



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 discovered by his father. He is out of work and in desperate straits. Underwood, who had 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 denies him the house. 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. Underwood tells him he is in debt up to his eyes. 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. The report of the pistol awakens Howard. He finds Underwood dead. Realizing his predicament he attempts to flee and is met by Underwood's valet. 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 says she will clear him. She 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 scorns his help.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the very heart of Manhattan, right in the center of the city's most congested district, an imposing edifice of gray stone, medieval in its style of architecture, towered high above all the surrounding dingy offices and squalid tenements. Its massive construction, steep walls, pointed turrets, raised parapets and long, narrow, slit-like windows, heavily barred, gave it the aspect of a feudal fortress incongruously set down plumb in the midst of twentieth century New York. The dull roar of Broadway hummed a couple of blocks away; in the distance loomed the lofty, graceful spans of Brooklyn bridge, jammed with its opposing streams of busy interurban traffic. The adjacent streets were filled with the din of hurrying crowds, the rattle of vehicles, the cries of vendors, the clang of street cars, the ugh! ugh! of speeding automobiles. The active, pulsating life of the metropolis surged like a rising flood about the tall gray walls, yet there was no response within. Grim, silent, sinister, the city prison, popularly known as "the Tombs," seemed to have nothing in common with the daily activities of the big town in which, notwithstanding, it unhappily played an important part.

The present prison is a vastly different place to the old jail from which it got its melancholy cognomen. To-day there is not the slightest justification for the lugubrious epithet applied to it, but in the old days, when man's inhumanity to man was less a form of speech than a cold, merciless fact, the "Tombs" described an intolerable and disgraceful condition fairly accurately. Formerly the cells in which the unfortunate prisoners were confined while awaiting trial were situated deep under ground and had neither light nor ventilation. A man might be guilty of the offense with which he was charged, yet while awaiting an opportunity to prove his innocence he was condemned to spend days, sometimes months, in what was little better than a grave. Literally, he was buried alive. A party of foreigners visiting the prison one day were startled at seeing human beings confined in such holes. "They look like tombs!" cried some one. New York was amused at the singularly appropriate appellation and it has stuck to the prison ever since.

But times change and institutions with them. As man becomes more civilized he treats the lawbreaker with more humanity. Probably society will always need its prisoners, but as we become more enlightened we insist on treating our criminals more from the physiological and psychological standpoints than in the cruel, brutal, barbarous manner of the dark ages. In other words the sociologist insists that the lawbreaker has greater need of the physician than he has of the jailer.

To-day the city prison is a tomb in name only. It is admirably constructed, commodious, well ventilated. The cells are large and well lighted, with comfortable cots and all the modern sanitary arrangements. There are roomy corridors for daily exercise and luxurious shower baths can be obtained free for the asking. There are chapels for the religiously inclined and a library for the studious. The food is wholesome and well prepared in a large, scrupulously clean kitchen situated on the top floor. Carping critics have, indeed, declared the Tombs to be too luxurious, declaring that habitual criminals enjoy a stay at the prison and actually commit crime so that they may enjoy some of its hotel-like comforts.

It was with a sinking heart and a dull, gnawing sense of apprehension that Annie descended from a south-bound Madison avenue car in Center street and approached the small portal under the forbidding gray walls. She had visited a prison once before, when her father died. She remembered the depressing ride in the train to Sing Sing, the formidable steel doors and ponderous bolts, the narrow cells, each with its involuntary occupant in degrading stripes and closely cropped hair, and the uniformed guards armed with rifles. She remembered how her mother wept and how she had wondered why they kept her poor da-da in such an ugly place. To think that after all these years she was again to go through a similar experience.

She had nerved herself for the ordeal. Anxious as she was to see Howard and learn from his lips all that had happened, she feared that she would never be able to see him behind the bars without breaking down. Yet she must be strong so she could work to set him free. So much had happened in the last two days. It seemed a month since the police had sent for her at midnight to hurry down to the Astoria, yet it was only two days ago. The morning following her trying interview with Capt. Clinton in the dead man's apartment she had tried to see Howard, but without success. The police held him a close prisoner, pretending that he might make an attempt upon his life. There was nothing for her to do but wait.

Intuitively she realized the necessity of immediately securing the ser-

vice of an able lawyer. There was no doubt of Howard's innocence, but she recalled with a shiver that even innocent persons have suffered capital punishment because they were unable to establish their innocence, so overwhelming were the appearances against them. He must have the best lawyer to be had, regardless of expense. Only one name occurred to her, the name of a man of international reputation, the mere mention of whose name in a courtroom filled the hearts of the innocent with hope and the guilty with dread. That man was Judge Brewster. She hurried downtown to his office and waited an hour before he could see her. Then he told her, politely but coldly, that he must decline to take her case. He knew well who she was and he eyed her with some curiosity, but his manner was frigid and discouraging. There were plenty of lawyers in New York, he said. She must go elsewhere. Politely he bowed her out. Half of a precious day was already lost. Judge Brewster refused the case. To whom could she turn now? In despair, almost desperate, she drove uptown to Riverside drive and forced an entrance into the Jeffries home. Here, again, she was met with a rebuff. Still not discouraged, she returned to Judge Brewster's office. He was out and she sat there an hour waiting to see him. Night came and he did not return. Almost prostrated with nervous exhaustion, she returned to their deserted little flat in Harlem.

