

# Jane Cable

By GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON, Author of "Beverly of Gramercy," Etc.

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## CHAPTER XIX—(Continued)

"To stop his infernal tongue!" asserted Cable, leaping down the steps, his eyes blazing. James Bannister laughed as he leered himself for the attack. They did not come together, for Graydon threw his leg frame in the path of the assailant. For an instant there was a frightful uproar. Rigby and the servant rushed to the young man's assistance. The women were screaming with terror, the men were shouting, and there was a violent struggle which ended in a truce.

his eyes. He had not expected the girl. Until the break of day he sat in his child room waiting for the rap of his son's night key, but Graydon did not come home.

"You infernal traitor!" hissed James Bannister. "You claim to be Graydon's friend, and yet you are the one who has led the plot to ruin me."

"What does it all mean?" cried Graydon, holding the shrieking Cable tightly. There was a moment of intense silence, except for the heavy breathing of the men. Graydon was staring while eye at his father. He saw the real, sardonic smile spread over his face and shuddered.

"I've simply come to 'see you out of the clutches of these people. I've wanted to see if that scheming woman up there would tell you, or her own son. She hasn't told you, so I will. You cannot marry that girl, for your daughter Jane Cable was picked up in a doorway, cast off by the woman who bore her."

The crash had come. The hairless woman stood like a trapeze player in the center of his stage, pouring out his poison without a touch of pity for the stricken girl who, after the first thrill of indignation and horror, had shrunk back into her mother's arms, bewildered.

"Call the police, if you like," laughed Bannister, at the end of his tirade. "It left a criminal offense to tell the truth. It will sound just as well in court, Mr. Rigby."

"Jane, Jane," Mrs. Cable was murmuring, "I might have saved you all this, but I couldn't—oh, I couldn't pay the price."

"You snake!" growled Cable, weak and hoarse with rage. "Jane, he has led! There is not a word of truth in what he says. I swear it to you."

"Ho, ho, by heaven, she hasn't told you, after all!" cried Bannister. "You still think she is yours!"

"Father!" exclaimed Graydon, standing straight before the other. David Cable had dropped limply into a chair, his hand to his heart. "I won't stand by and hear you any longer. Take back what you've said about her or I'll forget that you are my father and—"

"Graydon!" exclaimed Bannister, falling back, his expression changing like a flash. The smile of triumph left his face, and his lip twitched. "You forget I—I am doing this for your sake. My God, boy, you don't understand. Don't turn from me to them. They have—"

"That's enough, father! Don't say another word! You've talked like a madman. See! Look what you've done! Oh, Jane!" he caught sight of the girl on the landing and rushed up to her.

"Is it true, Graydon; is it true?" she wailed, beating her hands upon his arm.

"No, it can't be true! He's gone mad, dearest."

"Is it true, mother? Tell me, tell me!"

Frances Cable's white lips moved stiffly, but no sound came forth. Her eyes spoke the truth, however. The girl sank limp and helpless in Graydon's arms.

"You'll pay for this tomorrow!" he was saying. "Your day has come! You outthrew! You blackmailer!"

"Graydon!" called the father. "Come, let us go home. Come, boy!"

"Not now—not now," answered the son hoarsely. "I'll—I'll try to come home tonight, father. I'm not sure that I can. My place is here—with her."

Without a word James Bannister turned and rushed out into the street, hours of rage and disappointment in

the old man returned with the morning papers. As Droom placed them on the table beside him he grimaced cheerfully.

"Big headlines, eh? But these are not a circumstance to what they will be. These articles deal only with the great mystery concerning the birth of one of the 'most beautiful and popular young women in Chicago.' Wait—wait until the Bannister smash comes to re-enact the story! Fine reading, eh?"

"Don't, Elias, for heaven's sake, don't!" cried the young man. "Have you no soft spot in your heart? I believe you enjoy all this. Look! Look what it says about her! The whole sensational story of that some last night! There was a reporter there when it happened."

