

METHODS OF BLACKMAILING LAWYERS REVEALED IN PLAY

How Unscrupulous Members of the Bar Fleece Their Victims as Shown in George Scarborough's "At Bay"—A Heroine, a Schoolgirl Marriage and a Rascally Lawyer Make Powerful Scene

IN THAT gripping play called "At Bay," by George Scarborough, there is a powerful scene between the heroine who had contracted a secret schoolgirl marriage and a rascally lawyer who had obtained possession of one of her letters to the husband who had deserted her.

Judson Flagg, the blackmailing lawyer, is expecting a visit from Aline Graham, daughter of the District Attorney. He has telephoned her he has one of her letters revealing her marriage. The scene is in Flagg's office. He is carefully examining a camera and flashlight apparatus, glances at watch, chuckles satisfied, goes leisurely over to safe and opens it, takes out small japanned tin box, takes key ring from pocket and opens it, pauses to take a look at the letter on desk again. The portiere at centre opens and Aline enters. With one hand she holds a scarf partly over her face, glancing about to see that Flagg is alone.

Aline—Mr. Flagg.

Flagg—Oh, pardon! (Has instinct to hide box; put hands over breast as though in pain.)

Aline—I phoned you—

Flagg (controls himself)—Sit down.

Aline—Please let me see that letter you say you have. (Flagg picks up tin box and crosses to cabinet, locking box.)

Flagg—Miss Graham?

Aline—Yes.

Flagg—Sit down.

Aline—I must hurry!

Flagg—We won't be disturbed here.

Aline—Let me see the letter, if you have it. (Flagg sits in revolving chair at left of desk, again indicating chair for her on opposite side; she is impatient.)

Flagg—Presently (He scrutinizes her admiringly.)

Aline—Please hurry!

Flagg—You're a pretty woman, Miss Graham.

Aline—I didn't come here for that, sir.

Flagg—More beautiful than the lady in my picture—(He indicates picture above the camera) Good painting—Salon—Paris. (Reaches his left hand over and touches electric button.)

Aline—I haven't time for pictures—I must hurry. You know it! Please let me see the letter and go!

Flagg—You said over the phone you hadn't written any letter you were afraid of?

Aline—I haven't!

Flagg—Then, why are you here?

Aline—If you have such a letter it's a forgery.

Flagg—Why didn't you forge a marriage certificate?—One of them covers a multitude of sins.

Aline—You said you had a letter of mine—I've come to see that. If you won't let me see it I'm going. (Flagg rises, crosses to cabinet, unlocks tin box, leisurely examining contents, consisting of letters, &c.) Please hurry. (Unable to control her nervousness, she goes to centre door, cautiously lifts portiere and looks out to assure herself they are alone; listens, stands impatiently while he indulges in cynical running comment.)

Flagg—(Consults red morocco index.) Graham—Aline—that's it—(Pause. Takes letter) You ladies, Miss Graham, seem to go upon the theory that indiscretion is the better part of love—but it's a mistake. Next time be certain to steer your gentleman friend against a magistrate and a certificate—prosaic, but safer—and in the end—

cheaper. Ah, here it is—Woolworth—Graham! Does that recall anything to you? (She controls herself as Flagg drops book back in box, again sits at desk, takes letter from envelope and smiles.)

Aline—Oh, let me see it!

Flagg—No; listen to it. (He reads): "Oh, Tom, you can't desert me now; I won't believe even your own words." Remember it? (Pause.) No? What? (Reads): "You said there was romance in being your wife in secret; I can't believe it was all a masquerade; I won't believe it; I must see you before you go—"

(Aline trembles and supports herself by the desk.)

Aline—Oh—

Flagg—And then you write of the three heavenly days with the murmur of the sea through the open window. (Pause.) Forgery or genuine?

Aline—Let me see it myself, please. (He hesitates, then hands her the letter.)

Flagg—Be careful with it; it's very valuable.

(She takes the letter, glances at it, breaks down.)

Flagg (going to her)—Don't cry; it's better to have loved and repented than never to have loved at all. That's life; everybody has some such little shadow; we'd die of stagnation without some experience.

Aline (regaining control)—How much do you want for that letter?

Flagg—Two thousand dollars.

Aline—I haven't that much money; I can't get it.

Flagg—Your friends?

Aline—I can't appeal to my friends for money.

Flagg—Papa?

Aline (with spirit)—You know who my father is, and this is blackmail!

Flagg—Why not have me arrested?

Aline—I would if I were a man.

Flagg (smiling)—My best clients are gentlemen.

Aline—If my father knew this he'd kill you!

Flagg—Fathers don't kill any more; they're like husbands, they compromise.

Aline—Here are \$210; it's all the money I have.

