

THE FOURTH ESTATE

Novelized by FREDERICK R. TOOMBS From the Great Play of the Same Name by Joseph Medill Patterson and Harriet Ford.

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features, and the low cut neck of her sleeveless gown completed a picture of feminine loveliness that, innocently enough on her part, was admirably adapted to the purpose Judge Bartelmy had in his unprincipled mind when he sent her to the Advance office. "You are my only hope," he had told her after Dupuy had at first failed to locate Nolan. "You must go and plead with Wheeler Brand or else I am ruined. Your father will be ruined absolutely." At the sight of her father's emotion and yielding to the fervent pleadings of her only living parent she had willingly consented to undertake the mission. Unpleasant though she knew it would be, she believed it her duty to stand by in his hour of dire need the father whom she loved, the father whom she did not know.

As she entered the office and paused in conjecture as to just how she would proceed she heard footsteps hurriedly ascending the stairs, and, withdrawing into a shadow in a corner, she saw Michael Nolan and Mrs. Nolan cross the hall and disappear into the composing room. "Thank heaven!" she murmured fervently. "They will stop this story, which father says is a horrible lie." Wheeler Brand will never forget—



Remember the story of the creation was told in 600 words. has since said so from the depths of his soul—the shock that went through him when he saw Nolan, accompanied by his wife, making their way toward him on that memorable night. McHenry was speaking when they entered. "There is your first page, Brand," he was saying, "and it sends Bartelmy to state prison." The managing editor gazed approvingly at the appearance of the page of type and the cut in the form as it lay exposed on one of the stones under a shaded electric light. He looked up to congratulate McHenry on the manner in which he had completed the makeup of the page when his jaw suddenly fell. His eyes took on an amazed stare. He was looking straight over the night editor's shoulder. McHenry caught Brand's expression and whirled about. Then he, too, saw the owner of the Advance and his wife draw near. The triumphant air with which the wife and mother sailed along by his side boded no good to Brand and his story. Nolan paused in front of the form without looking at the contents at first. "Wheeler," he said kindly, "I've been notified about this story, and I think it best that I read it carefully myself, analyze it and learn all the circumstances under which it was procured before I allow it to go to press. That is a task which cannot be done in the short time that remains before press time, so we had best let it go over until tomorrow—delay it one day. That won't hurt the story any." Mrs. Nolan clutched at the ex-miner's arm and cried shrilly: "Now, now, Michael, that's not your usual way to explain things to one of your employees. Order him to destroy all this miserable stuff about the judge at once. Don't hesitate like this. Think what it means to me, to the children, to us," she pleaded. "There, there, mother; you keep out of this," said Nolan kindly, yet firmly. "I'm trying to do the best I can for you. It's because of you that I'm here now. But you see?" Ed Dupuy burst excitedly upon them, and as the typesetters were beginning to become distracted from their work owing to the unusual situation Brand began to fear that this new intruder would prove the final demoralizer of the entire night shift. "Mr. Nolan," cried Dupuy, "we haven't a minute to lose! They are almost ready to go to press." He looked intently at the newspaper owner. "Yes, quite right. We do go to press very soon," cried Brand confidently, "and I know Michael Nolan is the man who will order it done." "Michael," cried Mrs. Nolan at the top of her voice, which rose sharply

