

## The THIRD DEGREE

A Narrative  
of  
Metropolitan  
Life

By CHARLES KLEIN and  
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

### CHAPTER III.

The handsome townhouse of Howard Jeffries, the well-known banker, on Riverside drive, was one of the most striking among the many imposing millionaire homes that line the city's splendid water front. Houses there were in the immediate proximity which were more showy and had cost more money, but none as completely satisfying from the art lover's standpoint. It was the home of a man who studied and loved the beautiful for its own sake and not because he wanted to astonish people with what miracles his money could work. Occupying a large plot on slightly elevated ground, the house commanded a fine view of the broad Hudson. Directly opposite, across the river, busy with steam and sailing craft, smiled the green slopes of New Jersey; in the purple north frowned the jagged cliffs of the precipitous Palisades.

The elder Jeffries, aristocratic descendant of an old Knickerbocker family, was proud of his home and had spent large sums of money in beautifying it. Built in colonial style of pure white marble with long French windows and lofty columns supporting a flat, rounded roof, surrounded by broad lawns, wide-spreading shade trees and splashing fountains, it was a conspicuous landmark for miles. The interior was full of architectural beauty. The stately entrance hall, hung with ancestral portraits, was of noble proportions, and a superb staircase, decorated with statuary, led off to tastefully decorated reception rooms above. To-night the house was brilliantly illuminated and there was considerable activity at the front entrance, where a footman in smart livery stood opening the doors of the carriages as they drove up in quick succession.

Mrs. Jeffries' musicales were always largely attended because she knew the secret of making them interesting. Her husband's wealth and her fine house enabled her to entertain on a liberal scale, and she was a tactful and diplomatic hostess as well. She not only cultivated the right kind of people who were congenial to each other, but she always managed to have some guest of special distinction whom every one was eager to meet. Her own wide acquaintance among the prominent operatic artists and her husband's influential position in the world of finance made this policy an easy way of furthering her social ambitions. She would always invite some one whom she could present as the lion of the evening. One week it would be a tenor from the opera house, another time a famous violinist. In this way she managed to create a little artistic salon on the lines of the famous political salons in which the brilliant women of the eighteenth century molded public opinion in France.

Alicia knew she was clever and as she stood admiring herself in front of a full length mirror while awaiting the arrival of her guests she congratulated herself that she had made a success of her life. She had won those things which most women hold dear—wealth and social position. She had married a man she did not love, it was true, but other women had done that before her. If she had not brought her husband love she at least was not a wife he need be ashamed of. In her Paquin gown of gold cloth, with sweeping train and a jeweled tiara in her hair, she considered herself handsome enough to grace any man's home. It was indeed a beauty which she saw in the mirror—the face of a woman not yet 30, with the features regular and refined. The eyes were large and dark and the mouth and nose delicately molded. The face seemed academically perfect, all but the expression. She had a cold, calculating look, and a cynic might have charged her with being heartless, of stopping at nothing to gain her own ends.

To-night Alicia had every reason to feel jubilant. She had secured a social lion that all New York would talk about—no less a person than Dr. Bernstein, the celebrated psychologist, the originator of the theory of scientific psychology. Everything seemed to go the way she wished; her musicales were the talk of the town; her husband had just presented her with the jeweled tiara which now graced her head; there seemed to be nothing in the world that she could not enjoy.

Yet she was not happy, and as she gazed at the face reflected before her in the glass she wondered if the world guessed how unhappy she was. She knew that by her own indiscretion she was in danger of losing all she had won, her position in society, her place in the affections of her husband, everything.