Together they read the papers. Their comments varied. The young man whistled and growled under the revelations that were going to the public. The old clerk chuckled and philosophized.

Every one of these papers prophesied other and more sensational developments before the day was over. It promised to be war to the knife between David Cable, president of the Pacific, Lakes and Atlantic, and the man Bannister. In each interview with Cable he was quoted as saying emphatically that the adoption of Jane had been made with his knowledge and consent. The supposed daughter was the only one to whom the startling revelations were a surprise. There also was mention of the fact that the young woman had immediately broken her engagement with James Bannister's son. There were pictures of the leading characters in the drama.

"I can't stay in Chicago after all this," exclaimed Graydon, springing to his feet, his hands clinched in despair. "To be pointed out and talked about! To be puffed and scorned! To see the degradation of my own father! I'll go anywhere, just so it is away from Chicago."

Droom forgot his desire to scoff. His sardonic smile dwindled into a ludicrously pathetic look of dismay. He begged the young man to think twice before he did anything "foolish." "In any event," he implored, "let me get you some breakfast, or at least a cup of coffee."

In the end he helped Graydon into his coat and glided off down Wells street with him. It was 7 o'clock, and every corner newsstand glowered back at them with black frowns as they looked at the piles of papers. Two tough looking men walking ahead of them were discussing the sensation. A saloon keeper shouted to them, "It don't always happen over on de west side, does it?"

Graydon went to the office of Clegg, Groll & Davidson early and arranged his affairs, so that they could be taken up at once by another, and then, avoiding his fellow workers as much as possible, presented himself to Mr. Clegg at 10 o'clock. Without hesitation he announced his intention to give up his place in the office. All argument put forth by his old friend and employer went for naught. The cause of his action was not discussed, but it was understood.

"If you ever want to come back to us, Graydon, we'll welcome you with open arms. It isn't as bad as you think."

"You don't understand, Mr. Clegg," was all that Graydon could say. Then he hurried off to face his father.

James Bannister, haggard from loss of sleep and from fury over the alienation of his son, together with the fear of what the day might bring, was pacing the floor of his private office. Droom had eased his mind but little in regard to his son. When he heard Graydon's voice in the outer room his face brightened, and he took several quick steps toward the door. He checked himself suddenly with the remembrance that his son had turned against him the night before, and his face hardened.

Graydon found him standing stern and unfriendly before the steam radiator in the darkest corner of the room, his hands behind his back. The young man plumped down heavily in his father's desk chair.

"Why didn't you come home last night?" demanded the other.

"I hated the thought of it," he answered dejectedly.

"You've listened to their side of the story. You're a spineless son, you are!" sneered the father.

"There is nothing base and unprincipled in their side of the story. They have tried to shield her. They have never harmed her. But you! Why, father, you've lighted her life forever. They were going to tell her in a day or so, and they could have made it easy for her. Not like this! Why, in heaven's name, did you strike her like that? She's—the's the talk of the town. She's ostracized, that's what she is, and she's the best girl that ever lived!"

"Oh, you think they would have told her, eh? No! They would have let her marry—"

"Well, and what was your position? Why were you so considerate up to last night? If you knew, why did you let me go on so blindly? The truth is, father, if you would have let her marry—"

"I wouldn't have believed the other things they say of you if I hadn't like to break down my faith. I heard this with my own ears. It was too contemptible to forget in a lifetime. I did her. And my own father! Oh, it was terrible!"

Elias Droom did not tell him—now had he ever told any one but himself—that the woman he loved was the boy's mother. He loved her before and after she married James Bannister. He never had favored in his love and reverence for her.

Graydon waited in his rooms until

Jane."

"I suppose you would marry her, like a fool, even now," muttered the father.

"Marry her? Of course I would. I have more than ever. I'd give my life for her; I'd give my soul to ease the pain you have thrust upon her. But it's over between us. Don't let our affairs worry you. She has ended it. I don't blame her. How could she marry your son? I have hoped that I might not be your son, after all."

