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## CHAPTER III.

**A**FTER the court had settled down again to its grim duty, following the wild outburst of Strickland, the judge ordered the district attorney to proceed. He called for Mrs. Trask after the death of Mr. Trask had been formally proved. Every head in the courtroom bent forward eagerly and curiously to get a view of the handsome widow of the slain man.

"Mrs. Trask, will you kindly take the witness chair?" directed Gray.

"Raise your right hand, please," ordered the clerk. "Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?"

"I do," was the answer in deliberate tones.

"What's your name?"

"Joan Trask."

"Mrs. Trask, are you the widow of Gerald Trask?" now continued the prosecutor.

"Yes, sir."

"How long were you married to Mr. Trask?"

"Almost fifteen years."

On all sides were made whispered comments as to the thoroughly cool and self collected bearing of this, the chief witness against the now famous prisoner. "They will never shake her testimony on cross examination," it was generally agreed.

The same idea was entertained by Gray, and he proceeded confidently, almost militant in manner, with his questions which were to settle the fate of Robert Strickland.

"Do you remember the night of June 24, 1915, Mrs. Trask?"

Without hesitation, but with drooping eyes, she answered:

"Indeed I do."

"Where were you on that evening?"

"I had been dining out with friends in the city."

"What time did you arrive home?"

"About half past 9, Mr. Gray."

The prosecutor paused momentarily, as though to emphasize the effect of his next query. He gazed with significance in his expression along both rows of men in the jury box and then went on:

"Now, Mrs. Trask, I want you to describe to the court and jury everything that occurred after you arrived home on that night."

The woman now seemed for the first time to realize just how gravely serious was the part she was to play in this real life melodrama. A flood of heart-breaking memories surged through her brain, tugged at her very heartstrings, shook her with emotion.

That night—that night of June 24—that fatal night! She turned appealingly to the judge, but received no pity. She must answer the question and do as she had sworn to do—"tell the whole truth."

She dried her nervously moist hands with her handkerchief. She tried to speak, but words would not come forth from the lips that moved. The woman of steel nerve who had exercised admiration and comment at the opening of the trial now seemed verging on transformation to a physical wreck with palsied tongue.

"I will repeat the question," began the prosecutor, hoping to relieve the strain of the deep silence prevailing throughout the woman's ordeal.

But no. By a tremendous effort she pulled herself together, looked straight into the attorney's eyes and started, though in broken tones at the beginning, to tell what she knew of and had seen in the moments of the consummation of the crime that had shocked a continent.

"You need not repeat that—that question," she quickly said. "I—I will answer it fully. On the night in question I entered the library of my home, and—the telephone bell was—was ringing."

Again she paused. Her cheeks, her hands and her forehead twitched nervously as sometimes they do in an epileptic attack. She groped as though blindly for a bottle of smelling salts which she carried in a gold mesh bag.

The once strong thread of mental reserve and physical power had worn so thin to stand the strain. It snapped.

The woman fell back in the witness chair in a swoon as she gasped heavily. "Water, water," and the court attendants jumped to her aid.

After all, there was no just cause to wonder at the unexpected collapse of Mrs. Trask told him that it was "A

woman, as usual," who had sought to communicate with her husband.

The secretary seated himself at his employer's desk and appeared to desire to avoid the woman's gaze.

Suspecting that Glover knew something about the person, Mrs. Trask pressed him with questions, but all he stated that he knew absolutely nothing.

Mrs. Trask became somewhat contemptuous in her attitude.

"No, I suppose my husband doesn't take his secretary into his confidence to that extent, although he doesn't make any great attempt to keep things secret. He hasn't even a sense of shame."

Glover protested.

"You must excuse me. You know my position, Mrs. Trask."

"Yes, of course. I don't ordinarily discuss these things, but even my endurance has its limits. I've put up with things for fifteen years now. Oh, what a fool I am to stand for it!"

"My dear Mrs. Trask"—protested the secretary.

"Yes, forgive me. It was wrong of me to talk about it to you. Sometimes I lose patience. Well, we won't say anything more about it. Is Mr. Trask coming home tonight?"