When she married Mr. Jeffries it was with deliberate calculation. She did not love him, but, being ambitious,

she did not hesitate to deceive him. He was rich, he could give her that prominent position in society for which she yearned. The fact that she was already engaged to a man for whom she did care did not deter her for a moment from her set purpose. She had met Robert Underwood years before. He was then a college boy, tall, handsome, clever. She fell in love with him and they became engaged. As she grew more sophisticated she saw the folly of their youthful infatuation. Underwood was without fortune, his future uncertain. While in this uncertain state of mind she met Mr. Jeffries, then a widower, at a reception. The banker was attracted to her and being a business man he did things quickly. He proposed and was accepted, all in the brief time of five minutes. Robert Underwood and the romance of her girlhood were sacrificed without question when it came to reaching a prompt decision. She wrote Underwood a brief letter of farewell, telling him that the action she had taken was really for the best interests of them both. Underwood made no reply and for months did not attempt to go near her. Then he met her in public. There was a reconciliation. He exerted the old spell—on the married woman. Cold and indifferent to her husband, Alicia found it amusing to have her old lover paying her court and the danger of discovery only gave the intrigue additional zest and charm. She did not lead Underwood to believe that he could induce her to forget her duty to Mr. Jeffries, but she was foolish enough to encourage a dangerous intimacy. She thought she was strong enough to be able to call a halt whenever she would be so disposed, but as is often the case she overestimated her powers. The intimacy grew. Underwood became bolder, claiming and obtaining special privileges. He soon realized that he had the upper hand and he traded on it. Under her patronage he was invited everywhere. He practically lived on her friends. He borrowed their money and cheated them at cards. His real character was soon known to all, but no one dared expose him for fear of offending the influential Mrs. Jeffries. Realizing this, Underwood continued his deceptions until he became a sort of social highwayman. He had no legitimate source of income, but he took a suite of apartments at the expensive Astoria and on credit furnished them so gorgeously that they became the talk of the town. The magazines and newspapers devoted columns to the magnificence of their furnishings and the art treasures they contained. Art dealers all over the country offered him liberal commissions if he would dispose of expensive objects d'art to his friends. He entered in business relation with several firms and soon his rooms became a veritable bazaar for art curios of all kinds. Mrs. Jeffries' friends paid exorbitant prices for some of the stuff and Underwood pocketed the money, forgetting to account to the owners for the sums they brought. The dealers demanded restitution or a settlement and Underwood, dreading exposure, had to hustle around to raise enough money to make up the deficiency in order to avoid prosecution. In this way he lived from day to day borrowing from Peter to settle with Paul, and on one or two occasions he had not been ashamed to borrow from Mrs. Jeffries herself.

Alicia lent the money more because she feared ridicule than from any real desire to oblige Underwood. She had long since become disgusted with him. The man's real character was now plainly revealed to her. He was an adventurer, little better than a common crook. She congratulated herself on her narrow escape. Suppose she had married him—the horror of it! Yet the next instant she was filled with consternation. She had allowed him to become so intimate that it was difficult to break off with him all at once. She realized that with a man of that character the inevitable must come. There would be a disgraceful scandal. She would be mixed up in it, her husband's eyes

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She at Least Was Not a Wife He Need Be Ashamed Of.

would be opened to her folly, it might ruin her entire life. She must end it now—once for all. She had already given him to understand that their intimacy must cease. Now he must stop his visits to her house and desist from trapping her friends into his many schemes. She had written him that morning forbidding him to come to the house this evening. She was done with him forever.

These thoughts were responsible for the frown on the beautiful Mrs. Jeffries' bejeweled brow that particular Saturday evening. Alicia gave a sigh and was drawing on her long kid gloves before the glass, when suddenly a maid entered and tendered her mistress a note. Alicia knew the handwriting only too well. She tore

the letter open and read:

Dear Mrs. Jeffries: I received your letter telling me that my presence at your house to-night would be distasteful to you. As you can imagine, it was a great shock. Don't you understand the harm this will do me? Everybody will notice my absence. They will jump to the conclusion that there has been a rupture, and my credit will suffer immediately with your friends. I cannot afford to let this happen now. My affairs are in such condition that it will be fatal to me. I need your support and friendship more than ever. I have noticed for some time that your manner to me has changed. Perhaps you have believed some of the stories my enemies have circulated about me. For the sake of our old friendship, Alicia, don't desert me now. Remember what I once was to you and let me come to your reception to-night. There's a reason why I must be seen in your house.