Bannister bowed heavily against the radiator, gasping for breath. Then he staggered to the couch and dropped upon it, weeping.

"Graydon, Graydon! Don't say that! Don't! I'll make everything right. I'll try to undo it all! My boy, you are the only thing on earth I love. I've been heartless to all the rest of the world, but I love you. Don't turn against me."

The son stood looking at him in dull wonder. His heart was touched. He had not thought that this stern man could weep; he began to see the misery that was breaking him.

"Dad, don't do that," he said, starting toward him. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry for you."

Bannister leaped to his feet, his mood changing like a flash.

"I don't want your pity. I want your love and loyalty. I didn't mean to be weak. Will you leave Chicago with me? I must go. We'll go at once—anywhere, only together. We can escape if we start now. Come?"

"I won't go that way," exclaimed Graydon. "Not like a criminal!"

"No! You won't! There was no answer. 'Then there's nothing more to say. Go! Leave me alone. I had prayed that you might not have been like this. Go! I have important business to attend to at once.' He cast his gaze toward the drawer in which he kept the pistol lay. 'I don't expect to see you again. Take this message to the Cables. Say that I am the only living soul who knows the names of that girl's father and mother. God alone can drag them from me!'"

Graydon was silent, stunned, bewildered. His father was trembling before him, and he opened his lips to utter the question that meant so much if the answer came.

"Don't ask me!" cried Bannister. "You would be the last I'd tell."

"I don't believe you know!" cried Graydon.

"Ah, you think I'll tell you?" triumphantly.

"I don't want to know. He sat down, his moody gaze upon his father. Neither spoke for many minutes. Neither had the courage. James Bannister finally started up with a quick look at the door. Droom was speaking to some one in the outer office.

"Go now," he said harshly. "I want to be alone."

"Father, are you—are you afraid of these charges?" His father laughed shortly and extended his hand to the young man.

"Don't worry about me. They can't do James Bannister. You may leave Chicago. I'll stay! Goodbye, Graydon!"

"Goodbye, dad!"

They shook hands without flinching, and the young man left the room. On the threshold the father called after him:

"Where do you expect to go?"

"I don't know."

Droom was talking to a youth who held a notebook in his hand and who appeared frightened and embarrassed. Graydon shook hands with the old man. Droom followed him into the hall.

"If you ever need a friend, Graydon," he said in a low voice, "call on me. I'm not in jail, I'll help you."

Half an hour later Graydon rang the Cables' doorbell.

"Miss Jane is not seeing any one to-day, sir," said the servant.

"Say that I must see her," protested the young man. "I'm going away to-night."

"So is she, sir."

Cable's devotion to her was beautiful. He could not have been more tender had she been his own daughter. Instead of his wife's imposition.

Jane was ill in Pasadena for many weeks. Her depressed condition made her recovery doubtful. It was plain to two persons, at least, that she did not care whether she lived or died. The physicians were puzzled, but no explanation was offered by the Cables. It was not until certain Cables' acquaintances generously spread the news that the cause of her breakdown became apparent to the good doctors. Before many days she was able to walk and stroll upon the broad shaded piazzas with an object of curiosity to fashionable Pasadena. As soon as she was strong enough to make the trip the invited trio forsook Pasadena and fled northward.

San Francisco afforded relief in privacy. Jane's spirits began to revive. There had not been nor was there ever to be any mention of that terrible night and its revelations. What she may have felt and suffered in secret could only be conjectured by those who loved her. Bannister's name was never uttered. His fate remained unknown to her. The faraway, unhappy look in her eyes proved to them that Graydon was never out of her thoughts.

David Cable was in Chicago when Mrs. Cable received word from her sister, Kate Coleman, that she soon would reach San Francisco with her husband, bound for the Philippines. Kate was the wife of a West Pointer who had achieved the rank of colonel in the volunteers by virtue of political necessity. His regiment had been ordered to the islands, and she was accompanying him with their daughter, a girl of sixteen.