"Yes; he telephoned this morning. He's coming on the 9:10 from Long Branch. It's half past 9 now. He should have been here by this time."

"I can't imagine what he's doing down there these two days."

"Golfing and fishing, I suppose."

"He might have waited until next week?" Mrs. Trask said. "We'll be there all summer. By the way, I'd like you to go over my tradesmen's accounts for me before we leave the city."

"I'll do it at once. Where are the books?" was Glover's reply.

"In the safe," Mrs. Trask informed him.

It was just as Mrs. Trask had informed Glover that she would get the combination of the safe from her husband and give it to him that the sound of familiar footsteps was heard in the vestibule, a key was heard to scrape and turn in the lock of the cumbersome front door and in strode Gerald Trask.

The financier's eyes sparkled animately. His step and bearing were buoyant. He seemed the embodiment of health and energy and life and breathed forth the atmosphere of the enjoyment of them all as he walked forward to greet his wife.

Yet it was the night of June 24, 1915. The hour was that between 9 and 10.

Gerald Trask might have borne himself differently had he known what the wheel of events was whirling toward him at that hour, *at that very moment*.

But he did not know—he did not know.

"Hello, Joan! Hello, Glover!" was the greeting of the financier as he stepped forward.

Again came the "I don't know" of the wife.

both hands as if to brace himself against the gathering storm.

With an effort Mrs. Trask controlled herself, and she turned away with a brief "Nothing."

"Oh, is that all?" replied Trask, and then Stanley Glover, again the suave, cool, collected private secretary, his tension relaxed, stepped into the breach.

"Allow me," he said, stepping to the side of Trask and taking his hat and overcoat. He deposited them on a chair.

"Anything new, Glover?" asked Trask.

"No, sir," replied Glover.

Throughout the scene the telephone call from "the other woman" had been

W. B. Banning, Rae Frans and L. R. Upton motored over to Lincoln Tuesday to attend a banquet given by the Shriners of that city.

It is the opinion of some here that if the fellow who was robbed here last week had been captured he might have been proven to be an ex-convict.

Chas. Graves celebrated his fifty-fourth birthday last Tuesday. Don't tell him that he looks that old unless you happen to be on the other side of the street.

Fred Hiatt, Walt Henderson and Frank Brandon, of Sidney, Ia., were callers here Tuesday. Messers Hiatt and Henderson called on the editor while here.

A. A. Johnson and wife of Weeping Water and Asa Johnson and wife of Avoca, spent Sunday with relatives in Union, D. Lynn and wife, They came via auto route.

H. R. Wills and wife of Seattle, Wash., are here visiting Mrs. Wills' daughter, Mrs. G. W. Cheney. They will be here a few days longer after which they will return to their western home.

Wm. Carroll, who has been visiting here for some time with his brother, H. H. Carroll, departed Tuesday morning for Ft. Collins, Colo., near which place he will visit two other brothers before returning to his home in North Dakota. H. H. accompanied his brother as far as Lincoln.

Mrs. Dr. Evans, of Sioux Falls, S. D., arrived Friday and visited over Sunday with her brother, P. J. Marshall and family. She went from here to Panama, Neb., for a visit with her brother there and will visit at other points before returning home.

Uncle Reuben Fosler, better known as Judge Foster, was down to see the editor last Saturday. Mr. Foster is getting along nicely now, and we hope he will not be long before he completely recovers.

Chas. Niday sold his dray and transfer business to Clyde B. Lynde of Falls City. This deal was pulled off without a whisper and Mr. Niday had no intention of selling until approached by Mr. Lynde.

D. B. Porter sold his livery and feed stable to C. F. Harris last week.

The deal was made sudden and Mr. Harris sold the stable just as sudden as he bought it to J. B. Roudy. Mr. Porter will remain a resident of this place and will farm the coming year.

