WITHIN THE LAW

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CHAPTER II.

Only Three Years.

WHEN at last the owner of the store entered the office his face showed extreme irritation.

"What did they do with the Turner girl?" his secretary inquired in an elaborately casual manner.

Gilder did not look up from the heap of papers, but answered rather harshly.

"I don't know—I couldn't wait," he said. He made a petulant gesture as he went on. "I don't see why Judge Lawlor bothered me about the matter. He is the one to impose sentence, not I. I am hours behind with my work now."

Edward Gilder was a big man physically, plainly the possessor of that abundant vital energy which is a prime requisite for achievement in the ordering of modern business concerns. Force was indeed the dominant quality of the man. His tall figure was proportionately broad, and he was heavily fleshed. In fact the body was too ponderous. Perhaps, in that characteristic might be found a clew to the chief fault in his nature. For he was ponderous, spiritually and mentally, as well as materially. The fact was displayed suggestively in the face, which was too heavy with its prominent jowls and aggressive chin and rather bulbous nose. But there was nothing flabby anywhere.

It was with his accustomed blandness of manner that he presently acknowledged the greeting of George Demarest, the chief of the legal staff that looked after the firm's affairs.

"Well, Demarest?" he inquired.

"Judge Lawlor gave her three years," Demarest replied gravely. It was plain from his manner that he did not altogether approve.

"Good!" Gilder exclaimed. "Take this, Sarah." And he continued, as the girl opened her notebook and poised the pencil, "Be sure to have Smithson post a copy of it conspicuously in all the girls' dressing rooms and in the reading room and in the lunchrooms and in the assembly room." He cleared his throat ostentatiously and proceeded to the dictation of the notice:

"Mary Turner, formerly employed in this store, was today sentenced to prison for three years, having been convicted for the theft of goods valued at over $400. The management wishes again to draw attention on the part of its employees to the fact that honesty is always the best policy. Got that?" and thrust it toward the waiting lawyer, who, however, shook his head in refusal and continued to move about the room rather restlessly.

"Three years—three years! That ought to be a warning to the rest of the girls." Gilder looked toward Demarest for acquiescence.

"Most unusual case, in my estimation," Demarest replied. "You see, the girl keeps on declaring her innocence. That, of course, is common enough in a way. But here it's different. The point is somehow she makes her protestations more convincing than they usually do. They ring true, as it seems to me."

"The stolen goods were found in her locker," Gilder declared in a tone of finality. "Some of them, I have been given to understand, were actually in the pocket of her coat."

"Well," the attorney said, with a smile, "that sort of thing makes good enough circumstantial evidence, and without circumstantial evidence there would be few convictions for crime. Yet as a lawyer I'm free to admit that circumstantial evidence alone is never quite safe as proof of guilt. Naturally she says some one else must have put the stolen goods there. That is quite within the measure of possibility. That sort of thing has been done countless times."

"And for what reason? It's too absurd to think about."

"In similar cases," the lawyer answered, "those actually guilty of the thefts have thus sought to throw suspicion on the innocent in order to avoid it on themselves when the pursuit got too hot on their trail. Sometimes, too, such evidence has been manufactured merely to satisfy a spite against the one unjustly accused."

"A court of justice has decreed her guilty."

"Nowadays," Demarest shot out, "we don't call them courts of justice; we call them courts of law."

"Anyway," Gilder declared, becoming genial again, "it's out of our hands. There's nothing we can do now."

"Why, as to that," the lawyer replied, with a hint of hesitation, "I am not so sure. You see, the fact of the matter is that, though I helped to prosecute the case, I am not a little bit proud of the verdict. I am not sure that Mary Turner is guilty—far from it, in fact! Anyhow, the girl wants to see you, and I wish to urge you to grant her an interview."

"What's the use?" Gilder stormed. "I can't have her crying all over the office and begging for mercy," he protested truculently. But a note of fear lay under the petulance.

Demarest's answer was given with assurance.

"You are mistaken about that. The girl doesn't beg for mercy. In fact, that's the whole point of the matter. She demands justice—strange as that may seem in a court of law—and nothing else. The truth is, she's a very unusual girl, a long way beyond the ordinary salesgirl, both in brains and in education."

"The less reason, then, for her being a thief," Gilder grumbled in his heaviest voice.

"And perhaps the less reason for believing her to be a thief," the lawyer retorted suavely. He paused for a moment, then went on. There was a tone of sincere determination in his voice. "Just before the judge imposed sentence he asked her if she had anything to say. You know, it's just a usual form—a thing that rarely means much of anything. But this case was different, let me tell you. She surprised us all by answering at once that she had. It's really a pity, Gilder, that you didn't wait. Why, that poor girl made a fine speech!"

