

The THIRD DEGREE

A NARRATIVE OF
METROPOLITAN LIFE

By CHARLES KLEIN
AND
ARTHUR HORNBLow

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

Capt. Clinton's prognathous jaw snapped to with a click, and he squared his massive shoulders, as he usually did when preparing for hostilities.

"Now, Mrs. Jeffries," he said sharply. "I'll trouble you to go with me to headquarters."

Annie and Alicia both stood up. Judge Brewster quickly objected.

"Mrs. Jeffries will not go with you," he said quietly. "She has made no attempt to leave the state."

"She's wanted at police headquarters," said the captain doggedly.

"She'll be there to-morrow morning."

"She'll be there to-night."

He looked steadily at the judge, and the latter calmly returned his stare. There followed an awkward pause, and then the captain turned on his heel to depart.

"The moment she attempts to leave the house," he growled, "I shall arrest her. Good-night, judge."

"Good-night, captain!" cried Annie mockingly.

"I'll see you later," he muttered.

"Come on, Maloney."

The door banged to. They were alone.

"What a sweet disposition!" laughed Annie.

Judge Brewster looked sternly at her. Holding up the letter, he said:

"What is the meaning of this? You are not the woman to whom this letter is addressed?"

"No," stammered Annie, "that is—"

The judge interrupted her. Sternly he asked:

"Is it your intention to go on the witness stand and commit perjury?"

"I don't know. I never thought of that," she faltered.

The judge turned to Alicia.

"Are you going to allow her to do so, Mrs. Jeffries?"

"No, no," cried Alicia, quickly; "I never thought of such a thing."

"Then I repeat—is it your intention to perjure yourself?" Annie was silent, and he went on: "I assume it is, but let me ask you: Do you expect me, as your counsel, to become a participant in this tissue of lies? Am I expected to build up a false structure for you to swear to?"

"I don't know; I haven't thought of it," replied Annie. "If it can be done, why not? I'm glad you suggested it."

"I suggest it?" exclaimed the lawyer, scandalized.

"Yes," cried Annie with growing exaltation; "I never occurred to me till you spoke. Everybody says I'm the woman who called on Robert Underwood that night. Well, that's all right. Let them continue to think so. What difference does it make so long as Howard is not freed?" Going toward the door, she said: "Good-night, Mrs. Jeffries!"

The judge tried to bar her way.

"Don't go," he said; "Capt. Clinton's men are waiting outside."

"That doesn't matter!" she cried.

"But you must not go!" exclaimed the lawyer in a tone of command. "I won't allow it. They'll arrest you! Mrs. Jeffries, you'll please remain here."

But Annie was already at the door. "I wouldn't keep Capt. Clinton waiting for the world," she cried. "Good-night, Judge Brewster, and God bless you!"

The door slammed, and she was gone.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Jeffries case suddenly entered into an entirely new phase, and once more was deemed of sufficient public interest to warrant column after column of spicy comment in the newspapers. The town awoke one morning to learn that the long-sought-for witness, the mysterious woman on whose testimony everything hinged, had not only been found, but proved to be the prisoner's own wife, who had been so active in his defense. This announcement was stupefying enough to overshadow all other news of the day, and satisfied the most jaded palate for sensationalism.

The first question asked on all sides was: Why had not the wife come forward before? The reason, as glibly explained by an evening journal of somewhat yellow proclivities, was logical enough. The telling of her mid-night visit to a single man's rooms involved a shameful admission which any woman might well hesitate to make unless forced to it as a last extremity. Confronted, however, with the alternative of either seeing her husband suffer for a crime of which he was innocent or making public acknowledgment of her own frailty, she had chosen the latter course. Naturally, it meant divorce from the banker's son, and undoubtedly this was the solution most wished for by the family. The whole unsavory affair conveyed a good lesson to reckless young men of wealth to avoid entangling themselves in undesirable matrimonial adventures. But it was no less certain, went on this journalistic mentor, that this wife, unfaithful as she had proved herself to be, had really rendered her husband a signal service in her presence.

ent scrape. The letter she had produced, written to her by Underwood the day before his death, in which he stated his determination to kill himself, was, of course, a complete vindication for the man awaiting trial. His liberation now depended only on how quickly the ponderous machinery of the law could take cognizance of this new and most important evidence.