Attorney D. O. Dwyer of Plattsburgh, was a pleasant caller on the editor last Saturday. While here Mr. Dwyer related some of his earlier experiences as a school teacher in Union. He met some of his old pupils and friends here and he didn't forget to let the old pupils know that he still retained that muscle that he developed in maintaining discipline in his school days. Mr. Dwyer believes that the Missouri Pacific officials who had the power to raise the passenger rates will never go to heaven.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Minford and daughter, Miss Valentine, departed Wednesday morning for Maryville, Mo., where they will visit at the home of Mrs. Minford's sister, Mrs. Walter Mutts. Their daughter, Miss Willa Minford, who is attending Drake university at Des Moines, Ia., will join in the visit at Maryville.

The City National Bank of Weeping Water has been changed to a State Bank with the approval of the State Banking Board and will be known as the Nebraska State Bank.

C. E. Butler, formerly cashier of the Elmwood State Bank of this place will be the new cashier. His father E. E. Butler will also be a stockholder in this bank.

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At the telephone call for "the other woman,"

surging to and fro in the mind of Mrs. Trask. Now she turned again to her husband, and, looking directly at him, she said:

"A woman called you up."

"Oh, that's it? Who was it?"

Perhaps with the memory of similar scenes in mind the wife answered:

"I suppose you know well enough."

"If I knew I wouldn't ask you. Who was it?"

"I don't know. You don't suppose she'd tell me her name, do you?"

"Did she say she'd call again?"

Again came the "I don't know" of the wife.

(To be Continued)

IN COUNTY COURT.  
STATE OF NEBRASKA,  
County of Cass, ss.  
In re Estate of Estate of Ben F. Horning, Deceased.

To All Persons Interested:

You are hereby notified that there has been filed in this court an instrument purporting to be the will and testament of the said Ben F. Horning, deceased, together with the petition of C. E. Butler, probate attorney, the attorney and prothonotary, said proposed will as the last will and testament of said Deceased.

This a hearing will be had upon said petition on or will before this Court on the County Court room at Plattsburgh, in said County on the 21st day of December, 1915, at nine o'clock a.m.

That and all objections thereto if any, must be filed with this Court on or before the said day and hour of hearing.

Witness my hand and the seal of the County Court of said County this 26th day of November, 1915.

ALLEN J. BEESON,  
County Judge.

11-29-TWS

FOR SALE.

18 horse-power Buffalo Pitts double cylinder engine. Good as new. Will sell it at a bargain; half cash, balance terms to suit. Inquire at this office.

10-7-twky

FOR SALE—At a sacrifice, single harness and buggy. Good as new. Call 207-W.

11-22-2d-2tws

WANTED!



LIVE POULTRY

A carload of live poultry to be delivered at car near C. B. & Q. freight depot, Plattsburgh, Neb., on Tuesday, November 30th, one day only. We will pay cash as follows:

Hens ..... 11c  
Springs ..... 11c  
Ducks ..... 11c  
Geese ..... 11c  
Old Cox ..... 6c

Remember the date. We will be on hand rain or shine and take all poultry offered for sale.

W. E. KEENEN.

11-25-2tws

UNION.  
Leder.

ELMWOOD.  
Leader-Echo.

Silas E. Greenslate of Omaha, is here visiting his sister, Mrs. C. D. Clapp, and shaking hands with old Elmwood friends.

J. D. Fentiman and son, Ray, shipped three cars of cattle to the Omaha market Monday and another car to the same market Tuesday.

Ernest Fasenbeck of Seneca, Kas., and Mrs. Lizzie Norton, of Wayland, Iowa, visited with their mother, Grandma Fasenbeck, the first of the week.

J. D. Cobb left for Kansas City, Mo., Sunday morning where he will join Mrs. Cobb who is visiting at that place. They will visit over Thanksgiving and then return home.

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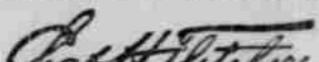
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W. A. ROBERTSON, Lawyer.

East of Riley Hotel.  
Coates' Block,  
Second Floor.

CASTORIA  
For Infants and Children

In Use For Over 30 Years  
Always bears  
the  
Signature of 

fracture and was set by Dr. Worthman.

Mr. and Mrs. James Dixon were called to Omaha last week by the serious illness of their son, Willie Dixon, who has had a bad case of scarlet fever. Mrs. Dixon