The THIRD DEGREE

A NARRATIVE OF METROPOLITAN LIFE

By CHARLES KLEIN AND ARTHUR HORNBLOW

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY G.W. DILLINGHAM COMPANY

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 disowned by his father. He is out of work and in desperate straits. Underwood, who had once been engaged to Howard's stepmother, 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. 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. 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 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. Annie appeals to Judge Brewster, attorney for Jeffries, Sr., to take Howard's case. He declines. It is reported that Annie is going on the stage. The banker and his wife call on Judge Brewster to find some way to prevent it. Annie again pleads with Brewster to defend Howard. He consents. Alicia is greatly alarmed when she learns from Annie that Brewster has taken the case. She confesses to Annie that she called on Underwood the night of his death, and that she has his letter in which he threatened suicide, but begs for time before giving out the information. Annie promises Brewster to produce the missing woman at a meeting at his home. Brewster accuses Clinton of forcing a confession from Howard. Annie appears without the witness and refuses to give the name. Alicia arrives. Capt. Clinton declares Annie has tricked them. Alicia hands him Underwood's letter. Annie lets Clinton believe the letter was written to her. She is arrested. The Underwood letter and Annie's perjured testimony clear Howard. The elder Jeffries offers to take Howard abroad.

CHAPTER XIX.—Continued.

He waited and looked at her curiously as if wondering what her answer would be. He waited some time, and then slowly she said:

"I think—you had better go!"

"You don't mean that!" he exclaimed, in genuine surprise.

She shook her head affirmatively.

"Yes, I do," she said; "your father wants you to take your position in the world, the position you are entitled to, the position your association with me prevents you from taking—"

Howard drummed his fingers on the tablecloth and looked out of the window. It seemed to her that his voice no longer had the same candid ring as he replied:

"Yes, father has spoken to me about it. He wants to be friends, and I—" He paused awkwardly, and then added: "I admit I've—I've promised to consider it, but—"

Annie finished his sentence for him:

"You're going to accept his offer, Howard. You owe it to yourself, to your family, and to—" She laughed as she added: "I was going to say to millions of anxious readers."

Howard looked at her curiously. He did not know if she was jesting or in earnest. Almost impatiently he exclaimed:

"Why do you talk in this way against your own interests? You know I'd like to be friendly with my family, and all that. But it wouldn't be fair to you."

"I'm not talking against myself, Howard. I want you to be happy, and you're not happy. You can't be happy under these conditions. Now be honest with me—can you?"

"Can you?" he demanded.

"No," she answered, frankly, "not unless you are." Slowly she went on: "Whatever happiness I've had in life I owe to you, and God knows you've had nothing but trouble from me. I did wrong to marry you, and I'm willing to pay the penalty. I've evened matters up with your family; now let me try and square up with you."

"Evened up matters with my family?" he exclaimed in surprise. "What do you mean?"

With a smile she replied ambiguously:

"Oh, that's a little private matter of my own!" He stared at her, unable to comprehend, and she went on, gravely: "Howard, you must do what's best for yourself. I'll pack your things. You can go when you please—"

He stared gloomily out of the window without replying. After all, he thought to himself, it was perhaps for the best. Shackled as he was now, he would never be able to accomplish anything. If they separated, his father would take him into his business. Life would begin for him all over again. It would be better for her, too. Of course, he would never forget her. He would provide for her comfort. His father would help him arrange for that. Lighting a cigarette, he said, carelessly:

"Well—perhaps you're right. Maybe a little trip through Europe won't do me any harm."

"Of course not," she said, simply.

Busy with an obstinate match, he did not hear the sigh that accompanied her words or see the look of agony that crossed her face.

"But what are you going to do?" he inquired, after a silence.

With an effort, she controlled her voice. Not for all the world would she betray the fact that her heart was breaking. With affected indifference, she replied:

"Oh, I shall be all right. I shall go and live somewhere in the country for a few months. I'm tired of the city."

"So am I," he rejoined, with a gesture of disgust. "But I hate like the deuce to leave you alone."

"That's nothing," she said, hastily. "A trip abroad is just what you need." Looking up at him, she added: "Your face has brightened up already!"

He stared at her, unable to understand.

"I wish you could go with me."

She smiled.

"Your father's society doesn't make quite such an appeal to me as it does to you." Carelessly, she added: "Where are you going—Paris or London?"

He sent a thick cloud of smoke curling to the ceiling. "A European trip was something he had long looked forward to.

"London—Vienna—Paris," he replied, gayly. With a laugh, he went on: "No, I think I'll cut out Paris. I'm a married man. I mustn't forget that!"

Annie looked up at him quickly.

