

The THIRD DEGREE

A NARRATIVE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE

By CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLow

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

CHAPTER X.

The clock ticked on, and still the merciless browbeating went on. They had been at it now five long, weary hours. Through the blinds the gray daylight outside was creeping its way in. All the policemen were exhausted. The prisoner was on the verge of collapse. Maloney and Patrolman Delaney were dozing on chairs, but Capt. Clinton, a marvel of iron will and physical strength, never relaxed for a moment. Not allowing himself to weaken or show signs of fatigue, he kept pounding the unhappy youth with scorching questions.

By this time Howard's condition was pitiable to witness. His face was white as death. His trembling lips could hardly articulate. It was with the greatest difficulty that he kept on his feet. Every moment he seemed about to fall. At times he clutched the table nervously, for fear he would stumble. Several times, through sheer exhaustion, he sat down. The act was almost involuntary. Nature was giving way.

"I can't stand any more," he murmured. "What's the good of all these questions? I tell you I didn't do it."

He sank helplessly on to a chair. His eyes rolled in his head. He looked as if he would faint.

"Stand up!" thundered the captain angrily.

Howard obeyed mechanically, although he reeled in the effort. To steady himself, he caught hold of the table. His strength was fast ebbing. He was losing his power to resist. The captain saw he was weakening, and he smiled with satisfaction. He'd soon get a confession out of him. Suddenly bending forward, so that his fierce, determined stare glared right into Howard's half closed eyes, he shouted:

"You did it and you know you did!"

"No—I—" replied Howard weakly.

"These repeated denials are useless!" shouted the captain. "There's already enough evidence to send you to the chair!"

Howard shook his head helplessly. Weakly he replied:

"This constant questioning is making me dizzy. Good God! What's the use of questioning me and questioning me? I know nothing about it."

"Why did you come here?" thundered the captain.

"I've told you over and over again. We're old friends. I came to borrow money. He owed me a few hundred dollars when we were at college together, and I tried to get it. I've told you so many times. You won't believe me. My brain is tired. I'm thoroughly exhausted. Please let me go. My poor wife won't know what's the matter."

"Never mind about your wife," growled the captain. "We've sent for her. How much did you try to borrow?"

Howard was silent a moment, as if racking his brain, trying to remember.

"A thousand—two thousand. I forget. I think one thousand."

"Did he say he'd lend you the money?" demanded the inquisitor.

"No," replied the prisoner, with hesitation. He couldn't—he—poor chap—he—

"Ah!" snapped the captain. "He refused—that led to words. There was



"Why Did You Come Here?"

a quarrel, and—" Suddenly leaning forward until his face almost touched Howard's, he hissed rather than spoke: "You shot him!"

Howard gave an involuntary step backward, as if he realized the trap being laid for him.

"No, no!" he cried.

Quickly following up his advantage, Capt. Clinton shouted dramatically:

"You lie! He was found on the floor in this room—dead. You were trying to get out of the house without being seen. You hadn't even stopped to wash the blood off your hands. All you fellows make mistakes. You relied on getting away unseen. You never stopped to think that the blood on your hands would betray you." Gruffly he added: "Now, come,

Howard shook his head. There was a pathetic expression of helplessness on his face.

"I didn't kill him," he faltered. "I was asleep on that sofa. I woke up. It was dark. I went out. I wanted to get home. My wife was waiting for me."

"Now I've caught you lying," interrupted the captain quickly. "You told the coroner you saw the dead man and feared you would be suspected of his murder, and so tried to get away unseen." Turning to his men, he added: "How is that, Maloney? Did the prisoner say that?"

The sergeant consulted his back notes, and replied:

"Yes, Cap', that's what he said."

Suddenly Capt. Clinton drew from his hip pocket the revolver which he had found on the floor near the dead man's body. The supreme test was about to be made. The wily police captain would now play his trump card. It was not without reason that his enemies charged him with employing unlawful methods in conducting his inquisitorial examinations.

"Stop your lying!" he said fiercely. "Tell the truth, or we'll keep you here until you do. The motive is clear. You came for money. You were refused, and you did the trick."

Suddenly producing the revolver, and holding it well under the light, so that the rays from the electric light fell directly on its highly polished surface, he shouted:

"Howard Jeffries, you shot Robert Underwood, and you shot him with this pistol!"

