

Jane Cable

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How far a man's natural inclination toward evil may carry him, despite the fact that his wrongdoing involves the wrecking of the happiness of his only son, is well shown in this story of Chicago, the Philippines and New York. The tale is not all one of evil, however. In it figure also love and romance, daring and danger, patriotism and the self-sacrificing devotion of the Filipino to his country's cause. Our narrative is essentially one of modern times, and its characters or their originals walk the streets of American cities today, but their actions and the story of their loves and hates recall with distinct force the scenes and persons depicted by Dickens. Especially is this true of Elias Droom, the elderly lawyer's clerk, who is worthy of comparison with any one to be found in the pages of the English master.



CHAPTER I.

It was a bright, clear afternoon in the late fall that pretty Miss Cable drove up in her trap and waited at the curb for her father to come forth from his office in one of Chicago's tallest buildings. The crisp, caressing wind that came up the street from the lake put the pink into her smooth cheeks, but it did not disturb the brown hair that crowned her head. Well groomed and graceful, she sat straight and sure upon the box, her gloved hand grasping the yellow reins firmly and confidently. Miss Cable looked neither to right nor to left, but at the tips of her thoroughbred's ears. Slender and tall and very aristocratic she appeared, her profile alone visible to the passerby.

After a very few moments' waiting in her trap the smart young woman became impatient. A severe little pucker settled upon her brow, and not once, but many times, her eyes turned to the broad entrance across the sidewalk. She had telephoned to her father earlier in the afternoon, and he had promised faithfully to be ready at 4 o'clock for a spin up the drive behind Spartan. At three minutes past 4 the pucker made its first appearance, and now, several minutes later, it was quite distressing. Never before had he kept her waiting like this. She was conscious of the fact that at least a hundred men had stared at her in the longest ten minutes she had ever known. From the bottom of a very hot heart she was beginning to resent this scrutiny when a tall young fellow swung around a nearby corner and came up with a smile so full of delight that the dainty pucker left her brow as the shadow flees from the sunshine. His hat was off and poised gallantly above his head, his right hand reaching up to clasp the warm little tan one outstretched to meet it.

"I knew it was you long before I saw you," said he warmly. "Truly? How interesting!" she responded, with equal warmth. "Something psychic in the atmosphere today?"

"Oh, no," he said, reluctantly releasing her hand. "I can't see through



"I knew it was you long before I saw you," these huge buildings, you know. It's impossible to look over their tops. I simply knew you were here, that's all. "You're romantic, even though you are a bit silly," she cried gayly. "Pray, how could you know?"

"Simplest thing in the world. Rightly told me he had seen you and that you seemed to be in a great rage. He dared me to venture into your presence, and that's why I'm here."

"What a hopelessly commonplace explanation! Why did you not leave me to think that there was really something psychic about it? Logic is so

discouraging to one's conceit. I'm in a very disagreeable humor today," she said, in fine despair.

"I don't believe it," he disputed graciously. "But I am," she insisted, smiling brightly. His heart was leaping high—so high that it filled his eyes. "Everything has gone wrong with me today. It's pretty trying to have to wait in front of a big office building for fifteen minutes! Every instant I expect a policeman to come up and order me to move on. Don't they arrest people for blocking the street?"

"Yes, and put them in awful, rat swarming dungeons over in Dearborn avenue. Poor Mr. Cable, he should be made to suffer severely for his wretched conduct. The idea of—"

"Don't you dare to say anything mean about dad," she warned.

"But he's the cause of all the trouble. He's never done anything to make you happy or—"

"Stop! I take it all back. I'm in a perfectly adorable humor. It was dreadfully mean of me to be half angry with him, wasn't it? He's in there now working his dear old brain to pieces, and I'm out here with no brain at all," she said ruefully.