Colonel Harbin had seen pleasant service at the eastern posts, where his wife had attained a certain kind of social distinction in the army fast set. She was not especially enamored of the prospect of her in the Philippines. But the new colonel was a strict disciplinarian on and off the field. He expected to be a brigadier general if fortune and favoritism supported him long enough. Mrs. Harbin could never be anything more than a private in the ranks, so far as his estimation of distinction was concerned. His daughter, Ethel, had, by means of a few points ahead of her mother and might have ranked as sergeant in the family corps.

Mrs. Harbin played cards, drank highballs, flirted with the younger officers, got talked about with pleasing emphasis and was as happy as any subordinate could be. There had not even thought of such a thing as discipline, and the whole army wondered and expressed disgust. The army's appetite for scandal is surprised only by its bravery in war. It is even hinted that the latter is welcomed as a loophole for the former. War brings peace.

The arrival of the Harbins and a staff of gay young cadets fresh from the banks of the Hudson put new life into the recluses. The regiment was to remain at the Presidio for several weeks before sailing. One of the lieutenants was a Chicago boy and an acquaintance of Graydon Bannister. It was from him that Jane learned that her sweetheart was a soldier in the service, doubtless now in Luzon.

A week before the sailing of Colonel Harbin's transport Jane suddenly announced that she had but one desire on earth, and that was to go to Manila with her aunt. She did not present her plea with the usual claim that she wanted to be of service to her country. She was not asking to go out as a heroine of the ordinary type. Instead she simply announced that she wanted to go as a temporary member of Colonel Harbin's family, to endure their hardships and to enjoy their enthusiasm. Mrs. Cable recognized the true motive, however, and in vain. The Harbins had lucklessly urged Jane to join them. Telegrams flew back and forth across the continent, and David Cable came on to present his feeble objections.

When the great transport sailed away, Jane Cable was one of her passengers, the ward of the regiment.

"It's just for a little while, dad," she said wistfully at the dock; "a few months. I'll think of you every minute I'm away."

The blood of the man in the service was calling to her. The ocean was between them. The longing to be near him, to tread the same soil, had conquered in the eternal battle of love. After all, so matter how the east was strangled into the world to love and to be loved. She put the past behind her and began to build a new future—a future in which the adoration of Graydon Bannister was the foundation. The hope that makes all human averages was at the work of reconstruction; youth was the builder. The months of destruction had not left a hopeless ruin, nor the heritage of dead millions.

The world grew brighter as the ship forged westward. Each day went warmer blood into her veins and a deeper light into her eyes. The new life was not inspired by the longing to be his wife, but to see him again and to comfort him. She would be no man's wife.

At last she had, soft morning in early July the great transport slipped past Cotacotaco and turned its nose across Manila bay, past Cavite, toward the anchorage which ended the long voyage. The city of Manila lay stretched out before them—Manila, the new American capital.

The troops were marched off to quarters, and the Harbins, with Jane Cable, required to go to the Orient, where they were to live prior to taking a house in Imita or San Miguel.

The campaign was not being pushed vigorously at this time. It was the rainy season. Desultory fighting was going on between the troops and the insurgents. There were numerous scouting and exploring expeditions into the enemy's country.

A week elapsed before Jane could find the opportunity to make inquiries concerning the whereabouts of Graydon Bannister. Her thoughts had been of nothing else; her eagerness had been tempered by the diffidence of the overcautious. She and pretty Ethel Harbin had made life endurable for the gay young officers who came over on the ship. The pretty wives of certain captains and lieutenants had small scope for their blandishments at close range. Flirtations were hard to manage in space so small. The two girls were therefore in a state of siege most of the time. The abject following fell away perceptibly when the broader field of action on shore gave their married sisters a chance to maneuver with some degree of security. A faithful few remained in train, however. Ethel Harbin, like the ingenue in the play, had each finger clumsily but tightly wrapped with a breathing uniform of blue. It must be admitted in shame, however, that she changed the bandages often and without conscience or ceremony.