It was going to be a hard fight, she saw that. But she would keep right on, no matter at what cost. Howard could not be left alone to perish without a hand to save him. Judge Brewster must come to his rescue. He could not refuse. She would return again to his office this afternoon and sit there all day long, if necessary, until he promised to take the case. He alone could save him. She would go to the lawyer and beg him on her knees if necessary, but first she must see Howard and bid him take courage.

A low doorway from Center street gave access to the gray fortress. At the heavy steel gate stood a portly policeman armed with a big key. Each time before letting people in or out he inserted this key in a ponderous lock. The gate would not open merely by turning the handle. This was to prevent the escape of prisoners, who might possibly succeed in reaching so far as the door, but could not open the steel gate without the big key. When once any one entered the prison he was not permitted to go out again except on a signal from a keeper.

When Annie entered she found the reception room filled with visitors, men and women of all ages and nationalities, who, like herself, had come to see some relative or friend in trouble. It was a motley and interesting crowd. There were fruit peddlers, sweat shop workers, sporty looking men, negroes and flashy looking women. All seemed callous and indifferent, as if quite at home amid the sinister surroundings of a prison. One or two others appeared to belong to a more respectable class, their sober manner and careworn faces reflecting silently the humiliation and shame



"So You're the Wife of Jeffries, Whom They've Got for Murder, Eh?"

They felt at their kinsman's disgrace. The small barred windows did not permit of much ventilation and, as the day was warm, the odor was sickening. Annie looked around fearfully and humbly took her place at the end of the long line which slowly worked its way to the narrow inner grating, where credentials were closely scrutinized. The horror of the place seized upon her. She wondered who all these poor people were and what the prisoners whom they came to see had done to offend the majesty of the law. The prison was filled with policemen and keepers and running in and out with messages and packages were a number of men in neat linen suits. She asked a woman who they were.

"Them's trustees — prisoners that has special privileges in return for work they does about the prison." The credentials were passed upon slowly and Annie, being the twentieth in line, found it a tedious wait. In front of her was a bestial looking negro, behind her a woman whose cheap jewelry, rouged face and extravagant dress proclaimed her profession to be the most ancient in the world. But at last the gate was reached. As the doorkeeper examined her ticket he looked up at her with curiosity. A murderer is rare enough even in the Tombs, to excite interest, and as she passed on the attendants whispered among themselves. She knew they were talking about her, but she stole herself not to care. It was only a foretaste of other humiliations which she must expect.

A keeper now took charge of her and led her to a room where she was

searched by a matron for concealed weapons, a humiliating ordeal, to which even the richest and most influential visitors must submit with as good grace as possible. The matron was a hard looking woman of about 50 years, in whom every spark of human pity and sympathy had been killed during her many years of constant association with criminals. The word "prison" had lost its meaning to her. She saw nothing undesirable in jail life, but looked upon the Tombs rather as a kind of boarding house in which people made short or long sojourns, according to their luck. She treated Annie unceremoniously, yet not unkindly.

"So you're the wife of Jeffries, whom they've got for murder, eh?" she said, as she rapidly ran her hands through the visitor's clothing. "Yes," faltered Annie, "but it's all a mistake, I assure you. My husband's perfectly innocent. He wouldn't hurt a fly." The woman grinned. "They all say that, m'm." Lugubriously she added: "I hope you'll be more lucky than some others were." Annie felt herself grow cold. Was this a sinister prophecy? She shuddered and, hastily taking a dollar from her purse, slipped it into the matron's hand.

"May I go now?" she said. "Yes, my dear; I guess you've got nothing dangerous on you. We have to be very careful. I remember once when we had that Hoboken murderer here. He's the feller that cut his wife's head off and stuffed the body in a barrel. His mother came here to see him one day and what did I find inside her stocking but an innocent looking little round pill, and if you please, it was nothing less than prussic acid. He would have swallowed it and the electric chair would have been cheated. So you see how careful we has to be."

Annie could not listen to any more. The horror of having Howard classed with fiends of that description sickened her. To the keeper she said quickly: "Please take me to my husband." Taking another dollar from her purse, she slipped the bill into the man's hand, feeling that, here as everywhere else, one must pay for privileges and courtesies. Her guide led the way and ushered her into an elevator, which, at a signal, started slowly upwards.