Yours devotedly,  
ROBERT UNDERWOOD.

Alicia's face flushed with anger. Turning to the maid, she said: "There's no answer."

The girl was about to close the door when her mistress suddenly recalled her.

"Wait a minute," she said; "I'll write a line."

Taking from her dainty escritoire a sheet of perfumed notepaper, she wrote hurriedly as follows:

"If you dare to come near my house to-night I will have you put out by the servants."

Quickly folding the note, she crushed it into an envelope, sealed it, handed it to the girl, and said:

"Give that to the messenger."

The servant disappeared and Alicia resumed her work of drawing on her gloves in front of her mirror. How dare he write her such a letter? Was her house to be made the headquarters for his swindling schemes? Did he want to cheat more of her friends?

The more she thought of all he had done, the angrier she became. Her eyes flashed and her bosom heaved with indignation. She wondered what her husband, the soul of honor, would say if he suspected that she had permitted a man of Underwood's character to use his home for his dishonest practices. She was glad she had ended it now, before it was too late. There might have been a scandal. Mr. Jeffries, she felt certain, would not tolerate a scandal of any kind.

All at once she felt something brush her cheek. She turned quickly. It was her husband who had entered the room quietly.

"Oh, Howard," she exclaimed, peevishly; "how you frightened me! You shouldn't startle me like that."

A tall, distinguished-looking man with white mustache and pointed beard stood admiring her in silence. His erect figure, admirably set off in a well-cut dress coat suggested the soldier.

"What are you doing alone here, dear?" he said. "I hear carriages outside. Our guests are arriving."

"Just thinking, that's all," she replied, evasively.

He noticed her preoccupied look and with some concern, he demanded:

"There's nothing to worry you, is there?"

"Oh, no—nothing like that," she said, hastily.

He looked at her closely and she averted her eyes. Mr. Jeffries often wondered if he had made a mistake. He felt that this woman to whom he had given his name did not love him, but his vanity as much as his pride prevented him from acknowledging it, even to himself. After all, what did he care? She was a companion, she graced his home and looked after his creature comforts. Perhaps no reasonable man should expect anything more. Carelessly, he asked:

"Whom do you expect to-night?"

"Oh, the usual crowd," replied Alicia, languidly. "Dr. Bernstein is coming—you know he's quite the rage just now. He has to do with psychology and all that sort of thing."

"So, he's your lion to-night, is he?" smiled the banker. Then he went on:

"By the by, I met Brewster at the club to-night. He promised to drop in."

Now it was Alicia's turn to smile. It was not everybody who could boast of having such a distinguished lawyer as Judge Brewster on their calling lists. To-night would certainly be a success—two lions instead of one. For the moment she forgot her worry.

"I am delighted that the judge is coming," she exclaimed, her face beaming. "Every one is talking about him since his brilliant speech for the defense in that murder case."

The banker noted his wife's beautiful hair and the white transparency of her skin. His gaze lingered on the graceful lines of her neck and bosom, glittering with precious stones. An exquisite aroma exuding from her person reached where he stood. His eyes grew more ardent and, passing his arm affectionately around her slender waist, he asked:

"How does my little girl like her tiara?"

"It's very nice. Don't you see I'm wearing it to-night?" she replied almost impatiently and drawing herself away.

Before Mr. Jeffries had time to reply there was a commotion at the other end of the reception room, where rich tapestries screened off the main entrance hall. The butler drew the curtains aside.

"Mr. and Mrs. Cortwright," he announced loudly.

(To Be Continued.)