The new turn of affairs was naturally most distasteful to the police. If there was one thing more than another which angered Capt. Clinton it was to take the trouble to build up a case only to have it suddenly demolished. He scoffed at the "suicide letter," safely committed to Judge Brewster's custody, and openly branded it as a forgery concocted by an immoral woman for the purpose of defeating the ends of justice. He kept Annie a prisoner and defied the counsel for the defense to do their worst. Judge Brewster, who loved the fray, accepted the challenge. He acted promptly. He secured Annie's release on habeas corpus proceedings and, his civil suit against the city having already begun in the courts, he suddenly called Capt. Clinton to the stand and gave him a grilling which more than atoned for any which the police tyrant had previously made his victims suffer. In the limelight of a sensational trial, in which public servants were charged with abusing positions of trust, he showed Capt. Clinton up as a bully and a grafter, a bribe-taker, working hand and glove with dishonest politicians, not hesitating even to divide loot with thieves and dive-keepers in his greed for wealth. He proved him to be a consummate liar, a man who would stop at nothing to gain his own ends. What jury would take the word of such a man as this? Yet this was the man who still insisted that Howard Jeffries was guilty of the shooting of Robert Underwood!

But public opinion was too intelligent to be hoodwinked for any length of time by a brutal and ignorant policeman. There was a clamor for the prisoner's release. The evidence was such that further delay was inexcusable. The district attorney, thus urged, took an active interest in the case, and after going over the new evidence with Judge Brewster, went before the court and made formal application for the dismissal of the complaint. A few days later Howard Jeffries left the Toms amid the cheers of a crowd assembled outside. At his side walked his wife, now smiling through tears of joy.

It was a glad home-coming to the little flat in Harlem. To Howard, after spending so long a time in the narrow prison quarters, it seemed like paradise, and Annie walked on air, so delighted was she to have him with her again. Yet there were still anxieties to cloud their happiness. The close confinement, with its attendant worry, had seriously undermined Howard's health. He was pale and attenuated, and so weak that he had several fainting spells. Much alarmed, Annie summoned Dr. Bernstein, who administered a tonic. There was nothing to cause anxiety, he said, reassuringly. It was a natural reaction after what her husband had undergone. But it was worry as much as anything else. Howard worried about his father, with whom he was only partially reconciled; he worried about his future, which was as precarious as ever, and most of all he worried about his wife. He was not content of the circumstances which had brought about his release, and while liberty was sweet to him, it had been a terrible shock when he first heard that she was the woman who had visited Underwood's rooms. He refused to believe her sworn evidence. How was it possible? Why should she go to Underwood's rooms knowing he was there? It was preposterous. Still the small voice rang in his ears—perhaps she's untrue! It haunted him till one day he asked point-blank for an explanation. Then she told that she had perjured herself. She was not the woman. Who she really was she could not say. He must be satisfied for the present with the assurance that it was not his wife. With that he was content. What did he care for the opinion of others? He knew—that was enough! In their conversation on the subject Annie did not even mention Alicia's name. Why should she?

Weeks passed, and Howard's health did not improve. He had tried to find a position, but without success, yet every day brought its obligations which had to be met. One morning Annie was bustling about their tiny dining room preparing the table for their frugal luncheon. She had just placed the rolls and butter on the table, and arranged the chairs, when there came a ring at the front door-bell. Early visitors were not so infrequent as to cause surprise, so, without waiting to remove her apron, she went to the door and opened it. Dr. Bernstein entered.

"Good morning, Mrs. Jeffries," he said, cheerily. Putting down his medical bag, he asked: "How is our patient this morning?"

"All right, doctor. He had a splendid night's rest. I'll call him."

"Never mind. I want to talk to you

Seriously, he went on: "Mrs. Jeffries, your husband needs a change of scene. He's worrying. That fainting spell the other day was only a symptom. I'm afraid he'll break down unless—"

"Unless what?" she demanded, anxiously.

He hesitated for a moment, as if unwilling to give utterance to words he knew must inflict pain. Then he quickly continued:

"Your husband is under a great mental strain. His inability to support you, his banishment from his proper sphere in the social world is mental torture to him. He feels his position keenly. There is nothing else to occupy his mind but thoughts of his utter and complete failure in life."



Placed the Rolls and Butter on the Table.

