

The THIRD DEGREE

By CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLow

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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A NARRATIVE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE

CHAPTER VI.

The door slammed, and Underwood returned to the sitting room. Taking no notice of Howard, he walked over to the desk, slowly selected a cigar and lighted it. Howard looked up at him foolishly, not knowing what to say. His frequent libations had so befuddled him that he had almost forgotten the object of his visit.

"Excuse my butting in, old chap," he stammered, "but—"

Underwood made no answer. Howard stared at him in comic surprise. He was not so drunk as not to be able to notice that something was wrong.

"Say, old fellow," he gurgled; "you're a regular Jim Dumps. Why so chortfallen, so—? My! what a long face! Is that the way you greet a classmate, a fellow frat? Wait till you hear my hard-luck story. That'll cheer you up. Who was it said: 'There's nothing cheers us up so much as other people's money?' Reaching for the whisky bottle, he went on: 'First I'll pour out another drink. You see, I need courage, old man. I've got a favor to ask. I want some money. I not only want it—I need it.'"

Underwood laughed, a hollow, mocking laugh of derision. His old classmate had certainly chosen a good time to come and ask him for money. Howard mistook the cynical gaiety for good humor.

"I said I'd cheer you up," he went on. "I don't want to remind you of that little matter of two hundred and fifty bucks which you borrowed from me two years ago. I suppose you've forgotten it, but—"

A look of annoyance came over Underwood's face.

"Well, what of it?" he snapped.

Howard took another drink before he continued.

"I wouldn't remind you of the loan, old chap; but I'm up against it. When the family kicked me out for marrying the finest girl that ever lived, my father cut me off with a piking allowance which I told him to put in the church plate. I told him I preferred independence. Well," he went on with serio-comic gravity, "I got my independence, but I'm—dead broke. You might as well understand the situation plainly, I can't find any business that I'm fitted for, and Annie threatens to go back to work. Now, you know I can't stand anything like that. I'm too much of a man to be supported by any woman."

He looked toward Underwood in a stupid kind of way, as if looking for some sign of approval, but he was disappointed. Underwood's face was a study of supreme indifference. He did not even appear to be listening. Somewhat disconcerted, Howard again raised the glass to his lips, and thus refreshed, went on:

"Then I thought of you, old chap. You've made a rousing success of it—got a big name as art collector—made lots of money and all that—"

Underwood impatiently interrupted him.

"It's impossible, Jeffries. Things are a little hard with me, too, just now. You'll have to wait for that \$250."

Howard grinned.

"Taint the \$250, old man, I didn't want that. I want a couple of thousand."

Underwood could not help laughing. "A couple of thousand? Why not make it a million?"

Howard's demand struck him as being so humorous that he sat down convulsed with laughter.

Looking at him stupidly, Howard helped himself to another drink.

"It seems I'm a hit," he said with a grin.

Underwood by this time had recovered his composure.

"So you've done nothing since you left college?" he said.

"No," answered Howard. "I don't seem to get down to anything. My



Sank Sleepily Back Among the Soft Divan Pillows.

Idea won't stay in one place. I got a job as time-keeper, but I didn't keep it down a week. I kept the time all right, but it wasn't the right time. Again raising the glass to his lips, he added: "They're so beastly particu-

"You keep pretty good time with that," laughed Underwood, pointing to the whisky.

Howard grinned in drunken fashion. "It's the one thing I do punctually," he hiccupped. "I can row, swim, play tennis, football, golf and polo as well as anybody, but I'll be damned if I can do anything quite as well as I can do this."

"What do you want \$2,000 for?" demanded Underwood.

"I've got an opportunity to go into business. I want \$2,000 and I want it deuced quick."

Underwood shrugged his shoulders. "Why don't you go home and ask your father?" he demanded.

His visitor seemed offended at the suggestion.

"What!" he exclaimed, with comic surprise, "after being turned out like a dog with a young wife on my hands! Not much—no. I've injured their pride. You know father married a second time, loaded me down with a stepmother. She's all right, but she's so confoundedly aristocratic. You know her. Say, didn't you and she—wasn't there some sort of an engagement once? Seems to me I—"

Underwood rose to his feet and abruptly turned his back.

"I'd rather you wouldn't get personal," he said curtly. "Sitting down at a desk, he began to rummage with some papers and, turning impatiently to Howard, he said:

"Say, old man, I'm very busy now. You'll have to excuse me."

