

The Third Degree

A NARRATIVE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE

By CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLow

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

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SYNOPSIS.

Howard Jeffries, banker's son, under the evil influence of Robert Underwood, fellow-student at Yale, leads a life of dissipation, marries the daughter of a gambler who died in prison, and is disowned by his father. He is out of work and in desperate straits. Underwood, who has once been engaged to Howard's step-mother, Alicia, is apparently in prosperous circumstances. Taking advantage of his intimacy with Alicia, he becomes a sort of social highwayman. Discovering his true character, Alicia denounces him to the police. He sends her a note threatening suicide. Art dealers for whom he acted as commissioner, demand an accounting. He cannot make good. Howard calls at his apartments in an intoxicated condition to request a loan of \$2,000 to enable him to take up a business proposition. Howard drinks himself into a maudlin condition, and goes to sleep on a divan. A caller is announced and Underwood draws a screen around the drunken sleeper. Alicia enters. She demands a promise from Underwood that he will not take his life. He refuses unless she will renew her patronage. This she refuses, and takes her leave. Underwood kills himself. He finds Underwood dead. Howard is turned over to the police. Capt. Clinton, notorious for his brutal treatment of prisoners, puts Howard through the third degree, and finally gets an alleged confession from the harassed man. Annie, Howard's wife, declares her belief in her husband's innocence, and calls on Jeffries, Sr. He refuses to help unless she will consent to a divorce. To save Howard she consents, but when she finds that the elder Jeffries does not intend to stand by his son, except financially, she secures his help. Annie appeals to Judge Brewster, attorney for Jeffries, Sr., to take Howard's case. He declines. It is reported that Annie is going on the stage. The banker and his wife call on Judge Brewster to find some way to prevent it. Annie again pleads with Brewster to defend Howard. He consents. Alicia is greatly annoyed that Brewster has taken the case. She confesses to Annie that she called on Underwood the night of his death, and that she has his letter in which he threatened suicide, but begs for time before giving out the information. Annie promises Brewster to produce the missing woman at a meeting at his home. Brewster accuses Clinton of forcing a confession from Howard. Annie appears without the witness and refuses to give the name. Alicia arrives. Capt. Clinton declares Annie has tricked them. Alicia hands him Underwood's letter. Annie lets Clinton believe the letter was written to her. She is arrested. The Underwood letter and Annie's perjured testimony clear Howard. The elder Jeffries offers to take Howard abroad.

CHAPTER XIX.—Continued.

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 you are entitled to, 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 try and 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—"

He stared gloomily out of the window without replying. After all, he thought to himself, it was perhaps for the best. Shackled as he was now, he would never be able to accomplish anything. If they separated, his father would take him into his business. Life would begin for him all over again. It would be better for her, too. Of course, he would never forget her. He would provide for her comfort. His father would help him arrange for that. Lighting a cigarette, he said, carelessly:

"Well—perhaps you're right. Maybe a little trip through Europe won't do me any harm."

"Of course not," she said, simply.

Busy with an obstinate match, he did not hear the sigh that accom-

panied her words or see the look of agony that crossed her face.

"But what are you going to do?" he inquired, after a silence.

With an effort, she controlled her voice. Not for all the world would she betray the fact that her heart was breaking. With affected indifference, she replied:

"Oh, I shall be all right. I shall go and live somewhere in the country for a few months. I'm tired of the city."

"So am I," he rejoined, with a gesture of disgust. "But I hate like the deuce to leave you alone."

"That's nothing," she said, hastily. "A trip abroad is just what you need." Looking up at him, she added: "Your face has brightened up already!"

He stared at her, unable to understand.

"I wish you could go with me."

She smiled.

"Your father's society doesn't make quite such an appeal to me as it does to you." Carelessly, she added: "Where are you going—Paris or London?"

He sent a thick cloud of smoke curling to the ceiling. A European trip was something he had long looked forward to.