I was talking to his father last night, and—"

"And what?" she demanded, drawing herself up. She suspected what was coming, and nerved herself to meet it.

"Now, don't regard me as an enemy," said the doctor in a conciliatory tone. "Mr. Jeffries inquired after his son. Believe me, he's very anxious. He knows he did the boy a great injustice, and he wants to make up for it."

"Oh, he does?" she exclaimed, sarcastically.

Dr. Bernstein hesitated for a moment before replying. Then he said, lightly: "Suppose Howard goes abroad for a few months with his father and mother?"

"Is that the proposition?" she demanded.

The doctor nodded.

"I believe Mr. Jeffries has already spoken about it to his son," he said.

Annie choked back a sob and, crossing the room to conceal her emotion, stood with her back turned, looking out of the window. Her voice was trembling as she said:

"He wants to separate us. I know. He'd give half his fortune to do it. Perhaps he's not altogether wrong. Things do look pretty black for me, don't they? Everybody believes that my going to see Underwood that night had something to do with his suicide and led to my husband being falsely accused. The police built up a fine romance about Mr. Underwood and me—and the newspapers! Every other day a reporter comes and asks us when the divorce is going to take place—and who is going to institute the proceedings, Howard or me. If everybody would only mind their own business and let us alone he might forget. Oh, I don't mean you, doctor. You're my friend. You made short work of Capt. Clinton and his 'confession.' I mean people—outsiders—strangers—who don't know us, and don't care whether we're alive or dead; those are the people I mean. They buy a one-cent paper and they think it gives them the right to pry into every detail of our lives." She paused for a moment, and then went on: "So you think Howard is worrying? I think so, too. At first I thought it was because of the letter Mr. Underwood wrote me, but I guess it's what you say. His old friends won't have anything to do with him—and he's lonely. Well, I'll talk it over with him—"

"Yes—talk it over with him."

"Did you promise his father you'd ask me?" she demanded.

"No—not exactly," he replied, hesitatingly.

Annie looked at him frankly.

"Howard's a pretty good fellow to stand by me in the face of all that's being said about my character, isn't he, doctor? And I'm not going to stand in his light, even if it doesn't exactly make me the happiest woman in the world, but don't let it trickle into your mind that I'm doing it for his father's sake."

At that moment Howard entered from the inner room. He was surprised to see Dr. Bernstein.

"How do you feel to-day?" asked the doctor.

"First rate! Oh, I'm all right. You see, I'm just going to eat a bite. Won't you join us?"

He sat down at the table and picked up the newspaper, while Annie busied herself with carrying in the dishes.

"No, thank you," laughed the doctor. "It's too early for me. I've only just had breakfast. I dropped in to see how you were." Taking up his bag, he said: "Good-by! Don't get up. I can let myself out."

But Annie had already opened the door for him, and smiled a farewell. When she returned to her seat at the head of the table, and began to pour out the coffee, Howard said:

"He's a pretty decent fellow, isn't he?"

"Yes," she replied, absent-mindedly, as she passed a cup of coffee.

"He made a monkey of Capt. Clinton all right," went on Howard. "What did he come for?"

"To see you—of course," she replied.

"Oh, I'm all right now," he replied. Looking anxiously at his wife across the table, he said: "You're the one that needs tuning up. I heard you crying last night. You thought I was asleep, but I wasn't. I didn't say anything because—well—I felt kind of blue myself."

Annie sighed and leaned her head on her hand. Wearily she said:

"I was thinking over all that we've been through together, and what they're saying about us—"

Howard threw down his newspaper impatiently.

"Let them say what they like. Why should we care as long as we're happy?"

His wife smiled sadly.

"Are we happy?" she asked, gently.

"Of course we are," replied Howard.

She looked up and smiled. It was good to hear him say so, but did he mean it? Was she doing right to stand in the way of his career? Would he not be happier if she left him? He was too loyal to suggest it, but perhaps in his heart he desired it. Looking at him tenderly, she went on:

"I don't question your affection for me, Howard. I believe you love me, but I'm afraid that, sooner or later, you'll ask yourself the question all your friends are asking now, the question everybody seems to be asking."

"What question?" demanded Howard.

"Yesterday the bell rang and a gentleman said he wanted to see you. I told him you were out, and he said 'I'd do just as well. He handed me a card. On it was the name of the newspaper he represented.'