To the ingenious youth such an appeal to his gallantry was well nigh irresistible, and for a moment it seemed as if he would yield to the temptation to essay a brilliant contradiction, but his wits came to his rescue, for, quickly realizing that not only were the frowning rocks of offense to be avoided, but likewise the danger of floundering helplessly about in the furling quicksands of insanity, he preserved silence, wise young man that he was, and trusted to his eyes to express an eloquent refutation. At last, however, something seemed to occur to him. A smile broke on his face.

"You had a stupid time last night," he hazarded.

"What makes you think so?" "I know who took you to dinner." The eyes of the girl narrowed slightly at the corners.

"Did he tell you?" "No; I have neither seen nor heard from any one present." She opened her eyes wide now.

"Well, Mr. S. Holmes, who was it?" "That imbecile, Medford."

Miss Cable sat up very straight in the trap. Her little chin went up in the air. She even went so far as to make a pretense of curbing the impudence of her horse.

"Mr. Medford was most entertaining. He was the life of the dinner," she returned somewhat severely.

"He's a professional." "An actor?" she cried incredulously.

"No; a professional diner out. Wasn't that rich young Jackson there?" "Why, yes. But do tell me how you knew." The girl was softening a little, her curiosity aroused.

"Of course I will," he said boyishly, at once pleased with himself and his sympathetic audience. "About 5:30 I happened to be in the club. Medford was there and, as usual, catering to Jackson, when the latter was called to the phone. Naturally I put two and two together." He paused to more thoroughly enjoy the look of utter mystification that hovered on the girl's countenance. It was very apparent that this method of deduction through addition was unsatisfying. "What Jackson said to Medford on his return," the young man continued, "I did not hear, but from the expression on the listener's face I could have wagered that an invitation had been extended and accepted. Oh, we boys have got it down fine. Garrison, is—"

"And who is Garrison?" "Garrison is the head dome man at the club. It's positively amazing the number of telephone calls he receives every afternoon from well known society women."

"What about? And what's that got to do with Mr. Medford taking me in to dinner?" "Just this: Suppose Mrs. Rowden—"

"Mrs. Rowden?" The girl was non-plussed.

"Yes—wants to find out who's in the club. She phones Garrison. Instantly, after ascertaining which set, younger or old, is wanted, from a small card upon which he has written a few but choice names of club members he submits a name to her."

"Really, you don't mean to tell me that such a thing is actually done?" exclaimed Miss Cable, who as yet was socially so unsophisticated as to be horrified. "You're joking, of course?"

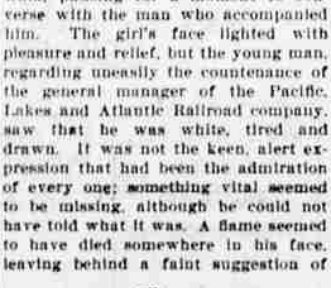
"But nine times out of ten," ignoring the interruption, "it is not with 'Don't want him!' Another: 'Makes a bad combination.' A third: 'Oh, no, no, dear, not a dollar to his name—hopelessly indigestible.' This last exclamation, though intended solely for the visitor, now struck approval of the speaker's discrimination, and presently he hears: 'Goodness me, Garrison, there must be some one else?' Then, to her delight, she is informed that Mr. Jackson has just come in, and he is requested to come to the phone, Garrison being dismissed with thanks and the expectation of seeing her later in the evening."

"How perfectly delicious!" came from the girl. "I can almost hear Mrs. Row-

den telling Jackson that he will be the dearest boy in the world if he will dine with her."

"And bring some one with him, as she is one man short," laughed Graydon, as he wound up lightly: "And here is where the professional comes in. We're all on to Medford! Why, Garrison has half a dozen requests a night—six times five—\$30. Not bad—but then the man's a 'who's who' that never makes mistakes. I won't be positive that he does not draw pay from both ends. For, men like Medford, outside of the club, probably tip him to give them the preference. It would be good business."