over the din of the typesetting machines, "are you going to stand for this? Mr. Brand acts as if he owned the Advance and treats you as if you were the office boy. He thinks he's a great reformer and knows it all. We other people have a right to our opinions, too, and I don't see why you and your family should be made to suffer on account of him as we have had to ever since you took him up." Judith Bartelmy heard the stormy scene, lived a part of it herself huddled in the managing editor's office. She felt that Nolan would not let the story be used from what she had heard, and she could not suppress a pang of pain that pierced her heart at what she believed to be the fanatical vindictiveness of Wheeler Brand against her father. Yet she was a true woman, and she could not, in spite of her loyalty to her parent, avoid feeling a touch of pride at his strength of character, his determination, at the sacrifices he had made, to accomplish what he believed, even if foolishly, to be his duty. "They don't need me," she finally muttered, and, gathering up her costly skirts, she tripped daintily across the paper strewn floor, out into the hall and down to her carriage. Nolan dropped his head in thought when his wife had finished her tirade. He paced up and down nervously. He looked at the clock, then at the form with its accusing contents, then at Brand, then at his wife. "I'll go and telephone Judge Bartelmy," put in Dupuy. "He'll be anxious." The lawyer took himself off. Brand saw the danger of delay. He doubted if any man would be able to successfully withstand the pressure that Bartelmy and Nolan's family would be able to bring to bear on the owner in another twenty-four hours. "No, no!" he exclaimed to Nolan. "You would fall me again. I have tried to prove this judge's guilt to the people, but I fear I have only succeeded in proving it to his daughter. A day's delay would be fatal, I know. At least Bartelmy could get another judge to issue an injunction against us even if he would not dare to do it himself. And there are other steps he might take." His voice rose higher, and he worked himself into a frenzy of earnestness. He stood before the little group gathered around the ink black form and continued his impassioned words: "You know I thought we were going to be absolutely unmuzzled here. You were a free man. Poverty couldn't frighten you, and you had seen both sides of life. You promised to back me up, no matter what it cost, so long as we printed the truth, but at the first big test you fall me." Mrs. Nolan was on the point of becoming hysterical in her agitation. "Michael, Michael!" she began. "There, mother, you go home with Sylvester. He's waiting outside for you. After all, this is a man's job we've got here. I am the head of the family, and I will settle this matter in my own way," he said sternly. "You must not attempt further to interfere." He led her out of the room. Brand spoke to McHenry. "Did you hear, Mac?" he asked. "He won't decide to run it." "It's tough, old man—it's tough!" "This is such a live thing I don't see how I can kill it," the managing editor said, rubbing his hand over the face of the form. "That's the best first page ever made up in America," said McHenry, with justifiable professional pride. Brand was inconsolable. "I've been working ten years for just this thing," he said, "something so plain that even children would see what the big thieves are doing." "You go home!" Brand suddenly ordered McHenry. "What?" was the surprised exclamation. "I said go home!" Brand's face was beginning to twitch nervously. He stood in the middle of the composing room, under the flooding white glare from a sixty-four candle power electric light, and clinched and unclenched his hands, not daring to look McHenry squarely in the face. The night editor began to guess what was passing through Brand's mind. "Yes, but," he began to protest—"but," Brand cut him short, saying agitatedly: "I am still managing editor." McHenry now realized plainly that the intensely earnest Brand had decided to run the story that very night regardless of Nolan's attitude. It would be an easy matter, as Nolan, of course, would not remain at the office much longer. And McHenry well knew that such an act would not only bring about Brand's discharge from the Advance, but that it would as well injure his reputation in other newspaper offices, where obedience to one's superior, as a man's first duty under all circumstances. "Why, man," he exclaimed questioningly, "you're surely not going to run this story?" Before Brand could give an answer to this last question, even if he had intended to do so, Nolan broke in on the pair. "Mr. Nolan," began Brand, "you have heard the whole story of this miserable affair, both sides of it—Bartelmy's and my own, from our own lips. Whatever defense or explanation Bartelmy gave you I don't know. But, so far as I am concerned, I told you the facts and the truth. You must believe it. Therefore why do you or how in heaven's name can you hesitate?" Michael Nolan's face shone with the light of determination. "Wheeler, my boy," he said, "I have learned much from you. I have needed

contact with such a man as you. I have led a rough life for most of my career. When I rose to be chairman of the Street Railway Workers' union I did so simply through my ruggedness of character, my ability to master men. Then I was driven out into the world, an outcast, and became a day laborer in the mines. When the day came that I owned my own mine it was again a case of fight, fight, FIGHT, for the lawless claim jumpers threatened me above ground, and the lawless floods assailed me below ground. So in the life I led I did not get the opportunity to study or even become familiar with the important questions and the problems that confront the men that guide the policy of newspapers." Nolan drew close to Brand and placed his hand affectionately on the young editor's shoulder. "But you, Wheeler—you have taught me much about those big issues that I did not know, and you have shown to me the high ideals that should guide the newspaper writer, the newspaper editor and the newspaper owner as well. You are right in this case." His voice rose to majestic heights. "Wheeler Brand, I have learned from you that the Advance is more than a newspaper. It is a great, throbbing, potential force. It is the strong arm of the Right standing against the evil arm of the Wrong. So we must not falter. We must not delay. Show the big thieves up, Wheeler. Let the story go to press." Nolan turned quickly away and hastened out and down into the street. A warm glow of enthusiasm spread over the face of Wheeler Brand as he picked up a bundle of proofs. "We'll show them up!" he cried exultantly. "We'll show them up, and we'll put them down!" CHAPTER XIV. BRAND and McHenry began eagerly to inspect the final proofs of the Bartelmy story. Two figures suddenly stood in the doorway of the composing room. Ed Dupuy's telephone call was beginning to show results. Judge Bartelmy and Judith, ready for a last effort to prevent the publication of the condemnatory article, quite unobserved, glanced to where Brand and his associate editor were at work. "Don't come in yet. Wait a few moments," whispered the judge. The girl slipped down the hall into the managing editor's little office, the coin of vantage from which she had previously been able to hear all that took place in the composing room. Bartelmy proceeded directly to the form before which the two editors were working, and Brand saw that he must undergo another unpleasant encounter before the presses began to whirl off his story. He glanced impatiently at the clock and raised his brows questioningly to the judge. "Mr. Brand, has Mr. Nolan been here tonight?" asked Bartelmy. "Yes." "Have you received instructions about this story?" "Yes." "What were those instructions? Is the story to be printed?" "I am not at liberty to discuss with any outside person the communications I receive from the owner, but I will add for your information that the story will be on the press in a very few minutes." At this latest declaration of Brand's Judith could restrain herself no longer. She rushed through the doorway, across the grimy floor, regardless of the flowing train of her silk gown. Brand rubbed the back of his hand across his eyes as though they were deceiving him. "Good God, it is Judith!" he exclaimed. Then he turned to his assistant. "Here, Mac, hurry—take this form away!" The girl's face and eyes were aglow with the effects of the nervous strain under which she labored on the epoch making and epoch breaking night before the startled night shift of the Advance. "Wheeler, you're not going to use that picture?" she pleaded. "Take the form away," again ordered Brand, his voice almost falling him. "No, no; don't send it! Wait, wait!" She threw herself over the ink form, her arms outstretched. Brand tried to draw her away. "Judith, please!" he protested. "They can't have!" She was hysterical. "Go to lunch, boys," ordered Brand to the typesetters. "We'll miss the mail," protested McHenry. "I don't care. Go to lunch." The compositors ceased work at the linotypes and, wondering and whispering, slowly filed out. "Judith," Brand besought her, "won't you?" "Listen to me, Wheeler," she broke in. "I know everything. Father has told me everything about—his—guilt. You understand what it means to me—what he is to me. You must spare him for me!" "Judith, it's impossible." "But it is the human thing to do. Oh, forget these ideals. Be just a man—a man who loves a woman and protects her. You do love me, I know, in spite of everything that you've done." "Yes, I love you!" he cried fervently. "And Wheeler, dear, I've not changed," she told him fondly. "I can see how right you mean to be in what you are trying to do, but in this you are wrong. Whatever my father may have done, his intentions were honest. He had been involved by others and when he tried to extricate himself it was too late. They, not he, were guilty. It was for their sakes, not his, that he offered you that money, so you see you are wrong. Why,