Superintendent of Bridges A. F. Hedengren and wife and children arrived last evening from their home at Omaha and Mrs. Hedengren and the children will visit friends here, while Mr. Hedengren attends to business matters.



## TRADE REVIEW FOR THE WEEK

Dun Says Improvement is Proving Very Slow.

### HOPEFUL OUTLOOK FOR CROPS

Iron and Steel Markets Designated as Irregular and Conservative—Improvement in Shoe Trade Continues. Hide Markets Quiet.

New York, March 18.—Dun's review says: Recent improvement in trade is very slow, irregular and conservative and chiefly is in evidence in iron and steel, in which there is a larger demand for structural materials; a more cheerful sentiment regarding pig iron and better mill conditions in finished materials. The volume of transactions is somewhat under that of last year's, but is generally larger than in the preceding quarter, while business sentiment is helped by the hopeful outlook for crops.

Very conservative trading is reported in the primary and secondary dry goods market, yet some mills are busy, while others, notably cotton mills, are being forced to curtail production in a large way. Silks, wools and worsteds, linens and some other special lines show business enough to offset the depression manifested in cotton circles.

The improvement in the shoe trade noted last week continues and further good sized orders have been placed by jobbers, who were previously holding out in the hope of concessions. The tone of the prices is steady. There is little if any improvement in the demand for leather and sole is especially quiet, owing to buyers having previously stocked up so heavily in advance of their needs on this variety.

The hide markets are generally quiet, but prices are well maintained on all varieties. Packer hides are especially dull, but the stocks of these are so well sold up for this season of the year that prices are easily maintained.

### IRON ORE SUPPLY DWINDLING

Cushman Says Deposits in United States Will Be Exhausted in 30 Years.

Philadelphia, March 18.—Speaking on the subject of the conservation of iron, Dr. Alerton S. Cushman, director of the bureau of industrial research at Washington, declared at the Franklin institute that at the present rate of production, the iron supply of the United States will be exhausted in thirty years.

"If the average rate of increase by decades should be continued," he said, "it would require the production in the next three decades of 6,088,000,000 tons of ore. But the ore supply now available in the United States is estimated at 4,788,000,000 tons, which is only 78 per cent of the amount needed on this assumption. It is evident, therefore, that the present average rate of increase in production of high grade ores cannot continue even for the thirty years."

### LEAGUE PRAISES TAFT

Meeting at London Heartily Approves Recent Utterances of President.

London, March 18.—The International Arbitration league at its meeting sang psalms in praise of President Taft's suggestion for an unqualified Anglo-American arbitration treaty and Sir Edward Grey's speech in support of the same.

Lord Chancellor Loreburn, who presided, declared that when a man who held an office such as the presidency of the United States said what President Taft had said, he raised the hopes of all mankind.

New York, March 15.—The grand jury began an investigation into the affairs of the Carnegie Trust company, closed by the superintendent of banks on Feb. 1. Three witnesses, including the vice president of the suspended institution, were examined.

### Find Body of Grace.

Ostend, Belgium, March 15.—A body was brought to the surface in this harbor which is thought to be that of Cecil Grace, the aviator, who was lost last December while attempting a return aeroplane flight from Calais to Dover.

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## EVANGELIST LEWIS' MEETING DRAWS LARGE CROWD AT METHODIST CHURCH

Mr. Lewis Tells Story of His Life in Most Eloquent and forcible Manner—Song Service Conducted by Mr. Sutherland Splendid

From Saturday's Daily.

Evangelist Lewis spoke to a crowded church last evening, the doors of the lecture room having been thrown open and that part of the church was also filled with interested listeners. For an hour and over Rev. Lewis held the large audience while he detailed some of the incidents of his life to his call to the ministry.

Before Rev. Lewis began to speak there was a song service, led by Prof. Sutherland, which delighted the audience, and to vary the program the singers were invited to whistle the air of some of the hymns. The ladies were given an opportunity to do the stunt alone, as well as the men, and then all whistled together, at which hand-clapping was permitted in applause.