"London—Vienna—Paris," he replied, gayly. With a laugh, he went on: "No, I think I'll cut out Paris. I'm a married man. I mustn't forget that!"

Annie looked up at him quickly. "You've forgotten it already," she



"Then Why Do You Leave Her Here to Fight the Battle Alone?"

said, quietly. There was reproach in her voice as she continued: "Ah, Howard, you're such a boy! A little pleasure trip and the past is forgotten!"

A look of perplexity came over his face. Being only a man, he did not grasp quickly the finer shades of her meaning. With some irritation, he demanded:

"Didn't you say you wanted me to go and forget?"

She nodded.

"Yes, I do, Howard. You've made me happy. I want you to be happy."

He looked puzzled.

"You say you love me?" he said, "and yet you're happy because I'm going away. I don't follow that line of reasoning."

"It isn't reason," she said with a smile, "it's what I feel. I guess a man wants to have what he loves and a woman is satisfied to love just what she wants. Anyway, I'm glad I'm glad you're going. Go and tell your father."

Taking his hat, he said:

"I'll telephone him."

"Yes, that's right," she replied. "Where's my cane?" he asked, looking round the room.

She found it for him, and as he opened the door, she said:

"Don't be long, will you?"

He laughed.

"I'll come right back. By George!" he exclaimed, "I feel quite excited at the prospect of this trip!" Regarding her fondly, he went on: "It's awfully good of you, old girl, to let me go. Annie averted her head.

"Now, don't spoil me," she said, lifting the tray as if to go into the kitchen.

"Wait till I kiss you good-by," he said, effusively.

Taking the tray from her, he placed it on the table, and folding her in his arms, he pressed his lips to hers.

"Good-by," he murmured; "I won't be long."

As soon as he disappeared she gave way completely, and sinking into a chair, leaned her head on the table and sobbed as if her heart would break. This then, was the end! Suddenly there was a ring at the bell. Hastily putting on a clean apron, she opened the door. Judge Brewster stood smiling on the threshold. Annie uttered a cry of pleasure. Greeting the old lawyer affectionately, she invited him in. As he entered, he looked questioning at her red eyes, but made no remark.

"I'm delighted to see you, judge," she stammered.

As he took a seat in the little parlor, he said:

"Your husband passed me on the stairs and didn't know me."

"The passage is so dark!" she explained, apologetically.

He looked at her for a moment without speaking, and for a moment there was awkward pause. Then he said:

"When does Howard leave you?"

Annie stared in surprise.

"How do you know that?" she exclaimed.

"We lawyers know everything," he smiled. Gravely he went on: "His father's attorneys have asked me for all the evidence I have. They want to use it against you. The idea is that he shall go abroad with his father, and that the proceedings will be begun during his absence."

"Howard knows nothing about it," said Annie, confidently.

"Are you sure?" demanded the lawyer, skeptically.

"Quite sure," she answered, positively.

"But he is going away?" persisted the judge.

"Yes, I want him to go—I am sending him away," she replied.

The lawyer was silent. He sat and looked at her as if trying to read her thoughts. Then quietly he said:

"Do you know they intend to make Robert Underwood the ground for the application for divorce, and to use your own perjured testimony as a weapon against you? You see what it leads to. There's no end to it, and you are compelled to go on lying to

"But you don't understand," she said, gently; "I am to blame."

"You're too ready to blame yourself," he said, testily.

Annie went up to him and laid her hand affectionately on his shoulder. With tears in her eyes, she said:

"Let me tell you something, judge. His father was right when he said I took advantage of him. I did. I saw that he was sentimental and self-willed, and all that. I started out to attract him. I was tired of the life I was living, the hard work, the loneliness, and all the rest of it, and I made up my mind to catch him if I could. I didn't think it was wrong then, but I do now. Besides," she went on, "I'm older than he is—five years older. He thinks I'm three years younger, and that he's protecting me from the world. I took advantage of his ignorance of life."