The cells in the Tombs are arranged in rows in the form of an ellipse in the center of each of the six floors. There is room to accommodate 900 prisoners of both sexes. The men are confined in the new prison; the women, fewer in number, in what remains of the old building. Only the center of each floor being taken up with the rows of narrow cells, there remains a broad corridor, running all the way round and flanked on the right by high walls with small barred windows. An observer from the street glancing up at the windows might conclude that they were those of the cells in which prisoners were confined. As a matter of fact, the cells have no windows, only a grating which looks directly out into the circular corridor.

At the fourth floor the elevator stopped and the heavy iron door swung back. "This way," said the keeper, stepping out and quickly walking along the corridor. "He's in cell No. 456." A lump rose in Annie's throat. The place was well ventilated, yet she thought she would faint from a choking feeling of restraint. All along the corridor to the left were iron doors painted yellow. In the upper part of the door were half a dozen broad slits through which one could see what was going on inside.

"Those are the cells," volunteered her guide. Annie shuddered as, mentally, she pictured Howard locked up in such a dreadful place. She peered through one of the slits and saw a narrow cell about ten feet long by six wide. The only furnishings were a folding cot with blanket, a wash bowl and lavatory. Each cell had its occupant, men and youths of all ages. Some were reading, some playing cards. Some were lying asleep on their cots, perhaps dreaming of home, but most of them leaning dejectedly against the iron bars wondering when they would regain their liberty.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Plant Breaking Up an Island. Strength is not a thing usually connected with maidenhair fern, yet if its roots have not sufficient room they break the pot in which the plant grows. Blades of grass will force the curbstones between which they spring up out of their place, and in a single night a crop of small mushrooms have lifted a large stone. Indeed, plants have been known to break the hardest rocks.

The island of Aldabra, to the northwest of Madagascar, is becoming smaller and smaller through the action of the mangroves that grow along the foot of the cliffs. They eat their way into the rock in all directions, and into the gaps thus formed the waves force their way. In time they will probably reduce the island to pieces.

Hypnotism and Will Power. People used to think that persons who could be hypnotized were deficient in will power, that it was something of a stigma on their mental equipment. The experts know better now. A writer in the Woman's Home Companion goes so far as to say that the more will power a person has the more readily he can be hypnotized.

Dr. Voisin, a French alienist, found that he could not hypnotize more than ten per cent. of the inmates of the asylum with which he was connected. Whereas an English experimenter named Vincent hypnotized with ease 96 per cent. of a large group of university men.

For Commissioner
To the Voters of Washington Co.:
The undersigned, a member of the Republican party, residing in Gales Creek precinct, announces himself a candidate for the Republican nomination for county commissioner at the primary election to be held April 19, 1912. If nominated I will accept, and if elected I will qualify as such officer. If nominated and elected I will during my term of office perform the duties of the office to the best of my ability and for the benefit of the taxpayers of the county.

JOHN MCCLAREN,
Candidate for Commissioner.
(Paid Advertisement.)

Candidate for Sheriff.
I hereby announce myself a candidate for the office of Sheriff of Washington county, subject to the will of the Republican voters at the primary election April 19, 1912. I am a resident of Hillsboro, and have been a Republican all my life. If nominated I will use my best efforts to secure my election, and if elected will pledge myself to conduct the affairs of the office in an honest, efficient, economical and business-like manner and at all times keeping in mind the interests of the tax-paying public.

FRED E. CORNELIUS,
(Paid Advertisement.)

SURVEYOR
I wish to announce that I will be an independent candidate for election in November to the office of county surveyor for Washington county. My name will not be before the primary nominating election, but will file as independent candidate for election.

A. A. KIRKWOOD,
Forest Grove, Ore.
(Paid Advertisement.)

J. W. GOODIN
North Plains, Oregon. Candidate for Republican nomination For County Judge.
(Paid Advertisement.)

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W. H. HOLLIS
Of Washington County.

I wish to announce my candidacy for nomination to the office of senator for the senatorial district comprising Washington, Tillamook, Yamhill and Lincoln counties, subject to the will of the Republican voters, at the primary election, April 19, 1912.

W. H. HOLLIS.
(Paid Advertisement.)

FOR STATE SENATOR

If I am nominated and elected I will, during my term of office, vote for the candidate for United States senator who has received the highest number of votes at the preceding election for that office.

Will support an economy that will keep down expenditures and apply the acid test to all appropriations and see that when made they have been judiciously expended and sufficient for which appropriated, thus avoiding deficiencies.

New boards and commissions have been unnecessarily created and some of these should be abolished, rather than more created.

I believe in a judicial reform that will insure more speedy justice, prevent delays and save money for the taxpayers of Washington county.

W. D. WOOD.

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