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opening extract from

Classics Illustrated: The Man in the Iron Mask

written by

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THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

Alexandre Dumas

ONE NIGHT IN THE YEAR 1661, THE STEPS OF THREE MEN RESOUNDED IN THE COURTYARD OF THE BASTILLE. THE TURNKEY, WHO LED THE WAY, HELD HIS HEAD DOWN. HE SEEMED AFRAID TO KEEP HIS EARS OPEN. IN THESE TOWERS SECRETS WERE BURIED AS WELL AS MEN-- SECRETS OF THE MIGHTY, SECRETS SO TERRIBLE THAT EVEN TO KNOW OF THEIR EXISTENCE COULD COST A MAN HIS LIFE.



AH, YOUR EYES ARE BECOMING WILD. I SHALL HAVE TO TAKE AWAY YOUR KNIFE.



THE JAILER LEFT. NOW THE KING'S RAGE AND FRENZY KNEW NO BOUNDS.



HE TORE AT THE DOOR WITH HIS NAILS AND UTTERED WILD AND FEARFUL CRIES.



TWO HOURS AFTERWARD, LOUIS XIV COULD NOT BE RECOGNIZED AS A KING--A GENTLEMAN--A HUMAN BEING.