Howard gazed at the shining surface of the metal as if fascinated. He spoke not a word, but his eyes became riveted on the weapon until his face assumed a vacant stare. From the scientific standpoint, the act of hypnotism had been accomplished. In his nervous and overfatigued state, added to his susceptibility to quick hypnosis, he was now directly under the influence of Capt. Clinton's stronger will. He was completely receptive. The past seemed all a blur on his mind. He saw the flash of steel and the police captain's angry, determined-looking face. He felt he was powerless to resist that will any longer. He stepped back and gave a shudder, averting his eyes from the blinding steel. Capt. Clinton quickly followed up his advantage:

"You committed this crime, Howard Jeffries!" he shouted, fixing him with a stare. To his subordinate he shouted: "Didn't he, Maloney?"

"He killed him all right," echoed Maloney.

His eyes still fixed on those of his victim, and approaching his face close to his, the captain shouted:

"You did it, Jeffries! Come on, own up! Let's have the truth! You shot Robert Underwood with this revolver. You did it, and you can't deny it! You know you can't deny it! Speak!" he thundered. "You did it!"

Howard, his eyes still fixed on the shining pistol, repeated, as if reciting a lesson:

"I did it!"

Quickly Capt. Clinton signaled to Maloney to approach nearer with his note-book. The detective sergeant took his place immediately back of Howard. The captain turned to his prisoner:

"You shot Robert Underwood!"

"I shot Robert Underwood," repeated Howard mechanically.

"You quarreled!"

"We quarreled."

"You came here for money!"

"I came here for money."

"He refused to give it to you!"

"He refused to give it to me."

"There was a quarrel!"

"There was a quarrel!"

"You drew that pistol!"

"I drew that pistol!"

"And shot him!"

"And shot him!"

Capt. Clinton smiled triumphantly.

"That's all," he said.

Howard collapsed into a chair. His head dropped forward on his breast, as if he were asleep. Capt. Clinton yawned and looked at his watch. Turning to Maloney, he said with a chuckle:

"By George! It's taken five hours to get it out of him!"

Maloney turned out the electric lights and went to pull up the window shades, letting the bright daylight stream into the room. Suddenly there was a ring at the front door. Officer Delaney opened, and Dr. Bernstein entered. Advancing into the room, he shook hands with the captain.

"I'm sorry I couldn't come before, captain. I was out when I got the call. Where's the body?"

The captain pointed to the inner room.

"In there."

After glancing curiously at Howard, the doctor disappeared into the inner room.

Capt. Clinton turned to Maloney.

"Well, Maloney, I guess our work is done here. We want to get the prisoner over to the station, then make out a charge of murder, and prepare the man's confession so as to take to the magistrate. Have everything ready by nine o'clock. Meantime, I'll

go down and see the newspaper boys. I guess there's a bunch of them down there. Of course, it's too late for the morning papers, but it's a bully good story for the afternoon editions. Delaney, you're responsible for the prisoner. Better handcuff him."

The patrolman was just putting the manacles on Howard's wrists when Dr. Bernstein re-entered from the inner room. The captain turned.

"Well, have you seen your man?" he asked.

The doctor nodded.

"Found a bullet wound in his head," he said. "Flesh all burned—must have been pretty close range. It might have been a case of suicide."

Capt. Clinton frowned. He didn't like suggestions of that kind after a confession which had cost him five hours' work to procure.

"Suicide?" he sneered. "Say, doctor, did you happen to notice what side of the head the wound was on?"

Dr. Bernstein reflected a moment.

"Ah, yes. Now I come to think of it, it was the left side."

"Precisely," sneered the captain. "I never heard of a suicide shooting himself in the left temple. Don't worry, doctor, it's murder, all right." Pointing with a jerk of his finger toward Howard, he added: "And we've got the man who did the job."

Officer Delaney approached his chief and spoke to him in a low tone. The captain frowned and looked toward his prisoner. Then, turning toward the officer, he said:

"Is the wife downstairs?"

The officer nodded.

"Yes, sir; they just telephoned."

"Then let her come up," said the captain. "She may know something."

Delaney returned to the telephone and Dr. Bernstein turned to the captain:

"Say what you will, captain, I'm not at all sure that Underwood did not do this himself."

"Ain't you? Well, I am," replied the captain with a sneer. Pointing again to Howard, he said:

"This man has just confessed to the shooting."

At that moment the front door opened and Annie Jeffries came in escorted by an officer. She was pale and frightened, and looked timidly at the group of strange and serious-looking men present. Then her eyes went round the room in search of her husband. She saw him seemingly asleep in an armchair, his wrists manacled in front of him. With a frightened exclamation she sprang forward, but Officer Delaney intercepted her. Capt. Clinton turned around angrily at the interruption.

"Keep the woman quiet till she's wanted!" he growled.

Annie sat timidly on a chair in the background and the captain turned again to the doctor.