There was so much self-satisfaction in the speaker's manner of uttering these last words that it would not have required the wisdom of one older than Miss Cable to detect that he was thoroughly enjoying his pose of man of the world. He was indeed young, for he had yet to learn that not to disillusion the girl, but to conform as much as possible to her ideals, was the surest way to win her favor, and his vanity surely would have received a blow had not David Cable at that moment come out of the doorway across the sidewalk, pausing for a moment to converse with the man who accompanied him. The girl's face lighted with pleasure and relief, but the young man, regarding uneasily the countenance of the general manager of the Pacific, Lakes and Atlantic Railroad company, saw that he was white, tired and drawn. It was not the keen, alert expression that had been the admiration of every one; something vital seemed to be missing, although he could not have told what it was. A flame seemed to have died somewhere in his face, leaving behind a faint suggestion of



"Hello, Graydon! How are you?"

and through the young man's brain there flashed the remark of his fair companion: "He's in there now, working his dear old brain to pieces." "I'm sorry to have kept you waiting, Jane," said Cable, crossing to the curb. "Hello, Graydon! How are you?" His voice was sharp, crisp and louder than the occasion seemed to demand, but it was natural with him. Years of life in an engine cab do not serve to mellow the tone of the human voice, and the habit is too strong to be overcome. There was no polish to the tones as they issued from David Cable's lips. He spoke with more than ordinary regard for the queen's English, but it was because he never had neglected it. It was characteristic of the man to do a thing as nearly right as he knew how in the beginning and to do it the same way until a better method presented itself.

"Very well, thank you, Mr. Cable, except that Jane has been abusing me because you were not here to—"

"Don't you believe a word he says, dad," she cried.

"Oh, if the truth isn't in me, I'll subscribe," laughed Graydon. "Nevertheless you've kept her waiting, and it's only reasonable that she should abuse somebody."

"I am glad you were here to receive it. It saves my gray hairs."

"Rubbish!" was Miss Cable's simple comment as her father took his place beside her.

"Oh, please drive on, Jane," said the young man, his admiring eyes on the girl who grasped the reins afresh and straightened like a soldier for inspection. "I must run around to the University club and watch the score of the Yale-Harvard game at Cambridge. It looks like Harvard, hang it all! Great game, they say."

"There he goes on football. We must be off or it will be dark before we get away from him. Goodbye!" cried Miss Cable.

"How's your father, Gray? He wasn't feeling the best in the world yesterday," said Cable, tucking in the robe.

"A case of liver, Mr. Cable. He's all right today. Goodbye!"

As Jane and her father whizzed away the latter gave utterance to a remark

that brought a new brightness to her eyes and a proud throbbing to her heart, but he did not observe the effect.

"Bright, clever chap—that Graydon Bausemer," he said comfortably.



CHAPTER II.

HE general manager of the Pacific, Lakes and Atlantic Railroad system had had a hard struggle of it. He who begins his career with a shovel in a locomotive cab usually has something of that sort to look back upon. There are no roses along the pathway he has traversed. In the end, perhaps, he wonders if it has been worth while. David Cable was a general manager. He had been a fireman. It had required twenty-five years of hard work on his part to break through the chrysalis. Packed away in a chest upstairs in his house there was a grimy, greasy, unwholesome suit of once blue overalls. The garments were just as old as his railroad career, for he had worn them on his first trip with the shovel. When his wife implored him to throw away the "detestable things," he said, with characteristic humor, that he thought he would keep them for a rainy day. It was much simpler to go from general manager to fireman than vice versa, and it might be that he would need the suit again. It pleased him to hear his wife sniff contemptuously.

David Cable had been a wayward, venturesome youth. His father and mother had built their hopes high with him as a foundation, and he had proved a decidedly insecure basis, for one night in the winter of 1863 he stole away from his home in New York. Before spring he was fighting in the far southland, a boy of sixteen carrying a musket in the service of his country.

At the close of the civil war Private Cable, barely eighteen, returned to his home, only to find that death had destroyed his happiness. His father had died, leaving his widowed mother a dependent upon him. It was then philosophically he realized that labor alone could win for him, and he stuck to it with rigid integrity. In turn he became brakeman and fireman. Finally his determination and faithfulness won him a fireman's place on one of the fast New York Central "trunks." If ever he was dissatisfied with the work, no one was the wiser.