Wheeler, if you belonged to me and committed a crime I would die to shield you from the penalty." Brand answered her quickly. "That is wrong reasoning." "No, no; it is right. That must always be," she cried. "It is like—like a law of life. Can't you see that too? I belong to you. Yes, I belong to you, and you should shield me. You must feel toward my father as he were your own because he is mine. It's not possible that you would do this thing to your own father. Think of him that way—your own father! You'll not regret it. I'll make it up to you with all my love for all the rest of life! Wheeler, say you will do what I ask." She broke down completely and sobbed brokenly, leaning across the form. "Oh, say you will do what I ask!" Brand tried to raise her, but she clung to him frenziedly. "Judith, for God's sake, don't!" he said. "Yes, yes; you must, you shall!" She was losing all control of herself in her desperation. "Judith, listen to me," he said inspiringly. "I'm not the man who loves you or is loved by you. I've no right to think of you or of myself. I'm an instrument to an end in the history of a great God. Can't you see this thing as I do?" "I can't reason. I can't argue. I can only feel." The judge had drawn a few steps away from the pair during the scene between them. He viewed with calculating satisfaction the battle that his daughter was waging so valiantly in his behalf, and he had felt that not even the young stoic Brand could resist this powerful and final appeal of the girl he loved. At his daughter's last outcry he drew near to the editor. "Brand, are you human?" he demanded strongly, pointing to the prostrated girl with his walking stick. "Human, human, Judge Bartelmy!" he exclaimed. "You are true to yourself to the end. You bring your daughter here so that by torturing me with the sight of her suffering you may escape the penalty of your thievery. I was willing she should think me heartless to spare her the greater pain of knowing you as you are. But now you bring her here in her innocence to repeat to me your lies. You're degrading her, dragging her down to your own level, just as you did her mother before her. If she lets you go on using her it will be with her eyes open." Judith raised her head amazedly. "What are you saying?" she asked. Brand turned to her and then to the judge. "Why, he's lied to you just as he's lied all his life. He told you he was trying to shield others. He lied. He never shielded any one but himself. Judge Bartelmy, the power of men like you must be destroyed. When justice is corrupted the nation rots. If I keep silent about you and your methods I become your accomplice; I betray my trust just as you have betrayed yours." Bartelmy raised his hand deprecatingly. Brand, however, drew a deep breath and went resolutely on. He spoke to both the girl and the judge. "Judith, if at the cost of my life I could spare you this grief I would do it gladly. But even that would do no good. You would always despise me for falling when my test came and always despise yourself for having caused me to fall. Can't you see you and I are nothing in all this? The individual does not exist, only the cause. Judge Bartelmy, that story goes to press," he cried, raising his eyes to meet those of Judith's father. Bartelmy saw that he had played his last card. It was his highest trump, but it had failed to win. What Judith could not do he surely, under the existing circumstances, could not do. Nolan, the only man who could save him if he would, had gone, he knew not where. And it was now press time. All was over. Bartelmy took a single step toward his daughter. "Brand, that story is my obituary," he said in low tones. "Oh, no," was the response in saddened voice. "Men like you don't finish." (Concluded next week)



"You're dragging her down to your own level."

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