"Pooh, pooh!" came the querulous objection. "She seems to have hypnotized you." Then, as a new thought came to the magnate, he spoke with a trace of anxiety. There were always the reporters looking for space to fill with foolish vaporings.

"Did she say anything against me or the store?"

"Not a word," the lawyer replied gravely. "She merely told us how her father died when she was sixteen years old. She was compelled after that to earn her own living. Then she told how she had worked for you for five years steadily without there ever being a single thing against her. She said, too, that she had never seen the things found in her locker. And she said more than that. She asked the judge if he himself understood what it means for a girl to be sentenced to prison for something she hadn't done. Somehow, Gilder, the way she talked had its effect on everybody in the courtroom. I know! It's my business to understand things like that. And what she said rang true. What she said and the way she said it take brains and courage. The ordinary crook has neither. So I had a suspicion that she might be speaking the truth." There was a little pause, while the lawyer moved back and forth nervously; then he added, "I believe Lawlor would have suspended sentence if it hadn't been for your talk with him."

"I simply did my duty," Gilder said. "You are aware that I did not seek any consultation with Judge Lawlor. He sent for me and asked me what I thought about the case—whether I thought it would be right to let the girl go on a suspended sentence. I told him frankly that I believed that an example should be made of her for the sake of others who might be tempted to steal. Property has some rights, Demarest, although it seems to be getting nowadays so that anybody is likely to deny it." Then the fretful, half alarmed note sounded in his voice again as he continued, "I can't understand why the girl wants to see me."

"Why, she just said that if you would see her for ten minutes she would tell you how to stop the thefts in this store."

"There," Gilder cried. "I knew it! The girl wants to confess. Well, it's the first sign of decent feeling she's shown. I suppose it ought to be encouraged. Probably there have been others mixed up in this."

"Perhaps," Demarest admitted. "At least it can do no harm if you see her. I thought you would be willing, so I spoke to the district attorney, and he has given orders to bring her here for a few minutes on the way to the Grand Central station. They're taking her up to Burnsing, you know. I wish, Gilder, you would have a little talk with her." The lawyer abruptly went out of the office, leaving the owner of the store fuming.

"Hello, dad!"

Gilder sprang to his feet, his face suddenly grown younger, radiant.

"Dick!" The big voice was softened to exquisite tenderness.

As the eyes of the two met the boy rushed forward, and in the next moment the hands of father and son clasped firmly. Presently Gilder spoke, with an effort toward harshness in his voice to mask how much he was shaken. But the tones rang more kindly than any he had used for many a day, tremulous with affection.

"What brought you back?" he demanded.

"Why, I just wanted to come back home," he said lightly. "And, for the love of heaven, give Sadie $5. I borrowed it from her to pay the taxi. You see, dad, I'm broke."

"Of course!" With the saying Edward Gilder roared Gargantuan laughter. In the burst of merriment his pent feelings found their vent. He was still chuckling when he spoke, sage from much experience of ocean travel. "Poker on the ship, I suppose."

"No, not that, though I did have a little run in at Monte Carlo. But it was the ship that finished me at that. You see, dad, they hired Captain Kidd and a bunch of pirates as stewards, and what they did to little Richard was something fierce. And yet, that wasn't the real trouble either. The fact is, I just naturally went broke. Not a hard thing to do on the other side."

"Nor on this," the father interjected dryly.

"Anyhow, it doesn't matter much," Dick replied, quite unabashed. "Tell me, dad, how goes it?"

"Pretty well, pretty well, son. I'm glad to see you home again, my boy." There was a great tenderness in the usually rather cold gray eyes.

"And I'm glad to be home, dad, to be"—there was again that clearing of the throat, but he finished bravely—"with you."

The father avoided a threatening display of emotion by an abrupt change of subject to the trite.

"Have a good time?" he inquired casually.

"The time of my young life. I tell you, dad, it's a fact that I did almost break the bank at Monte Carlo. I'd have done it sure if only my money had held out."

"It seems to me that I've heard something of the sort before," was Gilder's caustic comment. But his smile was still wholly sympathetic. He took a curious vicarious delight in the escapades of his son, probably because he himself had committed no follies in his callow days. "Why didn't you cable me?" he asked, puzzled at such restraint on the part of his son.

"Because it gave me a capital excuse for coming home."

"You clear out of here, boy!" Gilder commanded brusquely. "I'm a working man. But here, wait a minute," he added. He brought forth from a pocket a neat sheaf of banknotes, which he held out. "There's carfare for you," he said, with a chuckle. "And now clear out. I'll see you at dinner."