Jane's admirers were in love with her. She was not the sort to inspire

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CHAPTER XXII.

REGORIO DEL PILAR, the picturesque Filipino leader, about whom so much has been written in praise by the war correspondents, was leading his men back into the danger fields, inviting the American pursuers into every trap which his crafty brain could devise.

Captain Groce, with a company of infantry, was following him closely and doggedly into the fastnesses far to the north. Village after village was devastated by the white troops, always a few hours after the wily Pilar had evacuated. Amigos laughed in their deceptive sleeves at the Americans and misdirected them with impunity. In eight cases out of ten the Anglo weapons underneath his garment of friendship and shrew in the dark whenever opportunity arose. Graydon Bannister was one of this doughty, eager company which blazed the way into the hills. Close behind came the bigger and stronger forces, with guns and horse, and the hospital corps. It was the hunt of death for Aguinaldo and Pilar.

Shortly after daybreak one morning a slick, black figure crept out from among the trees and gave the countersign to the challenging scout. He was soon on his way to the captain's headquarters bearing news of importance. The brown skinned scout had traveled all night over a hazardous route, and he was more than welcome. His intelligence news that Pilar's men were off to the east and the north, well increased and prepared to fall upon the Americans when they advanced blindly into the trap laid for them. The newspaper men picked up their ears and at once leaped to a box of carrier pigeons which possessed a most important part of their equipment. A fight was at hand, doubtless an important meeting of the clashing forces. The whole army was waiting for intelligence of Pilar—waiting with little less anxiety than that which attached itself to the pursuit of Aguinaldo.

Captain Groce ordered Sergeant Connel with a picked squad to reconnoiter. They scurried off in advance of the company, with instructions to locate

the elusive enemy and open up the secret of his position. Supposedly Pilar was ten miles off among the rocky foothills which guarded the pass through the mountains. As usual, Bannister was one of the scouts. He snatched his rations with the others and went forth eagerly to court the danger and excitement that was promised. For days they had had no fighting worthy the name. Amigos everywhere, villages peopled only by women and children, treacherous peasants on every side. This had been their encounter—an occasional rifle shot from the rice fields, a crackle of guns far ahead, a prisoner or two who had not been quick enough in transforming himself from combatant to friend, that was all. Now there seemed to be real fighting ahead.

Pilar was known to have many men—good soldiers all of them. The native scout gave close and accurate directions as to his position. It remained for Connel's men to draw him out if possible. Captain Groce and his remainder of his eager company did not march until long after the scouts were on their precarious way.

Two hours after the party of eleven left the village a Mauser bullet from a clump of trees far to the right cut through the hat of one of the scouts who was some distance in advance of his fellows. As he saw the scout stoop to pick up his hat Rogers turned to the man nearest him and remarked: "They'll get him sure as shootin' some day if he hikes along in that fool way."

It was no new experience for the scouts to find the quarry gone when they reached the place where they expected to find him. Pilar's own scouts had found that the ambushade was destined to fail of its purpose, and the wily leader drew back into the more accessible country. The scouting party did not come in sight of the light-brown soldiers. Before noon they were far up in the hills, everywhere met by the physical assurance that the enemy was not far ahead of them. Behind them came Captain Groce and his men and the two correspondents.

(Continued Next Week.)

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## CHAPTER XX.

GRAYDON sat with his chin in his hands, dull and stricken, crushed. He had heard the story of his father's business from Frances Cable, and he had been told the true story of Jane. From Rigby he learned of the vile transactions in which his father had dealt. At first he could scarcely believe his own ears, but in the end he saw that but half the truth could be told.

It was past midnight when he left David Cable's—not to go to his own home, but to that of Elias Droom. He knew now that the newspaper would devote columns to the "sensation in high life," he knew that Jane would suffer agonies untold, but he would not

blame his father for that; he knew that arrest and disgrace hang over the tall gray man who had shown his true and amazing side at last; he knew that shame and humiliation were to be his own share in the division. Down somewhere in his aching heart he nourished the hope that Elias Droom could ease the pain of these wretched disclosures.