Railroading in those days was not what it is in these advanced times. Then it meant that one was possessed of all the evil habits that fall to the lot of man. David Cable was more or less contaminated by contact with his rough, ribald companions of the rail, and he glided moderately into the bad habits of his kind. He drank and "gambled" with the rest of the boys; but, by nature not being vicious and now, the influences were not hopelessly deadening to the better qualities of his character. To his mother he was always the strong, good hearted, manly boy, better than all the other sons in the world. She believed in him. He worshiped her, and it was not until he was well up in the twenties that he stopped to think that she was not the only good woman in the world who deserved respect.

Up in Albany lived the Widow Coleman and her two pretty daughters. Mrs. Coleman's husband died on the battlefield, and she, like many women in the north and the south, after years of moderate prosperity was compelled to support herself and her family. She had been a pretty woman, and one readily could see where her daughters got their personal attractiveness.

Not many doors from the boisterous little eating house in which the railroad men snatched their meals as they went through, the widow opened a book and news stand. Her home was on the floor above the stand, and it was there she brought her little girls to womanhood. Good looking, burly scamp Dave Cable saw Frances Coleman one evening as he dropped in to purchase a newspaper. It was at the end of June, in 1876, and the country was in the throes of excitement over the first news of the Custer massacre on the Little Big Horn river.

Cable was deeply interested, for he had seen Custer fighting at the front in the sixties. Frances Coleman, the prettiest girl he had ever seen, sold him the newspaper. After that, he seldom went through Albany without visiting the little book shop.

Tempestuous, even arrogant in love, Cable, once convinced that he cared for her, lost no time in claiming her, whether or no. In less than three months after the Custer massacre they were married.

Deviated rivals unanimously and anxiously observed that the haughtiest fireman on the road had conquered the most outrageous little coquette between New York and Buffalo. As a matter of fact, she had loved him from the start; the others served as thorns with which she delightedly pricked his heart into submission.

The young husband settled down, renounced all of his undesirable habits and became a new man with such surprising suddenness that his friends marvelled and—decided. A year of

happiness followed. He grew accustomed to her frivolous ways, overlooked her merry whimsicalities and gave her the "full length of a free rope," as he called it. He was contented and consequently careless. Starved under the indifference and in her resentment believed the worst of him. Turnall succeeded peace and contentment, and in the end David Cable, driven to distraction, weakly abandoned the domestic battlefield and fled to the far west, giving up home, good wages and all for the sake of freedom, such as it was. He ignored her letters and entreaties, but in all those months that he was away from her he never ceased to regret the impulse that had defeated him. Nevertheless he could not make up his mind to go back and resume the life of torture her jealousy had begotten.

Then the unexpected happened. A letter was received containing the command to come home and care for his wife and baby. At once David Cable called a halt in his demoralizing career and saw the situation plainly. He forgot that she had "nagged" him to the point where endurance rebelled; he forgot everything but the fact that he cared for her in spite of all. Sobered and conscience stricken, he knew only that she was alone and tending; that she had suffered uncomplainingly until the babe was some months old before appealing to him for help. In abject humiliation he hastened back to New York, reproaching himself every mile of the way. Had he but known the true situation he would have been spared the pangs of remorse and this narrative never would have been written.



CHAPTER III.

IN the city of New York there was practicing at that time a lawyer by the name of Bausemer. His office, on the top-most floor of a dingy building in the lower section of the city, was not inviting. On leaving the elevator one would ably through narrow halls and finally peered with more or less uncertainty and misgiving at the half obliterated sign which said that James Bausemer held forth on the other side of the glass panel.

It was whispered in certain circles and openly avowed in others that Bausemer's business was not the kind which elevates the law. In plain words, his methods were construed to debase the good and honest statutes of the land. Once inside the door of his office—and a heavy spring always closed it behind one—there was quick evidence that the lawyer lamentably disregarded the virtues of prosperity, no matter how they had been courted and won. Although his transactions in and out of the courts of that great city bore the mark of dishonor, he was known to have made money during the ten years of his career as a member of the bar.