If Howard had been sober, he would have understood that this was a pretty strong hint for him to be gone, but in his besotted condition, he did not propose to be disposed of so easily. Turning to Underwood, he burst out with an air of offended dignity:

"Underwood, you wouldn't go back on me now. I'm an outcast, a pariah, a derelict on the ocean of life, as one of my highly respectable uncles wrote me. His grandfather was an iron puddler. With a drunken laugh he went on: 'Doesn't it make you sick? I'm no good because I married the girl. If I had ruined her life I'd still be a decent member of society.'"

He helped himself to another drink, his hand shaking so that he could hardly hold the decanter. He was fast approaching the state of complete intoxication. Underwood made no attempt to interfere. Why should he care if the young fool made a sot of himself? The sooner he drank himself insensible the quicker he would get rid of him.

"No, Howard," he said; "you'd never make a decent member of society."

"Praps not," hiccupped Howard.

"How does Annie take her social ostracism?" inquired Underwood.

"Like a brick. She's all a thoroughbred, all right. She's all to the good."

"All the same, I'm sorry I ever introduced you to her," replied Underwood. "I never thought you'd make such a fool of yourself as to marry—"

Howard shook his head in a maudlin manner, as he replied:

"I don't know whether I made a fool of myself or not, but she's all right. She's got in her the makings of a great woman—very crude, but still the makings. The only thing I object to is, she insists on going back to work, just as if I'd permit such a thing. Do you know what I said on our wedding day? 'Mrs. Howard Jeffries, you are entering one of the oldest families in America. Nature has fitted you for social leadership. You'll be a petted, pampered member of that select few called the '400,' and now damn it all, how can I ask her to go back to work? But if you'll let me have that \$2,000—"

By this time Howard was beginning to get drowsy. Lying back on the sofa, he proceeded to make himself comfortable.

"Two thousand dollars!" laughed Underwood. "Why, man, I'm in debt up to my eyes."

As far as his condition enabled him, Howard gave a start of surprise.

"Hard up!" he exclaimed. Pointing around the room, he said: "What's all this—a bluff?"

Underwood nodded.

"A bluff, that's it. Not a picture, not a vase, not a stick belongs to me. You'll have to go to your father."

"Never," said Howard despondently. The suggestion was evidently too much for him, because he stretched out his hand for his whisky glass. "Father's done with me," he said dolefully.

"He'll relent," suggested Underwood.

Howard shook his head drowsily. Touching his brow, he said:

"Too much brains, too much up here." Placing his hand on his heart, he went on: "Too little down here. Once he gets an idea, he never lets it go. He holds on. Obstinately. One idea—stick to it. Gee, but I've made a mess of things, haven't I?"

Underwood looked at him with contempt.

"You've made a mess of your life," he said bitterly, "yet you've had some measure of happiness. You, at least, married the woman you love. Drunk

yes, I'll come down. No, tell her to come up."

Hanging up the receiver, he hastily went over to the divan and shook Howard.

"Howard, wake up! confound you! You've got to get out—there's somebody coming."

He shook him roughly, but his old classmate made no attempt to move.

"Quick, do you hear!" exclaimed Underwood impatiently. "Wake up—some one's coming."

Howard sleepily half opened his eyes. He had forgotten entirely where he was and believed he was on the train, for he answered:

"Sure, I'm sleepy. Say—porter, make up my bed."

His patience exhausted, Underwood was about to pull him from the sofa by force, when there was a ring at the front door.

Bending quickly over his companion, Underwood saw that he was fast asleep. There was no time to awaken him and get him out of the way, so, quickly, he took a big screen and arranged it around the divan so that Howard could not be seen. Then he hurried to the front door and opened it.

Alicia entered.

"en beast as you are, I envy you. The woman I wanted married some one else, damn her!"

Howard was so drowsy from the effects of the whisky that he was almost asleep. As he lay back on the sofa, he gurgled:

"Say, old man, I didn't come here to listen to hard-luck stories. I came to tell one."

In maudlin fashion he began to sing. "Oh, listen to my tale of woe," while Underwood sat glaring at him, wondering how he could put him out.

As he reached the last verse his head began to nod. The words came thickly from his lips and he sank sleepily back among the soft divan pillows.

Just at that moment the telephone bell rang. Underwood quickly picked up the receiver.