"Well?"

"He asked me if it were true that proceedings for a divorce were about to be instituted. If so, when? And could I give him any information on the subject? I asked him who wanted the information, and he said the readers of his paper—the people—I believe he said over a million of them. Just think, Howard! Over a million people, not counting your father, your friends and relations, all waiting to know why you don't get rid of me, why you don't believe me to be as bad as they think I am—"

Howard raised his hand for her to desist.

"Annie—please!" he pleaded.

"That's the fact, isn't it?" she laughed.

"No."

His wife's head dropped on the table. She was crying now.

"I've made a hard fight, Howard," she sobbed, "but I'm going to give up. I'm through—I'm through!"

Howard took hold of her hand and carried it to his lips.

"Annie, old girl," he said, with some feeling, "I may be weak, I may be blind, but nobody on top of God's green earth can tell me that you're not the squarest, straightest little woman that ever lived! I don't care a damn what one million or eight million think. Supposing you had received letters from Underwood, supposing you had gone to his rooms to beg him not to kill himself—what of it? It would be for a good motive, wouldn't it? Let them talk all the bad of you they want. I don't believe a word of it—you know I don't."

She looked up and smiled through her tears.

"You're so good dear," she exclaimed.

"Yes, I know you believe in me," she stopped and continued, sadly: "But you're only a boy, you know. What of the future, the years to come?" Howard's face became serious, and she went on: "You see you've thought about it, too, and you're trying to hide it from me. But you can't. Your father wants you to go abroad with the family."

"Well?"

He waited and looked at her curiously as if wondering what her answer would be. He waited some time, and then slowly she said:

"I think—you had better go!"

"You don't mean that!" he exclaimed, in genuine surprise.

She shook her head affirmatively.

"Yes, I do," she said; "your father wants you to take your position in the world, the position your association with me prevents you from taking—"

Howard drummed his fingers on the tablecloth and looked out of the window. It seemed to her that his voice no longer had the same candid ring as he replied:

"Yes, father has spoken to me about it. He wants to be friends, and I—"

He paused awkwardly, and then added: "I admit I've—I've promised to consider it, but—"

Annie finished his sentence for him: "You're going to accept his offer, Howard. You owe it to yourself, to your family, and to—"

She laughed as she added: "I was going to say to millions of anxious readers."

Howard looked at her curiously. He did not know if she was jesting or in earnest. Almost impatiently he exclaimed:

"Why do you talk in this way against your own interests? You know I'd like to be friendly with my family, and all that. But it wouldn't be fair to you."

"I'm not talking against myself, Howard. I want you to be happy, and you're not happy. You can't be happy under these conditions. Now be honest with me—can you?"

"Can you?" he demanded.

"No," she answered, frankly, "not unless you are." Slowly she went on: "Whatever happiness I've had in life I owe to you, and God knows you've had nothing but trouble from me. I did wrong to marry you, and I'm willing to pay the penalty. I've evened matters up with your family; now let

me square up with you."

"Evened up matters with my family?" he exclaimed in surprise. "What do you mean?"

With a smile she replied ambiguously:

"Oh, that's a little private matter of my own!" He stared at her, unable to comprehend, and she went on, gravely: "Howard, you must do what's best for yourself. I'll pack your things. You can go when you please—"

(Continued Next Issue.)