"What's that you were saying, doctor?"

"You tell me the man confessed!"

Crossing the room to where Howard sat, Dr. Bernstein looked closely at him. Apparently the prisoner was asleep. His eyes were closed and his head drooped forward on his chest. He was glantly pale.

The captain grinned.

"Yes, sir, confessed—in the presence of three witnesses. Eh, sergeant?"

"Yes, sir," replied Maloney.

"You heard him, too, didn't you, Delaney?"

"Yes, captain."

Squaring his huge shoulders, the captain said with a self-satisfied chuckle:

"It took us five hours to get him to own up, but we got it out of him at last."

The doctor was still busy with his examination.

"He seems to be asleep. Worn out, I guess. Five hours—that's your method, captain." Shaking his head, he went on: "I don't believe in these all-night examinations and your 'third degree' mental torture. It is barbarous. When a man is nervous and frightened his brain gets so numbed at the end of two or three hours' questioning on the same subject that he's liable to say anything, or even believe anything. Of course, you know, captain, that after a certain time the law of suggestion commences to operate and—"

The captain turned to his sergeant and laughed:

"The law of suggestion? Ha, ha! That's a good one! You know, doctor,



"Sitting There Crying Your Eyes Out Won't Do Him Any Good."

them theories of yours make a hit with college students and amateur professors, but they don't go with us. You can't make a man say 'yes' when he wants to say 'no.'"

Dr. Bernstein smiled.

"I don't agree with you," he said. "You can make him say anything, or believe anything—or do anything if he is unable to resist your will."

The captain burst into a hearty peal

of merriment.

"Ha, ha! What's the use of chinning? We've got him to rights. I tell you, doctor, no newspaper can say that my precinct ain't cleaned up. My record is a hundred convictions to one acquittal. I catch 'em with the goods when I go after 'em!"

A faint smile hovered about the doctor's face.

"I know your reputation," he said sarcastically.

The captain thought the doctor was flattering him, so he rubbed his hands with satisfaction, as he replied:

"That's right, I'm after results. None of them Psyche themes for mine." Striding over to the armchair where sat Howard, he laid a rough hand on his shoulder.

"Hoy, Jeffries, wake up!"

Howard opened his eyes and stared stupidly about him. The captain took him by the collar of his coat.

"Come—stand up! Brace up now!" Turning to Sergeant Maloney, he added, "Take him over to the station. Write out that confession and make him sign it before breakfast. I'll be right over."

Howard struggled to his feet and Maloney helped him arrange his collar and tie. Officer Delaney clapped his hat on his head. Dr. Bernstein turned to go.

"Good morning, captain. I'll make out my report."

"Good morning, doctor."

Dr. Bernstein disappeared and Capt. Clinton turned to look at Annie, who had been waiting patiently in the background. Her anguish on seeing Howard's condition was unspeakable. It was only with difficulty that she restrained herself from crying out and rushing to his side. But these stern, uniformed men intimidated her. It seemed to her that Howard was on trial—a prisoner—perhaps his life was in danger. What could he have done? Of course, he was innocent, whatever the charge was. He wouldn't harm a fly. She was sure of that. But every one looked so grave, and there was a big crowd gathered in front of the hotel when she came up. She thought she had heard the terrible word "murder," but surely there was some mistake. Seeing Capt. Clinton turn in her direction, she darted eagerly forward.

"May I speak to him, sir? He is my husband."

"Not just now," replied the captain, not unkindly. "It's against the rules. Wait till we get him to the Tombs. You can see him all you want there."

Annie's heart sank. Could she have heard aright?

"The Tombs!" she faltered. "Is the charge so serious?"

"Murder—that's all!" replied the captain laconically.

Annie nearly swooned. Had she not caught the back of a chair she would have fallen.

The captain turned to Maloney and, in a low tone, said:

"Quick! Get him over to the station. We don't want any family scenes here."

Manacled to Officer Delaney and escorted on the other side by Maloney, Howard made his way toward the door. Just as he reached it he caught sight of his wife who, with tears streaming down her cheeks, was watching him as if in a dream. To her it seemed like some hideous nightmare from which both would soon awaken. Howard recognized her, yet seemed too dazed to wonder how she came there. He simply blurted out as he passed:

"Something's happened, Annie, dear. Underwood—I don't quite know—"

The policemen pushed him through the door, which closed behind him.

To Be Continued.