As he traversed the dark streets across town he was vaguely wondering whether Jane's eyes would ever lose the pained, hopeless expression he had seen in them. He wondered whether she would retract her avowal that she could not be his wife with the shame upon her; he rejoiced in her tearless, lifeless promise to hold him in no fault for what had happened.

Distressed and miserable, he spent the remainder of the night in Elias Droom's squalid rooms, sitting before the little stove which his host replenished from time to time during the weary hours.

Droom answered his questions with a direct tenderness that surprised even himself. He kept much to himself, however, and advised the young man to reserve judgment until after he had heard his father's side of the story.

"I've been loyal to James Bannister, Graydon, and I'll still be loyal to him. He's not done right by other people, but he has tried to do right by you."

"If he wanted to do right by me, why did he not tell me of Jane's—uh—fortune?" exclaimed the young man bitterly.

"Because he really wanted you to marry her. Anybody can see she is without a flaw. That's the truth, Graydon. Your father was wrong in his desire to make capital of it in connection with Mrs. Cable. I told him so. I don't believe he knew just what he was doing; he was so used to success, you see. Can't you go to sleep, boy? You need to."

"I'd advise you to go home and talk it over with your father."

"Tomorrow will be time enough—after to think of the disgrace. Harbert has been interviewed, they say. He's told everything."

"Talk to your father tonight, my boy. There may be—may be warrants tomorrow."

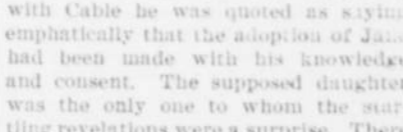
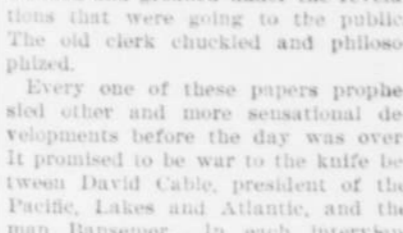
The young man dropped his head on his arm and burst into tears. Old Droom puffed vigorously at his pipe, his eyes shifting and uncomfortable. Twice he attempted to speak and could not. In both instances he arose and poked the fire. At last the young man's choking sobs grew less violent. Droom cleared his throat with raucous emphasis, took his snaky gaze from a print on the wall representing "Dawn" and spoke:

"You wouldn't think it to look at me now, or any other time for that matter, but I loved a woman once—a long time ago. She never knew it. I didn't expect her to love me. How could I? I don't cry, Graydon. You're not like I was. The girl you love loves you. I swear up and down. She's good enough, I'll swear!"

"She says she can't marry me. Good heavens, Elias! You don't know what a blow it was to her. It almost killed her. And my own father! Oh, it was terrible!"

Elias Droom did not tell him—now had he ever told any one but himself—that the woman he loved was the boy's mother. He loved her before and after she married James Bannister. He never had favored in his love and reverence for her.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

DAVID CABLE lost no time in hurrying away from Chicago with his wife and Jane. They were whisked westward in his private car on the second day after the Bannister exposure. Breckenridge, Jane questioned in all their plans. She seemed as one in a stupor, comprehending yet unresponsive to the pain that enveloped her.

"I can't see any one that I know here," she said listlessly. "Oh, the thought of what they are saying!"

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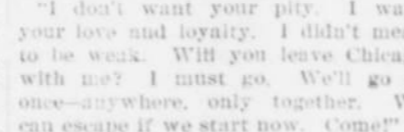
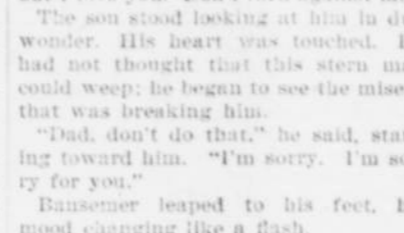
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