Judge Brewster shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"If boys of 25 are not men they never will be." Looking down at her kindly, he went on: "Pon my word! If I was 25, I'd let this divorce go through and marry you myself."

"Oh, judge!"

That was all she could say, but there was gratitude in the girl's eyes. These were the first kind words any one had yet spoken to her. It was nice to know that some one saw some good in her. She was trying to think of something to say, when suddenly there was the click of a key being inserted in a Yale lock. The front door opened, and Howard appeared.

"Well, judge!" he exclaimed, "this is a surprise!"

The lawyer looked at him gravely.

"How do you do, young man?" he said. Quizzically he added: "You look very pleased with yourself!"

"This is the first opportunity I've had to thank you for your kindness," said Howard, cordially.

"You can thank your wife, my boy, not me!" Changing the topic, he said: "So you're going abroad, eh?"

"Yes, did Annie tell you? It's only for a few months."

The lawyer frowned. Tapping the floor impatiently with his cane, he said:

"Why are you going away?"

Taken aback at the question, Howard stammered:

"Because—because—"

"Because I want him to go," interrupted Annie quickly.

The lawyer shook his head, and looking steadily at Howard, he said sternly:

"I'll tell you, Howard, my boy. You're going to escape from the scandal-mongers and the gossiping busy bodies. Forgive me for speaking plainly, but you're going away because your wife's conduct is a topic of conversation among your friends—"

Howard interrupted him.

"You're mistaken, judge; I don't care a hang what people say—"

"Then why do you leave her here to fight the battle alone?" demanded the judge, angrily.

Annie advanced, and raised her hand deprecatingly. Howard looked at her as if now for the first time he realized the truth.

"To fight the battle alone?" he echoed.

"Yes," said the judge, "you are giving the world a weapon with which to strike at your wife!"

Howard was silent. The lawyer's words had struck home. Slowly he said:

"I never thought of that. You're right! I wanted to get away from it all. Father offered me the chance and Annie told me to go—"

Annie turned to the judge.

"Please, judge," she said, "don't say any more." Addressing her husband, she went on: "He didn't mean what he said, Howard."

Howard hung his head.

"He's quite right, Annie," he said, shamefacedly. "I never should have consented to go; I was wrong."

Judge Brewster advanced and patted him kindly on the back.

"Good boy!" he said. "Now, Mrs. Jeffries, I'll tell your husband the truth."

"No!" she cried.

"Then I'll tell him without your permission," he retorted. Turning to the young man, he went on: "Howard your wife is an angel! She's too good a woman for this world. She has not hesitated to sacrifice her good name, her happiness, to shield another woman. And that woman—the woman who called at Underwood's room that night—was Mrs. Jeffries, your stepmother!"

Howard stared back in amazement.

"It's true, then, I did recognize her voice!" he cried.

Turning to his wife, he said: "Oh, Annie, why didn't you tell me? You saved my stepmother from disgrace, you spared my father! Oh, that was noble of you!" In a low tone he whispered: "Don't send me away from you, Annie! Let me stay and prove that I'm worthy of you!"

To the young wife it all seemed like a dream, almost too good to be real. The dark, troubled days were ended. A long life, bright with its promise of happiness, was before them.

"But what of the future, Howard?" she demanded, gently.

Judge Brewster answered the question.

"I've thought of that," he said. "Howard, will you come into my office and study law? You can show your father what you can do with a good wife to second your efforts."

Howard grasped his outstretched hand.

"Thanks, judge, I accept," he replied, heartily.

Turning to his wife, he took her in his arms. Her head fell on his shoulder. Looking up at him shyly and smiling through her tears, she murmured, softly:

"I am happy now—at last!"

THE END.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS OF OUR HOME STATE

MILL WASTE TO BE USED.

Coos Bay Wood Pulp Plant Will Be Completed Within Year.

Portland—Robert Nerdrum and Hyalte Nerdrum, young Norwegians who are interested in the Coos Bay Pulp & Paper company, of Marshfield, have been at the Multnomah hotel for several days awaiting the arrival of their wives from Norway.