Flagg—I said two thousand.

(She tosses the bills on the table, opens her coat and unpins the two long stemmed roses at her corsage, drops the roses on the desk and hands him the emerald brooch with which the roses were fastened.)

Aline—This emerald will nearly make it up.

Flagg (examining emerald)—What's it worth?

Aline—I don't know exactly; enough for you anyway.

Flagg—Less than a thousand I'd say.

Aline—But it's everything I have, and I promise to pay you the balance.

Flagg—Ladies are careless about paying.

Aline—Every penny I get will come to you until you are paid—believe me!

(He shakes his head; finally pitches the brooch back on the desk.)

Flagg—I'm a business man, but the man in me is more important than the business.

Aline—You mean I may have it?

Flagg—I mean there's a way to get it. You're very pretty, my dear, and mock marriages are the real thing. You—you're a young person of experience—we could be friends.

Aline—You're mistaken.

Flagg—No, I'm not. You and Woolworth had three days together by the

free hand. In the course of the struggle papers and one of the roses are knocked from the desk to the floor. He

We'd have a hundred strung through the year.

Aline—There's your money; I'm going.

Flagg (interposing)—Oh, no.

Aline—You mustn't stop me.

Flagg—I'll keep the letter till you can pay cash for it or be friendly.

(Her grip tightens on the letter, which she still holds, and she takes a backward step fearfully.)

Aline—No.

Flagg (angrily)—Give it to me. (Follows.)

Aline (Retreating)—No, it's mine! Mine! You have no right to it—you never had any right to it!

(He starts toward her round upper end of desk.)

Flagg—Give it to me! What the hell do you think I am?

(She thrusts the letter behind her and quickly glances toward the centre door. He interposes; seizes her very roughly.)

Aline—Don't put your hand on me!

Flagg—That letter—give it up!

Aline—I won't! I won't!

(They struggle.)

Aline—A letter belongs to the person who wrote it.

(Her desperate resistance taxes his strength. To overcome her his arm goes about her waist and tightens; she struggles to release herself.)

Flagg—Going to take it, eh? Like hell!

(She strikes him in the face with her

pinions the hand with which she struck him as she cries hysterically.)

Aline—Let me go! Let me go!

(Picks up the steel letter file.)

Flagg—Put that down! I'll break your arm!

(She gives a sob of pain and strikes him in the forehead with the base of the paper file, which infuriates him.)

And your damned neck, too!

(Grabs her throat.)

Aline—(Fighting hard)—You're choking me.

(Reverses the paper file, plunges the sharp point into his breast. He staggers back, releasing her; he gasps; she is horrified at what she has done.)

Flagg—Ah—ah—try—(Pause)—to murder me!

(Staggering, gasps and calls)—Tommy! Tommy!

Aline—I didn't mean to kill you!

Flagg—Tommy!

(He sinks into chair at desk, his face distorted with pain; with his right hand tries to pull the file out of his breast; Aline watches him, paralyzed with fright and horror.)

Tommy—(Off stage)—You call me, Uncle Jud?

Flagg—Come quick—Tommy.

Tommy—Yes, Uncle Jud.

(Flagg pulls weapon from his breast; grabs brooch with left hand and sprawls across desk, right hand still holding the file; with left hand gropes for electric button. Aline picks up rose on desk; searches an instant for brooch.)



Guy Standing, leading man of play, and George Scarborough, author.



Mario Majeroni and Chrystal Herne in lawyer's office scene in "At Bay."

Flagg pushes the button. Flashlight explodes. Aline rushes out.

Tommy—(Off stage)—Uncle—Uncle—Uncle Jud!

(Silence. Lights out.)

Showing That It Pays to Be Careful

THERE is nothing like being careful," said Capt. Jim Bradley of the revenue cutter Hudson, as he stood in the pilot house guiding his vessel neatly between a heavy car float and a Staten Island ferryboat. "I remember the time I was on the Mercedida blockading Charleston during the civil war.

"The Mercedida mounted a Parrott gun in the bow and several six pounders along the sides. I was a first class fireman aboard of her and only 17 years old at that.

"And I was a careful boy in those days, as I was saying. I had a new

pair of boots and the way I used to take care of those boots was a caution. I had to watch 'em like a hawk or they would have been stolen.

"Early one morning, just before going on watch, I was sitting there in the fore'sle and what was I doing but putting mutton tallow on my boots. I thought they were gettin' dried up and as they cost me \$28 I couldn't allow that to happen.

"And did I tell you about the rats on the Mercedida? Well, sir, there were more rats in that ship than a broken down corner, and big fellows too, some of them big enough to frighten the master at arms, and he had seen some rats in his day, being a deep water sailor just off a tea clipper.