Rev. L. W. Gade of the Presbyterian church offered prayer and Prof. Sutherland sang as a solo, "What Shall the Harvest Be?" and Rev. Lewis and Prof. Sutherland together sang a duet, which was much appreciated by the listeners.

In giving a sketch of his career, Rev. Lewis said, in substance, that he was born in Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, February 25, 1861, and that he is of Welsh, Irish and German extraction, and said if that combination did not make a fighter he did not know what would. He was the youngest son of a family of ten children and two of his brothers fell soldiers' graves. The speaker here paid a tribute to the old soldiers and said he would like to see the G. A. R. of the city attend the services in a body some evening. When the speaker was 6 years of age his parents moved to Ashland county, Ohio, and at the age of 8 years he went to reside in a Presbyterian family.

His education was limited to what a boy could acquire in attending school from three to four months each year. When the speaker was 19 years of age he moved to Wayne county, Ohio, and December 30, 1879, he was married to the daughter of a Christian woman, who exacted the promise of him before consenting that her daughter should marry him, that "he would become a Christian, erect a family altar and live the Christ life." Mr. Lewis made the promise. Himself and wife began housekeeping in 1880 on a farm, their possessions being two cows, a couple of pig horses, a few chickens and \$30 in debt. Thirty years ago last January himself and wife were converted, and for fourteen or fifteen years he lived a consistent Christian life. But they finally moved into a neighborhood where the church people engaged in dancing. Rev. Lewis here condemned this form of amusement in no uncertain terms, charging this as the means of leading him near to a drunkard's grave as well as a drunkard's hell.

He was a musician, played the violin, and at the head of a good orchestra, was soon in great demand to play at dancing parties. He was in-

cluded to take intoxicating drinks and soon became a habitual user of the beverage. Although he never became unconscious from drink, as he could "carry an awful load," he was never too drunk to drive his team home from the dance, or elsewhere. The speaker then recounted the pleadings of his wife to give up the dance playing, as her heart was slowly breaking. Mr. Lewis complied with her request at once, but did not cease the habit of drinking until some time after, when, by an accident, which he believes was providential, he was suddenly brought face to face with death. The accident resulted in the loss of the end of the little finger on his left hand, and a surgical operation in which he was required to take chloroform. His dissipated habits had brought heart disease upon him, and he had been taking treatment for the same for some months, and when the family doctor told him that the finger would have to be amputated and he feared the effect of the chloroform on his heart, it was decided to delay the operation until the next day. That night Mr. Lewis did not sleep at all, not because the injury hurt, for the physician had numbed it so that it did not do so. What troubled him was the almost certain death from the chloroform. His conscience told him that he was not prepared for death, and agitated by the horror of impending doom hanging over him, he vowed to his God that if he was permitted to live he would preach, or do anything that God wanted him to do. The operation was performed and the process of healing was very slow, which was accounted for by his physician, who was a Christian man, by telling Rev. Lewis that maybe if the injury healed rapidly he might forget his vow and not give up the intoxicants.

Coatless, tieless and collarless, wiping perspiration and tears from his face, Farmer Lewis proclaimed the story of his life, and the large audience listened with intense interest as he bared the innermost weaknesses of his life, without flinching or hesitation, and the struggle up through the darkness and despair of a drunkard's career to the marvelous light of the liberty of God. And he convinced his audience that the manifold providence of God worked through his experience and culminated in his conversion and call to the ministry. The story bristled with off-hand witicisms, homely truths, while through it all ran that pathos and humility of soul that brought tears to the eyes of many during the recital.

He told of the tabernacle meeting conducted by Evangelist Williams, with Prof. Sutherland as singer, which he attended, and which had much to do with moulding his resolve to keep his vow with God to be a preacher. And in closing he stated that if any good resulted from his sermons he desired God should have the credit for it all.

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