Business	Rate
Every person or corporation engaged in the business of supplying water by means of main or conduits to the residents of said city, per year	25.00
Each side show, per day	30.00
Each circus or menagerie, per day	5.00
Coal dealers, per year	25.00
Printing offices, per year	5.00
Second-hand stores, per year	5.00
Shooting galleries, per year	15.00
Each fire, life or accident insurance company, except fraternal insurance companies, per year	2.00
Every laundry agency, per year	5.00
Abstractors, per year	5.00
Loan and building associations, per year	10.00
Agricultural, implement or buggy dealers, per year	10.00
Steam laundries, per year	5.00
Dealers in petroleum, gasoline, kerosene or naphtha, who sell in quantities exceeding fifty gallons at any one time, or who store said oils or any of them in quantities exceeding three hundred gallons, per year	50.00
Cigar or tobacco factories that employ labor, per year	5.00
Machine shops, per year	5.00
Room factory that employs labor, per year	5.00
Concrete factory, per year	5.00
Dye and cleaning works, per year	5.00
Soda and pop factory, per year	10.00
Undertakers, per year	10.00
Tombstone dealers, per year	10.00
Section 2. All tax under this ordinance shall become due and payable on or before the first day of May of each year or as soon thereafter as any person shall engage in business in said City.	
Section 3. The tax provided for in this ordinance shall be payable in cash only.	
Section 4. All moneys collected under the provisions of this ordinance shall be paid into a fund to be known as the business or occupation tax fund, to be used only by said city to pay the expenses of grading and repairing streets and sidewalks, salaries of policemen and officials of said City, etc. provided, however, the city council may at any time, by a majority of all members, vote to transfer money from said fund into any other fund of said City.	
Section 5. It shall be the duty of every person, firm or corporation, before engaging in any of the occupations or business hereinbefore enumerated, to pay to the City Clerk the tax hereinbefore provided for said business or occupation, whereupon the City Clerk shall issue to said firm, persons or corporation a receipt and business permit under the corporate seal of said city, which receipt or business permit shall be substantially as follows:	
Office of the City Clerk	
Plattsmouth, Neb., 1911	
Received from _____	
_____ being the amount in full against said _____ due the City of Plattsmouth for the year _____ as a business or occupation tax upon the following described business _____	
(Seal)	
City Clerk	
Section 6. Any person or persons engaged in any of the occupations or business specified in Section 1 of this ordinance, who shall transact any such business or engage in any such occupation without having first complied with the provisions and requirements herein, by paying the full amount of tax levied on such occupation, shall be guilty of misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be fined in any sum not less than the amount of said tax, nor to exceed one hundred dollars, and shall stand committed till said fine and costs are paid, and such fine or prosecutions shall not relieve said party from civil action or distress for the collection of said tax.	
Where any of the above enumerated business or occupations shall be conducted by an agent for a corporation or non-resident, such agent shall be subject to arrest and punishment under the provisions of this section, if his principal shall not have complied with the provisions of this ordinance.	
Section 7. The City Clerk is hereby authorized to issue a distress warrant, over seal of the City, directed to the Marshal or Chief of Police, commanding the said Marshal or Chief of Police to forthwith collect by distress and sale of goods and chattels of the party in said warrant named, the occupation tax due and unpaid, of any individual, firm or corporation within the limits of said City and owing any occupation tax as herein provided. Said Marshal shall be entitled to his usual fee for said services as provided for the levy of an execution and sale of property hereunder. The City Attorney shall, when requested by the principal of said City, commence a civil action against any individual, firm or corporation engaged in any business or occupation which is herein levied for the amount of such tax due said City. Said action shall be maintained in the name of the City of Plattsmouth.	
Section 8. The provision of this ordinance shall not be construed so as to affect the rights or liabilities between the City of Plattsmouth and the persons or individuals liable to the business or occupation tax herein named existing or arising under any other ordinance of the City. Nor shall the provisions of this ordinance extend to or affect individuals vending meat, milk, butter, eggs, vegetables, fruits, hay, grain, or fuel gotten or produced by said vendors.	
Section 9. All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance, be and the same are hereby repealed.	
Section 10. This ordinance shall take effect from and after its passage, approval and publication according to law.	
Passed and approved this 24th day of April, 1911.	
John P. Sattler, Mayor.	
Attest:	
B. G. Wurl, City Clerk.	
Little Willie Again.	
"Pa!" came little Willie's voice from the darkness of the nursery.	
Pa gave a bad imitation of a snore. He was tired and did not wish to be disturbed.	
"Pa!" came the little voice again.	
"What is it, Willie?" replied his father, sleepily.	
"Tum in here; I want to ast you sumpin'!" said the little voice.	
So Pa rose up from his downy and, putting on his bath-robe and slippers, marched into the nursery.	
"Well, what is it now?" he asked.	
"Say, pa," said little Willie, "if you was to feed the cow on soap would she give shaving-cream?"—Harper's Weekly.	
Announcement.	
I hereby announce myself as a candidate for the nomination of the office of sheriff, subject to the decision of the voters at the coming primary. I ask them to place me in nomination on the democratic ticket.	
D. C. Rhoden.	
CASTORA	
For Infants and Children.	
The Kind You Have Always Bought	
Bears the Signature of <i>Dr. J. C. Watson</i>	