"Just as I said before, I was latherin' my new boots with tallow this morning just before turn to and what did I do but go to sleep. And when the call came to go below and tend fires there was Jim Bradley snoozin' away fit to kill and the first thing I knew I felt a sharp pain in my hand and looking down saw a rat as big as a woodchuck

nibbling away at my thumb. I let out a yell and just then there was a thunderin' report and the ship seemed to be knocked eleven feet west.

"Come to find out a rebel gunboat had sneaked out of the harbor in the early morning mist, had come close aboard and fired a shot clean through the fire room, killing every man there, about eleven all told. And I s'pose if I had been there I'd 'a' got it too.

"So you see it pays to be careful. If I hadn't got up early to grease my boots and fell asleep doing it why I'd be there yet and not dodgin' car floats still in Uncle Sam's service.

"What did the rat bite my hand for? Well, he and some of his friends had eaten all the tallow off my boots and he wanted what was on my hand. They ate a lot of holes in my boots and I had to chuck 'em overboard.

"The Mercedida? Well, sir, the little Mercedida was captured that morning by the Johnny Rebs and had to go to Hilton Head and behave herself. We were all sent up to Philadelphia on parole afterward and I wound up as captain of the Admiral's gig."

Romance and History of Actors and the Theatre in America

Continued from Seventh Page.

with a laurel wreath. Critics generally are agreed that, for a man who could "neither walk nor talk," Irving made a simply amazing success as an actor. This was very largely due to his tall, impressive figure and to his face—far and away the most fascinating face which has ever been seen on our stage. The high forehead, set off by strongly marked and exceedingly flexible eyebrows, the large, possibly nose, the narrow, sensitive lips, the strong, thin jaw, the glowing and cavernous eyes—and, to crown all, the hair—continued to make a head which, even if empty, could have meant a fortune for an actor. Irving's head was by no means empty. The man was a most devout student of stage history, with deep and highly intellectual interest in everything that bore even remotely upon his work. Hence his success in life of obvious disadvantages. Henry Irving was a man of one passion, and that for his calling.

Edwin Booth was born at his father's farm in Belair, Md., on the night of November 13, 1833, a night fitly marked by a series of meteoric showers. He was named Edwin after Forrest, who had been his father's friend but was never his. Without intending to do so, young Booth superseded the elder tragedian in the public esteem.

The relationship of these two Edwin's to the American Theatre William Winter has stated in a few pregnant sentences. When the nineteenth century dawned he shows us, Hodgkinson and Cooper were the principal tragic figures on the American stage, but by the middle of the century Forrest was the reigning theatrical monarch. It was under Forrest that America theatrically attained for the first time a character of its own. Then came Charlotte Phelps and E. L. Davenport to emphasize the fact that we were no longer a province of England.

Yet the art of acting was not spiritual

and intellectual as well as American until Edwin Booth rose to eminence. He it was who gave to dramatic expression in this country sensitiveness, taste and feeling. Americans who regard the theatre as a force for great good in our life as a people cannot redden too much honor, therefore, to Edwin Booth. For, as Augustin Daly said in his final tribute: Booth was certainly the greatest tragic actor of his time and beyond dispute the noblest agent as man and actor, our stage has known this century."

The most impressive years of the lad Edwin's life were passed in the purlieus of the stage, where it was his singular office to act as mentor, dresser, companion and guide to his highly gifted but exceedingly erratic father. This father seems never to have concerned himself much about his son's education, but he was steadily opposed to having Edwin on the stage, and when the decisive first step was taken in a half accidental manner he gave it only negative countenance.

What Booth was to tragedy in this country Joseph Jefferson was to comedy. Like Booth, he came of a well known actor family; like Booth, he had the highest respect for his art; and, again like Booth—he was a scholar and a gentleman. Jefferson was very pleasantly told his life story in his delightful "Autobiography," a book which no lover of the stage should fail to read. Yet since it would be absurd to write at all of the American theatre without giving some sketch of its most gifted comedian it behooves me here to record that Rip Van Winkle Jefferson began his active life on the "boards" at the age of 4, by being dumped from a paper bag carried by Thomas D. Rice, who was impersonating an eccentric and agile negro and who sang this couplet:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'd have yer for a little darkey here to jump Jim Crow."

Whereupon both the man and the diminutive lad, who was dressed exactly

like him, danced the dance and sang the song that are remembered to this day.

"He was anxious to appear in London," wrote Boucicault, "and all his pieces had been played there. The managers would not give him an appearance unless he could offer them a new play. He had played a piece called 'Rip Van Winkle,' but when he submitted this for their perusal they rejected it. Still, he was so desirous of playing Rip that I took down Washington Irving's story and read it over. It was hopelessly undramatic.