"Who's that?" he asked. As he heard the answer his face lit up and he replied eagerly: "Mrs. Jeffries—"

(To Be Continued.)

BILL FOR TELEPHONE MERGER

Senate File No. 86 Regulating the Telephone Companies

A bill for an act authorizing telephone and telegraph companies or corporations to mortgage, lease, sell or otherwise alienate the property and franchises of such telephone and telegraph companies or corporations, and prescribing the terms and conditions upon which competing telephone companies may combine or consolidate their respective properties. Introduced by Senator Ollis.

Introduced and read first time January 20, 1911. Read second time January 23, 1911, and referred to the Committee on Miscellaneous Corporations. Sent to printer January 23, 1911.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Nebraska:

Section 1. That every telephone and telegraph company or corporation owning lands, franchises or other property in this State be and hereby is authorized to mortgage or execute deeds of trust, lease, sell or otherwise alienate the whole or any part of the property, franchises or lands owned by said telephone or telegraph company or corporation.

Section 2. That every telephone and telegraph company or corporation owning lands, franchises or other property in this State shall have power to borrow money and execute bonds or promissory notes therefor and to secure the payment thereof by pledging the property and income of such company, and any mortgage or deed of trust executed by such company shall bind and be a valid lien upon all the property therein described and by its terms may include and cover not only the property owned at the time of the execution thereof, but also all other property, both real, personal or mixed, which may hereafter be acquired by such company or corporation, and such mortgages or deeds of trust shall be as valid and effectual as to such after acquired property as if the same were in possession at the time of the execution thereof.

Section 3. That whenever two or more competing telephone companies are operating lines or are engaged in business in the same municipality or locality, such companies may, in the manner and upon the terms agreed upon in respect to the operation and maintenance of their respective plants, connect their lines and equipment so that subscribers and patrons of one company may obtain telephonic connection with the subscribers and patrons of the other company or companies, and thereafter the plants so connected shall be operated and maintained in the manner and upon the terms so agreed upon; provided, that no such agreement shall become effective until the state railway commission shall have certified that the proposed arrangement is for the public interest and shall have

approved the terms and conditions of the agreement.

Section 4. Whenever the state railway commission shall certify its approval thereof, any telephone company may purchase, hold, sell, lease or otherwise acquire or dispose of all or any part of the property, franchises, business, stock or bonds of any other such company and competing telephone companies may consolidate or combine by an agreement approved by a vote of two-thirds of the stockholders of each of the consolidating companies; provided, such agreement to consolidate or to combine shall have been filed with and be approved by the state railway commission; and provided further, that all valid existing contracts of such companies which provide for the interchange of business between such companies and other telephone companies shall be carried out and be assumed by the consolidated company; and provided further, that when telephone exchanges located in the same city or town are combined pursuant to the terms of this act the state railway commission shall prescribe the maximum rates to be charged by the consolidated exchanges and such rates shall not thereafter be increased without the consent and approval of the state railway commission.

Section 5. That all acts and parts of acts in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

High School Notes.

Miss Foster delivered an able lecture this morning to the students of the school on her trip to Tuskegee, Alabama, where she visited the schools under the management of Booker T. Washington.

Superintendent Abbott returned this morning from Nebraska City, where he addressed the Women's club and a large number of their invited guests on "The Inspiration of Art," yesterday. Mr. Abbott was given a cordial greeting from his former neighbors.

Next Friday evening will be the regular monthly meeting of teachers of the Plattsmouth schools, at which time Mr. Abbott will resume his series of lectures on "The Inspiration of Good Books." As the monthly pay checks are passed out at that time to the teachers, there is likely to be a full attendance. Each of the teachers is expected to hand in the title of her favorite play and give in writing why it is her favorite. This has already been done with poems and songs.

Mrs. Frans of Union was a visitor at the High school today, where her son, Rue, is a student.

Judge B. S. Ramsey visited Superintendent Abbott at his office today.

NEW WOODMAN HALL AT CEDAR CREEK

The members of the M. W. A. lodge at Cedar Creek are going to have a new lodge room and hall. The contract for the erection of the new building has been let to T. J. Iner of this city, and the work will be started some time the early part of May. The new building will be 32x60, one story. We are informed that almost sufficient funds have already been raised for the completion of the building. The Cedar Creek lodge of Woodmen is a very strong one and there is no reason why they should not have one of the best meeting rooms in the county, which they will have when the new building is ready for occupancy.