QUITE A LOSS TO MR. RICHARDS, AN OLD VETERAN

Mr. Eldon Richards, an old soldier, who, with his aged wife, resides south of the city, had the misfortune this morning to lose quite a sum of money from his vest pocket while walking along Main street of this city. The sum lost was \$40 in bills, which Mr. Richards had just received at the First National bank in payment of his pension check for the last quarter. The money was probably accidentally dropped from his pocket after leaving the bank, as he separated his funds when his check was cashed into two parts, placing \$5 in one pocket and \$40 in the other, and went to the Rynot drug store and paid the \$5 on his bill there, and on putting his hand in his pocket for the roll discovered that he had lost the whole amount.

The loss will fall quite heavily on Mr. Richards, as he has been looking forward to the receipt of his check with anticipation of using the money for his needs. The sympathy of his friends and neighbors will not take the place of the money, though he has that, to be sure.

IMPROVING HOTEL.

Mr. P. F. Goos, the enterprising landlord of the Plattsmouth hotel, is having electric lights put in all of his rooms and the dining room is being decorated with a fine steel fire-proof ceiling. Mr. Goos does not believe in falling behind the procession and will have his hotel as modern as any in the city, and in this way he helps to "See Plattsmouth Succeed."

Councilman Dwyer was an Omaha traveler this afternoon, where he was called on professional business.

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Have you seen the beautiful picture in Demie Hiatt's show window adjacent to the Journal office? This picture is receiving much merited comment. The picture is a sample of what can be done with the latest improved enlarging device. At an expense of \$150 Mr. Hiatt recently put in a new apparatus, including two fine 14-inch lenses, there being only one other set in the state as fine as Mr. Hiatt's. With his late improvements he can make a picture five feet long from a photo postal card.

He has received hundreds of inquiries of late concerning the enlarged pictures and many new orders are coming in every day; only this morning three orders from parties in Illinois came in through the mail. The novelty business is also on the increase, and he is turning out watch fobs, paper weights and many other styles in novelty lines. There is no doubt a great future for this line of Mr. Hiatt's goods. The circulars mailed out during the early months are beginning to bring in orders and inquiries on every mail.

Plattsmouth has an industry in Mr. Hiatt's photo-manufacturing plant which is not appreciated by most of our citizens as it should be. The volume of business has increased within the past two years to an astonishing amount, and Mr. Hiatt believes that he has only made a beginning.

He is doing a great deal of kodak work, finishing pictures for hundreds of persons throughout Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois. Every job of this kind sent to adjoining states helps to advertise our city, and leads persons to inquire about the town, and in the long run many persons will be attracted to this town by seeing samples of the work turned out by Mr. Hiatt's enterprise.

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CANNOT CAMP WITHOUT PERMISSION OF OWNER

One of the most important measures passed by the late legislature is that of preventing campers from occupying the road without permission of the farmer through whose land such road passes. It is of vital interest to farmers, and is not intended for the honest emigrant who is passing through Nebraska to seek homes in this state or elsewhere.

It provides that people traveling through the country overland will not be allowed to camp along the highway unless they have secured permission from the owner of the land on which they make their camp.

Under the old law, gypsies, or vagrants generally, who travel via wagons and take toll of corn cribs, hay stacks and chicken roosts en route, would have to be specifically complained against by the land owner. On this complaint a warrant would have to be issued and by the time all the formalities had been gone through the campers would be well on their way to new scenes.

The new law is so worded that if John Jones notes campers on the land of Bill Smith, he will phone Smith and ask him if he has granted permission. If he has not, the sheriff is merely notified and in a few minutes the officer sweeps down on the campers. If they are "undesirable citizens" they are forthwith arrested, and never know who filed the complaint, thus protecting the farmer against having his house or barn burned down later on.

The bill, of course, is aimed at the gypsies, horse traders and general riff-raff who live in wagons and eke out an existence by questionable methods. Of course, no farmer would refuse camping permission to honest immigrants who are moving from one locality to another by the covered wagon route.

Residents of this county have had their full share of grief from the "wagon traders" and will welcome an opportunity to invite them to move to some other state.

ALWAYS WELCOME.

Hon. William DellesDernier, the eminent attorney of Elmwood, came in last evening to look after some important legal matters, and while here gave the Journal a social visit. Bill is a republican, but not one of those hide-bound kind, who can never see any good in a democrat, and it is always a pleasure to have his good-natured countenance beam in upon us. He is among the noted and able attorneys of southeast Nebraska, and his extensive practice is evidence of the fact that his services are in great demand and his practice large. Bill DellesDernier is every inch a gentleman, and we are always glad to meet him. May his shadow never grow less.

Mrs. C. F. Weber, accompanied by her mother, Mrs. W. T. Scotten, departed for Omaha on the morning train today to spend the day with friends.