"'Joe,' I said, 'this old set is not a pleasant figure. He lacks romance, I dare say you make a fine sketch of the old bear, but there is no interest in him. He may be picturesque, but he is not dramatic. I would prefer to start him in a play as a young scamp, thoughtless, gay, just a curly headed, good humored fellow such as all the village girls would love and the children and dogs would run after.' Jefferson threw up his hands in despair. It was totally opposed to his artistic preconception. But I insisted and he reluctantly complied. Well, I wrote the play as he plays it now. It was not much of a literary production, and it was with some apology that it was handed to him. He read it, and when he met me I said: 'It is a poor thing, Joe.' 'Well,' he replied, 'it is good enough for me.' It was produced. Three or four weeks afterward he called on me and his first words were: 'You were right about making Rip a young man. Now I could not conceive and play him in any other shape.'

"The thing was indeed almost perfect and when given its initial performance at the London Adelphi, on the evening of September 4, 1865, scored a great success, as it deserved to do. For the part, as interpreted by Jefferson, had the irresistible charm of poetry. Moreover, it is perhaps the most profoundly moral piece which has ever drawn large and promiscuous audiences to a theatre. A minister once wrote of the play: 'No

sermon except that of Christ when He stood with the adulterous woman ever illustrated the power of love to conquer evil and to win the wanderer as that little part (of Rip) does, so perfectly embodied by this genius which God has given us, to show in the drama the power of love over the sins of the race.'

In similar strain William Winter has testified to the wonderful, lasting impression produced by Jefferson's acting of this part: "Not Edwin Booth's Hamlet, nor Hilda's Queen Elizabeth, nor Adelade Neilson's Juliet, nor Salvini's Othello," he once wrote, "has so towered in popularity or so dominated contemporary thought upon the influence of the stage."

In view of the two or three hundred dollar a week salaries now frequently paid to leading ladies—costumes being supplied—it is interesting to learn that for many years Miss Cushman received only a modest twenty-five dollars a week, upon which she had to dress her roles besides supporting herself and her family. It is not strange, therefore, that later, when her material reward became greater, she sometimes showed herself to be a little grasping. William Winter relates that when arrangements were being made for her farewell performance at Booth's Theatre she was much more interested in the amount of extra salary she was to receive for that night than in the elaborate exercises planned for the occasion. And I have it on an unimpeachable authority that she disposed of the bronze statues presented to her on the occasion of her farewell performance at the Globe Theatre, Boston, for money, arguing that as she already possessed similar ones the money was much better worth having. All of which is perhaps only another way of saying that Charlotte Cushman was blessed with a generous share of New England thrift. To read these anecdotes of her is to recall, indeed, David Garrick's protecting care for candle ends. Like Garrick, however, she could give lavishly to worthy causes—she contributed more than eight thousand dollars to the Sani-

tary Commission—and also, like Garrick, she did much by the dignity of her private life to elevate the tone of the acting profession.

Another American woman who has done this is Miss Mary Anderson, perhaps the most celebrated of our other homeborn actresses and a player whose natural endowments Miss Cushman at once recognized. Her advice to the girl was to begin "at the top," where, as Daniel Webster said, there is always plenty of room. This counsel Mary Anderson devoutly followed. At the age of 16 she made her debut in Louisville in the part of Juliet, and the verdict being in her favor, the manager gave her a regular engagement. Thus from January, 1876, until the season preceding her marriage and retirement to private life, she played with increasing popularity throughout the chief cities of the United States.

Barrett was born at Paterson, N. J., April 4, 1838, and passed at Detroit, Mich., a cramped and sordid childhood. He managed somehow, while still only a boy and very meagrely educated, to obtain a humble post in a theatre, and here he became possessed of a single but very precious book, Dr. Johnson's Dictionary. By the light of the candle ends which had been thrown away in the dressing room of the theatre he studied his treasure of a dictionary at odd hours and so improved himself that in the season of 1853 he was cast for a small part in "The French Spy."

New York first knew Barrett in 1855; very soon after this he supported many of the leading players of the day. Boston, Philadelphia and Washington then enjoyed his work as a resident actor until he joined Edwin Booth's company at the Winter Garden for the season of 1863-64. Three years later he made his first professional visit to England. Subsequently for some time he was associated with John McCullough as a San Francisco manager, then, in 1870, he made the success of his career by giving us the best Cassius America has ever known.

LONDON'S NOVEL NEW TAXICAB



This unusual taxicab has just made its initial appearance on the streets of London. The cab, which has three wheels, is propelled by a one-cylinder eight horsepower water cooled motor and can seat three passengers. The front seat is arranged so that it may be turned toward rear.