Charles Heger Secures Baker.

Charles Heger, the Main street baker, returned from Omaha last evening, where he secured the services of an experienced baker to handle the bread-making at his shop. The new baker is Mr. Fred Rabra, who comes highly recommended as an experienced man in his line, and he is particularly commended for his cleanliness and neatness about his work. Mr. Heger feels that he is fortunate in securing so good a man at this time.

Having the Grippe.

John Lohnes and son, Will, from Louisville, were in the city today, and while here the former paid the Journal office a brief call. Mr. Lohnes, sr., has been troubled with the grippe most all winter, this being his first trip to Plattsmouth since last August. We are pleased to note that the old gentleman is recovering rapidly at this time.

James Stander of Louisville was in the city today visiting with his many county seat friends and looking after some business matters. While here he called at the Journal office to renew for his paper, also for his mother, Mrs. E. A. Stander.


Mrs. E. A. Kirkpatrick of Nehawka arrived in this city this evening for a visit at the home of Mr. and Mrs. P. E. Ruffner, she being a sister of Mrs. Ruffner.

STUNG!

Have you ever been stung in buying boys clothes? It's no wonder. There are more cheap, half-made clothes on the market for boys than any other kind. Let us sell you one of our boy's suits at \$5.

They're Guaranteed!

You do not have to take one single chance on them. If you don't feel you get your money's worth out of them bring them back and get your money. They are made of strictly all-wool material, preshrunk and waterproofed. Pants are lined throughout and all seams reinforced. Coats have double lining at arm pit, are cut long and full and in the latest style. Just think of a pure all-wool blue serge suit like this for \$5.



C. E. Wescott's Sons

THE HOME OF SATISFACTION

ANDREW KEARN, AGED GERMAN FARMER, IN DOMESTIC TROUBLE

Former Wife Takes Two Children to Omaha With Her to Make Their Home—Kearn to Try and Recover Them.

Andrew Kearn, an aged German retired farmer, has been having more than his share of domestic infelicity of late. In addition to being an invalid for the past ten or eleven years, his divorced wife, who for a year past has been at his home and sick also, as soon as she was strong enough to travel, left his home, taking with her his 14-year-old daughter, Augusta Alvina. This incident occurred on March 13. The woman went to Omaha, where she was married to a man whom Mr. Kearn does not know, but whom he has seen once or twice. Last Monday the little boy, Andrew, who is about 15 years of age, went to school as usual, but did not return, and Mr. Kearn was left in great suspense for some time until he ascertained that his former wife had taken the little fellow to Omaha, also. The little fellow no doubt wanted to see his sister and was thus persuaded to go with the woman.

Mr. Kearn feels very much in-

duced the way his former wife has repaid his kindness in furnishing her a home during the past year while she was too ill to care for herself, and he has already legal proceedings under way to recover possession of his children. The penalty for kidnapping is a term in the penitentiary, and Mr. Kearn proposes to push the matter and punish the parties who stole his children.

He will probably resort to a habeas corpus for the purpose of taking the children, which may be issued here and the children brought here for the hearing. The offense seems all the more aggravated from the fact that this is the third time the woman has left in this way.

When Mr. Kearn was divorced some years ago, he took two of the children and his wife took the youngest. She placed the two that she had in the custody of a children's home in Omaha, and Mr. Kearn fears now that she wants the two that have been with him simply because they are now large enough to do some work.

Saved a Soldier's Life.

Facing death from shot and shell in the civil war was more agreeable to J. A. Stone of Kemp, Tex., than facing it from what doctors said was consumption. "I contracted a stubborn cold," he writes, "that developed a cough, that stuck to me in spite of all remedies for years. My weight ran down to 130 pounds. Then I began to use Dr. King New Discovery,

which completely cured me. I now weight 178 pounds." For Coughs, Colds, La Grippe, Asthma, Hemorrhage, Hoarseness, Croup, Whooping Cough and lung trouble, its supreme. 50c, \$1.00. Trial bottle free. Guaranteed by F. G. Fricke & Co.

Mrs. J. S. Hastings of Glenwood arrived today and will visit at the G. J. Jones home for a few days.

Spring Millinery



You will find an elegant line of medium priced hats.

Large Medium Small **HATS!**

Please call and see this line.

Miss Myers