and determination, lips that could form in a thin, straight line if occasion required, eyes that could be kind or stern, according to the needs of the moment. A man of the world would have said that Sidney Prale was a gentleman of broad experience, a man who had presence of mind in the face of danger, a man who could think quickly and act quickly when such things were necessary.

He was not alone at the rail—and yet he was alone in a sense, for he gave no one the slightest attention. He bent over and looked ahead eagerly, waving a hand now and then at the men on passing craft, like a schoolboy on an excursion trip. He listened to the bellowing sirens and foghorns, drank in the raucous cries of the ship's officers, strained his ears for the land sounds that rolled now and then across the waters.

"It's great—great!" Sidney Prale said, half aloud.

He bent over the rail again. A hand descended upon his shoulder, and a voice answered him.

"You bet it's great, Prale?"

Sidney Prale's smile weakened a bit as he turned

around, but there was nothing of discourtesy in his manner.

"You like it, Mr. Shepley?" he asked.

"Do I like it? Does Rufus Shepley, forced to run here and there around the old world in the name of business, like it when he gets the chance to return to New York? Ask me!"

"I have my answer," Prale said, laughing a bit. "And judge, then, how I like it—when I have not seen it for ten years."

"Haven't seen New York for ten years?" Rufus Shepley gasped.

"A whole decade," Prale admitted.

"Been down in Honduras all that time?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you live to tell it? You are my idea of a real man!" Rufus Shepley said.

Shepley took a cigar from his vest pocket, bit off the end, lighted it, and puffed a cloud of fragrant smoke into the air. Rufus Shepley was a man of fifty, and looked his age. If human being ever gave the appearance of being the regulation man of big business affairs, Rufus Shepley did.

Sidney Prale had held some conversation with him on board ship, but they had not become very well acquainted, though they seemed to like each other. Each man seemed to be holding back, waiting, trying to discover in the other more qualities to like or dislike.

"Ten years," Sidney Prale went on thoughtfully. "It seems a long time, but the years have passed swiftly."