"You can always get rid of me on the same terms," Dick remarked slyly. In the doorway he turned with a final speech, which was uttered in splendid disregard for the packet of money he had just received. "Oh, dad, please don't forget to give Sadie that $5 I borrowed from her for the taxi."

The owner of the store returned to his labors with a new zest, for the meeting with his son had put him in high spirits. Perhaps it might have been better for Mary Turner had she come to him just then, while he was yet in this softened mood. But fate had ordained that other events should restore him to his usual harder self before their interview. Smithson entered with an expression of discomfiture on his rather vacuous countenance. He walked almost nimbly to the desk and spoke with evident distress as his employer looked up interrogatively.

"McCracken has detained—er—a—lady, sir," he said feebly. "She has been searched, and we have found about $100 worth of laces on her."

"Well?" Gilder demanded impatiently. Such affairs were too common in the store to make necessary this intrusion of the matter on him. "Why did you come to me about it?"

"I'm very sorry, sir, but I thought it wiser, sir, to—er—to bring the matter to your personal attention. The lady happens to be the wife of J. W. Gaskell, the banker, you know."

(To be Continued)

MURRAY

Miss Pearl Dugay spent Sunday with home folks.

Guy Stokes was a Plattsmouth visitor Sunday evening.

Frank Campbell was doing the butchering act Wednesday.

Lloyd Lewis was a business visitor in Union Tuesday.

Charles Reed was delivering cora to R. R. Nickels Monday.

F. L. Rhoden was transacting business in Union Wednesday.

Mrs. A. J. Stokes spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Copenhaver.

Lee Nickels and Harry Creamer attended the sale at Nehawka Tuesday.

Charles Wolfe and George Shrader were visiting friends in Union Friday.

Mrs. F. L. Rhoden returned last week from Asmond, Neb., where she made an extended visit with Miss Maggie O'Brien.

Miss Etta M. Nickels returned home Friday, after an extended visit with relatives in various points in northern Nebraska.

Pleasant Hill School.

The ninth grade has begun studying poetry.

Eva Bailey was winner in the spelling contest Friday.

Miss Mary Volk of Louisville was a visitor at Pleasant Hill on Thursday afternoon.

The third grade has finished their readers and will take up Searson Martin's studies in reading.

Harry Noel and Curtis Fitzpatrick are on the sick list. We hope to see them in school again soon.

The ninth grade will take bookkeeping during the second semester, instead of physical geography.

Colegate & Co. presented each student with a trial tube of dental cream and pledge cards to care for their teeth.

Those receiving the highest average in the last quarterly examinations were: Vera Vroman, ninth grade; Roy Fitzpatrick, eighth grade; Lola Fitzpatrick, sixth grade; Margaret Beck, third grade, and Harley Puls, primary class.

The following were those having a perfect attendance during the third week of this month: Janet Young, Morris Bailey, Dewey Boedecker, Eva Bailey, Roy Fitzpatrick, Edward Bailey, Lola Fitzpatrick, Harry Puls, Margaret Beck, Harry Noel, Harley Puls and Curtis Fitzpatrick.

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OFFER CLOSES FEBRUARY 15th

THE EVENING JOURNAL Plattsmouth Nebraska

EAGLE.
Beacon.

Jim Remaly is reported to be seriously ill with pneumonia at his home, southeast of Eagle.

Mrs. T. E. K. Dihel left Wednesday for Aledo, Illinois, for a couple of weeks' visit with relatives and friends.

Mrs. W. H. Betts of Avoca came to Eagle last Saturday morning for a few days' visit with her son, Ed Betts and family.

Herman Oelschlager, wife and daughter, of Hickman, visited over Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Oelschlager.

Mr. and Mrs. Sam Craig of Powell, Wyo., are visiting at the home of Mrs. Craig's sister, Mrs. Paul Judkins and family.

We understand that Fred Spahnle has tendered his resignation as village marshal, to take effect at the next regular meeting of the village board.

Claude Foreman sold a span of mules to the Standard Oil company at Lincoln last week for which he received 609 planks. How's that for hard time prices?

E. C. Babcock, expert accountant of Lincoln, has been at work auditing the books of the Farmers' Elevator Co. since Wednesday of last week and has found everything in fine shape, and the earnings of the company to be satisfactory.

John Mayer, living in the west part of town, is very sick at this writing, but it is hoped that under the skillful treatment of his attending physician he may have a speedy recovery. His brother, Joe, and his mother and sister from Humboldt, Neb., are with him at present.