Hyalte Nerdrum, in speaking of this new industry at Coos Bay, said: "It will be a year before we begin the manufacture of wood pulp, as it takes that long to complete the buildings of reinforced concrete, and install the machinery. The machinery will largely be manufactured in this country but some parts will come from Europe."

"The process of separating the wood fiber in this country is known as the soda process, while we are to use the sulphate of soda process."

"We are jointly interested in the enterprise with the C. A. Smith Lumber company and our raw material will consist of the refuse from the mill of that company, which is now destroyed."

"Our ultimate plan is to operate a paper mill at Coos Bay, but this will not be attempted at present."

NEW CHERRY GROWN.

Max Pracht, Jackson County, Develops Luscious Variety.

Ashland—Since retiring from the government service at Washington, Max Pracht, has developed into a practical horticulturist. He resides near Ashland, Jackson county, where he first came into prominence as a successful peach culturist. More recently he has produced a new variety of cherry, which is pronounced by experts to be one of the best commercial varieties that is grown in the Pacific Northwest. This cherry in many respects resembles the Bing, being large, firm and of exceptional flavor.

Mr. Pracht sent a sample box of the fruit, which he has christened the Pracht Imperial, to his friend, Phil Metchan, proprietor of the Imperial hotel at Portland. The demand for "just a taste" of the cherries was so great that the supply proved insufficient to go the rounds.

MILL AIDS EMPLOYES.

Willamette Pulp & Paper Company to Build Model City.

Oregon City—In order to aid its employees and make them better satisfied with conditions the Willamette Pulp & Paper company will found a little city for them on the West Side near the schoolhouse. The concern has about 750 employees, and at least half of them will be benefited within a year. A tract of 56 acres has been purchased which will be cleared immediately and platted this summer. It is the company's plan as outlined by Mr. McBain, mill manager, to divide the land into quarter-acre tracts, lots 100 by 100 feet or 50 by 200 feet, as desired, and to reserve one block for park purposes.

Modern dwellings will be erected by the company for the employees, to be paid for on monthly installments equal to rent. No interest will be charged. This method of home-building and buying, Mr. McBain declares, will make it possible for every employe to own his own home within a few years.

Jews Take to Agriculture.

The Hebrew Agricultural association of Oregon came into corporate existence recently in the vestry rooms of the Hall street Synagogue, Portland, with the appointment of a committee on constitution and by-laws, the securing of a charter from the State of Oregon and the election of officers. The object of this organization is to encourage agriculture among the Jews. This organization will lend money without interest and otherwise assist Jewish farmers in their vocation.

Hood River Has Record Hay Yield

Hood River—The Hood River valley will have one of the largest hay crops this year in its history. The acreage is unusually large and the continuous rains have produced heavier crops than in former years. The first power baler ever used in the valley was delivered here last week. In Odell district, where a great deal of hay is raised, nearly every rancher will have quantities of feedstuffs to sell, whereas in former years nearly every one is a purchaser of the product to tide over the winter months.

Road Builders at Ontario.

Ontario—Forty-nine cars loaded with railroad construction material have arrived here. In the lot were 17 cars of steel. Nearly every train arriving brings laborers contracted for the grade work. Bridge carpenters also have arrived. A track foreman, who has been laying track on the Idaho Northern branch, is here and it is understood the construction train will follow in a few days when the work of laying the steel will begin.

Tillamook Factory Site Sought.

Tillamook—A site is being selected here for the location of a factory to manufacture milk products, including condensed whipped cream, cream of rice, ready-prepared cocones and chocolate and other products requiring the use of large quantities of milk. It is proposed to expend \$100,000 on a plant, which will be opened some time in the fall.

CLEMENT HITS OREGON.