Possibly he kept his office shabby and unclean that it might be in touch with the transactions which had their morbid birth inside the grimy walls. There was no spot or corner in the two small rooms that comprised his "chambers" to which he could point with pride. The floors were littered with papers; the walls were greasy and bedecked with unwholesome notices, documents and pictures; the windows were smoky and useless; the clerk's desk bore every suggestion of disrepute.

But little less appalling to one's sensitive sense was the clerk himself. Squinting behind his wretched desk, Elias Droom peered across the litter of papers and books with shabby but polite eyes, almost as inviting as the spider who with wily but insidious decorum draws the gullible into its web.

If one passed muster in the estimation of the incompressible Droom he was permitted in due season to pass through a second oppressive looking door and into the private office of Mr. James Bausemer, attorney at law and solicitor. It may be remarked at this early stage that, no matter how long or how well one may have known Droom, one seldom lingered to engage in commonplace with him. His was the most repellent personality imaginable. When he smiled one was conscious of a shock to the nervous system, when he so far forgot himself as to laugh aloud there was a distinct illustration of the word "crunching," when he spoke one was almost sorry that he had ears.

Bausemer knew but little of this freakish individual's history; no one else had the temerity to inquire into his past or to separate it from his future, for that matter. Once Bausemer, incidentally asked him why he had never married. It was a full minute before the other lifted his eyes from the sheet of legal cap, and by that time he was in full control of his passion.

"Look at me! Would any woman marry a thing like me?" This was said with such terrible earnestness that Bausemer took care never to touch the subject again. He saw that Droom's heart was not all steel and brass.

Droom was middle aged. His body and endowments were not

constructed on principles not generally accorded to nature as it applies to men. When one's body swayed as if it were a stubborn reed determined to maintain its dignity in the face of the wind, he did not walk; he glided. His long, square chin, rarely clean shaven, protruded far beyond its natural orbit. Indeed, the attitude of the chin gave one an insight to the greedy character of the man. At first glance one felt that Droom was reaching forth with his lower jaw to give greeting with his teeth instead of his hand.

His neck was long and thin, and his turndown collar was at least two sizes too large. The nose was hooked and of abnormal length, the tip coming down over the short upper lip and broad mouth. His eyes were light blue and so intense that he was never known to blink the lashes. Topping them were deep, wavy black eyebrows that met above the nose, forming an ominous, cloudy line across the base of his thin, high forehead. The crown of his head, covered by long,



Droom grinned diabolically as he resumed the rubbing of his hands.

scant strands of black hair, was of the type known as "retreating and pointed." The forehead ran upward and back from the brows almost to a point, and down from the pinnacle hung the veil of hair, just as if he had draped it there with the same care he might have used in placing his best hat upon a peg. His back was stooped, and the high, narrow shoulders were hunched forward eagerly. Long arms and ridiculously thin legs, with big hands and feet, told the story of his extremities. When he was on his feet Droom was more than six feet tall; as he sat in the low backed office chair he looked to be less than five feet over all.

The men had been classmates in an obscure law school down in Pennsylvania. Bausemer was good looking, forceful and young, while Droom was distinctly his opposite. Where he came from no one knew and no one cared. He was past thirty-five when he entered the school, at least twelve years the senior of Bausemer.

His appearance and attire proclaimed him to be from the country, but his sophistry, his knowledge of the world and his wonderful insight into human nature contradicted his looks immeasurably. A conflict or two convinced his fellow students that he was more than a match for them in stealth and cunning if not in dress and deportment.

Elias Droom had not succeeded as a lawyer. He repelled people, growing more and more bitter against the world as his struggles became harder. What little money he had accumulated—heaven alone knew how he came by it—divided to nothing, and he was in actual squalor when later Bausemer found him in an attic in Baltimore. Even as he engaged the half starved wretch to become his confidential clerk the lawyer shuddered and almost repented of his action.