LOUISVILLE.
Courier.

Miss Alice Twiss and Virgil Haddon visited the latter's sister Mrs. Cora Iske, at La Platte over Sunday.

Mrs. John Kahler is in a hospital at Omaha, where she is under treatment for heart and nervous trouble.

Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Richey and two daughters, Misses Katherine and Pauline, motored to Omaha Saturday for a day's visit.

Miss Esther Bart of Gresham, who is attending business college in Omaha, visited over Sunday with her aunt, Mrs. W. F. Diers.

We are glad to report that "Dad" Barringer has recovered from a severe attack of asthma, which kept him bedfast all of last week.

A baby girl came to brighten the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Gess on Thursday, January 22. The following day the little one passed away.

W. F. Diers went to Gresham last Sunday to spend a week assisting in the annual invoice of their store. Herman Diers of Gresham will be here next week to help invoice their store here.

Word received from Isaac Tennant at Wibaux, Mont., states that they arrived home after their visit here feeling fine, but in driving out to the farm their team ran away and Mrs. Tennant was thrown out and received a compound fracture of one of her arms. It was a sorry culmination to an otherwise pleasant trip.

Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Haddon are the proud parents of a bouncing baby boy. The young man was somewhat abashed on entering a home where there were so many girls, but he soon decided to make the best of it and is now quite content with the home selected for him by Dr. Stork. He arrived on Sunday, January 25.

WEEPING WATER.
Republican.

W. H. Lyman left Monday night for Liberal, Kansas, where he was called by the serious illness of his brother, George.

Mrs. J. M. Leyda came over from Plattsmouth Monday for a few days' visit with her sister, Mrs. George Olive and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mark of Custer county arrived Tuesday morning for a visit with the latter's sister, Mrs. William Bates and family, east of town.

A child of Mr. and Mrs. John Roberts is under the care of Dr. Butler, suffering with scarlet fever. A strict quarantine is in force and the case is coming along well.

Ray Hitchman has resigned his position as bookkeeper at the First National bank to take up other work. Max Girardet has accepted the place made vacant.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mauer and family went to Plattsmouth Monday afternoon. Frank is having trouble with a gathering on the bottom of his foot and couldn't work, so they will spend the time with relatives.

O. T. Leyda and family of Imperial arrived Sunday morning. Mrs. Leyda and the children will visit her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Wiles and other relatives, while Mr. Leyda does grand jury duty at the state capital.

Mr. and Mrs. John Fitzpatrick, sr., went to Union Sunday morning to attend the funeral of Mrs. Fitzpatrick's sister, Mrs. George LaRue, who died at her home in Union Friday, January 23, 1914. Mrs. LaRue was among the oldest settlers of Union.

The Misses Arbel and Ananna Hiatt, who have been spending three weeks visiting their sisters, Mesdames S. A. Jackman and Charles Gibson, and their uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Cole, and other relatives, left for their home at Rising City oMnday morning.

ELMWOOD.
Leader-Echo.

Jake Reumlip of Crab Orchard, Neb., came in Tuesday evening for a visit with friends and relatives.

F. J. Fitch was absent a couple of days the fore part of the week on a business trip to Omaha and Waterloo, Iowa.

John Kunz shipped a car of cattle to Omaha Monday, accompanying the load. He was accompanied by Geo. Oehlerking.

Mrs. James Durkin went to Union Monday to answer to a message announcing the serious illness of her aunt, Mrs. James Edmunson.

Mr. and Mrs. George Wohlgemuth of Milford came in Monday for a visit with the David Kunz, jr., and Emil Dornacher families.

We hear that Mrs. Henry Miller had the misfortune to break a leg while visiting at the home of one of her sons in Lincoln one day this week.

Miss Bessie DelosDernier came home Monday from the hospital at Lincoln, where she underwent an operation and has been confined for some time. She is greatly improved in health.

Albert W. Seiker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Seiker of near Elmwood, and Miss Barbara M. Stander, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. August Stander of Louisville, were married at 10 o'clock Wednesday morning at St. Patrick's church at Manley, Rev. Father William Higgins, rector of the church, officiating.

C. S. Aldrich is in receipt of a letter written for John Bartz by Chas. T. Chandler, president of the University Avenue bank of San Diego, California, in which the letter states that Mr. Bartz was the victim of an auto accident not long since. Mr. Bartz was crossing a San Diego street when he was hit by an auto driven by a careless driver. He was knocked down and rolled under the machine, and was badly cut and bruised, but no bones were broken. The letter states that Mr. Bartz is up and around now, which his Elmwood friends will be pleased to know.

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