Lack of Corporation Law Cause of "Crookedness"

Salem—That Oregon is the stamping ground for crooked promoters from other states, who make it a practice to come here to organize fake companies because the laws of Oregon do not give the state authority to look into the affairs of corporations is one of the declarations made by E. C. Clement, United States postoffice inspector.

Among other things, he told of one person alone who was fleeced of \$40,000 by the Columbia River Orchards Trust company and the Oregon-Washington Trust company, in which these companies deliberately led him into a trap to secure the money and branding him as a "sucker" in letters which passed back and forth between those interested.

"I am now on the trail of certain men who did not dare organize in the state where they live, but have come to Oregon to file their papers and have already floated millions of dollars of worthless stock all over the West," he declared.

"The Columbia River Orchards company affairs furnishes a good illustration of the way in which grafters flock to this state to float their crooked enterprises. These people had to have a dummy corporation to act as a trustee. They couldn't organize it under the laws of Washington, so they came to Portland and organized the Oregon-Washington Trust company under the laws of Oregon. This company was supposed to hold \$125 worth of securities for every \$100 worth of the obligation of the Columbia River Orchards company. When the crash came it developed that their alleged securities were absolutely worthless. Even the office furniture was not paid for and the stenographer was cheated out of her salary. The public was fleeced out of about two and a quarter millions of dollars on this graft, which would not have been possible if there had been a state law providing for the supervision of corporations, such as the proposed blue-sky law, which I earnestly hope may be adopted. I do not know of anything that would be of greater benefit to honest corporations than some such act to give the state control of crooked promoters and corporations."

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TARIFFS PLACED ON FILE.

Roads Named on Which Interchangeable Books Are Good.

Salem—Tariffs for the new interchangeable mileage books have been filed with the State Railroad commission, to become effective August 15.

The mileage books will be good at the rate of one coupon a mile on the following roads: Camas Prairie; Chicago, Milwaukee Puget Sound; Corvallis & Eastern; Idaho, Washington & Northern; Northern Pacific; Oregon Electric; Oregon Trunk; O. W. R. & N.; P. T. & N.; Port Townsend & Southern; Salem, Falls City & Western; Spokane & Inland; Spokane International; S. P. & S.; Southern Pacific in Oregon, including towns on Klamath Falls branch via Weed, Cal.; Tacoma & Eastern, and Washington, Idaho & Montana.

The roads on which mileage from mileage books will be accepted on the basis of the local fare are as follows: Coeur d'Alene & St. Joe Transportation company, Great Northern in British Columbia on local lines, Pacific & Eastern, Reid Transportation company, and United Railways.

Brook Trout Planted.

Portland—The work of stocking Oregon streams with brook trout is going forward rapidly. Ten cans of trout fry were taken down the river to be liberated in streams near Scappoose. The work of distributing these fish is being shared by members of the Multnomah Anglers' club. Cans of fish are being transported to various points in automobiles belonging to club members. Another shipment of Eastern trout is soon to be taken into the mountains of the Cascade range for liberation in the lakes.

Fair to Get New Buildings.

Astoria—At the meeting of the board of directors of the Lower Columbia Fair association, the bid of Fred Elliott & Son, of Gearhart, for the erection of four of the exhibit buildings was accepted and President G. L. Rees was authorized to enter into a contract with them at once. The buildings are to be completed by September 1. Mr. Rees was also appointed to arrange for the clearing of the grounds.

"Business Form" is Lost.

Oregon City—The business form of government proposed for Oregon City in place of the present councilmanic form, was voted down at a special election by a vote of 342 to 65. Likewise the proposed bond issue to the amount of \$17,000 to erect a municipal elevator to take the place of the long stairsteps leading up to the residence section, was voted down by 222 to 175.

Hawley Secures New Route.

Salem—After repeatedly having the proposal to establish rural route No. 7 from Oregon City rejected, Representative Hawley continued to collect facts and arguments from the people living along the Willamette river on the Clackamas county side, opposite the town of Willamette, and has at last secured a favorable decision from the department permitting the desired service.