But Elias Droom was worth his weight in gold to James Bausemer from that day forth. His employer's sole aim in life was to get rich and thereby to achieve power. His ambition was laudable if one accepts the creed of morals, but his methods were not so praiseworthy. After a year or two of strenuous struggles to get on with the legitimate he packed up his scribbles and laid them away—temporarily, he said. He resorted to sharp practice, knavery and all the forms of legal blackmail. It was not long before his bank account began to swell. His business thrived. He was so clever that not one of his shady proceedings was reported. It is safe to venture that he had per cent of the people who were bilked through his manipulations proclaimed in the heat of virtuous wrath to expose him, but he had learned to smile in security. He knew that exposing for him meant humiliation for the investigator, and he continued to rest easy while he worked hard.

"You're getting rich at this sort of thing," observed Droom one day after the lawyer had closed a particularly successful deal to his own satisfaction, "but what are you going to do when the tide turns?" Bausemer, irritated on perceiving that the other was engaged in his exasperating habit of rubbing his hands together, did not answer, but merely thumped out: "Will you stop that?" There was a faint suggestion of the possibility of a transition of the hands to fists as Droom abruptly desisted, but smilingly went on: "Some day the other shark will get the letter of you, and you'll have nothing to fall back on. You've been building a mighty slim foundation. There isn't a scrap of support if the worst comes to the worst," he chuckled.

"It's a large world, Tom. Employer easily. "And small also, Bausemer saying," supplemented the man's down, every day I'm afraid you could be kicking."

Droom grinned as he again he resumed, the hands that the other turned on a nail, and closed the side office. Bausemer was where Droom's eyes were but something told him to hang outside the door a while, as if waiting for a in and tantalize him.

Bausemer was a good the course mind—the kind merits a second look in the second look is not a factor. He was thirty-five but looked older. He had and deeply marked with tenacity. The black eyes, his cruel, savage light in the nose and mouth were pitiless in their very sympathy after leaving college in a shingle he had married the influence kept his efforts righteous path, but he was the yoke of poverty. His because he was unable to with more of the insurance his selfish way he loved to advance made him stern pered, despite her amiable lighten the shadows around home. When the baby to them and she suffered more from the calculations James Bausemer, by untrav sor, threw off restraint into the traffic that soon to famously successful. She ever, before the taint of touched her, and he ever felt thankful that she to know the truth.

At this time Bausemer fort at one of the middle ing houses uptown, and just leaving the kinder private school, Bausemer heart had one tender char it dwelt the little lad of hair and gray eyes of the had died.

Late one November before Bausemer put on coat to leave the office, Droom tapped on the door to his private of the clerk communicated a signal, a door button could acquaint his master that he ought to know, in the outer office would wiser. The occasions he went so far as to tap Bausemer was puzzled listened for sounds from side. Suddenly there came the voices of women, as Droom's suppressed but ous tones.

Bausemer opened the door into the outer office, he swaying before two women hands and smiling. women carried a small arms. Neither she nor seemed quite at ease in the of the bank guardian of the



CHAPTER IV.

ADY to be named, she showed, from the moment she up on the previous gaze of his clerk. Unwilling fell.

"Confound it, Live!" quit looking at me like the something positively out of state of yours?"

"Lady to see you," replied shifting about, though she long way to take his own the long row of lockers cases. He had performed dozen times a day for years. The habit had become that chains could not break him. It was what he did graceful way of dropping at the same time giving that he was constantly

"Are you Mr. Bausemer?" woman with the tale as he crossed into the outer

For a moment Bausemer remained absorbed in the tion of his finger nail, he sudden, comprehensive took in the young woman and all the supposed cases was no doubt in his was another "intentionally catalogued them in his

"I am," he replied usually made short cases. There was no in them at best. "Would ing in tomorrow? I'm the day."

"It will take but a few and it would be very get away again nervous young woman nervous-ness in a family my days are not very

(Continued Next Page) Prize night at the