"You've forgotten it already," she said, quietly. There was reproach in her voice as she continued: "Ah, Howard, you're such a boy! A little pleasure trip and the past is forgotten!"

"Then Why Do You Leave Her Here to Fight the Battle Alone?"

A look of perplexity came over his face. Being only a man, he did not grasp quickly the finer shades of her meaning. With some irritation, he demanded:

"Didn't you say you wanted me to go and forget?"

She nodded.

"Yes, I do, Howard. You've made me happy. I want you to be happy."

He looked puzzled.

"You say you love me?" he said, "and yet you're happy because I'm going away. I don't follow that line of reasoning."

"It isn't reason," she said with a smile, "it's what I feel. I guess a man wants to have what he loves and a woman is satisfied to love just what she wants. Anyway, I'm glad. I'm glad you're going. Go and tell your father."

Taking his hat, he said:

"I'll telephone him."

"Yes, that's right," she replied.

"Where's my cane?" he asked, looking round the room.

She found it for him, and as he opened the door, she said:

"Don't be long, will you?"

He laughed.

"I'll come right back. By George!" he exclaimed, "I feel quite excited at the prospect of this trip!" Regarding her fondly, he went on: "It's awfully good of you, old girl, to let me go."

Annie averted her head.

"Now, don't spoil me," she said, lifting the tray as if to go into the kitchen.

"Wait till I kiss you good-by," he said, effusively.

Taking the tray from her, he placed it on the table, and folding her in his arms, he pressed his lips to hers.

"Good-by," he murmured; "I won't be long."

As soon as he disappeared she gave way completely, and sinking into a chair, leaned her head on the table and sobbed as if her heart would break. This then, was the end! Suddenly there was a ring at the bell. Hastily putting on a clean apron, she opened the door. Judge Brewster stood smiling on the threshold. Annie uttered a cry of pleasure. Greeting the old lawyer affectionately, she invited him in. As he entered, he looked questioningly at her red eyes, but made no remark.

"I'm delighted to see you, judge," she stammered.

As he took a seat in the little parlor, he said:

"Your husband passed me on the stairs and didn't know me."

"The passage is so dark!" she explained, apologetically.

He looked at her for a moment without speaking, and for a moment there was awkward pause. Then he said:

"When does Howard leave you?"

Annie stared in surprise.

"How do you know that?" she exclaimed.

"We lawyers know everything," he smiled. Gravely he went on: "His father's attorneys have asked me for all the evidence I have. They want to use it against you. The idea is that he shall go abroad with his father, and that the proceedings will be begun during his absence."

"Howard knows nothing about it," said Annie, confidently.

"Are you sure?" demanded the lawyer, skeptically.

"Quite sure," she answered, positively.

"But he is going away?" persisted the judge.

"Yes, I want him to go—I am sending him away," she replied.

The lawyer was silent. He sat and looked at her as if trying to read her thoughts. Then quietly he said:

"Do you know they intend to make Robert Underwood the ground for the application for divorce, and to use your own perjured testimony as a weapon against you? You see what a lie leads to. There's no end to it, and you are compelled to go on lying to support the original lie, and that's precisely what I won't permit."

Annie nodded acquiescence.

"I knew you were going to scold me," she smiled.

"Scold you?" he said, kindly. "No—it's myself I'm scolding. You did what you thought was right, and I allowed you to do what I knew was wrong."

"You made two miserable women happy," she said, quietly.

The lawyer tried to suppress a smile.

"I try to excuse myself on that ground," he said, "but it won't work. I violated my oath as a lawyer, my integrity as a man, my honor, my self-respect, all upset, all gone. I've been a very unpleasant companion for myself lately." Rising impatiently, he strode up and down the room. Then turning on her, he said, angrily: "But I'll have no more lies. That's why I brings me here this morning. The first move they make against you and I'll tell the whole truth!"

Annie gazed pensively out of the window without making reply.

"Did you hear?" he said, raising his voice. "I shall let the world know that you sacrificed yourself for that woman."

She turned and shook her head.

"No, judge," she said, "I do not wish it. If they do succeed in influencing Howard to bring suit against me I shall not defend it."

Judge Brewster was not a patient man, and if there was anything that angered him it was rank injustice. He had no patience with this young woman who allowed herself to be trampled on in this outrageous way. Yet he could not be angry with her. She had qualities which compelled his admiration and respect, and not the least of these was her willingness to shield others at her own expense.

"Perhaps not," he retorted, "but I will. It's unjust, it's unrighteous, it's impossible!"

"But you don't understand," she said, gently; "I am to blame."

"You're too ready to blame yourself," he said, tenderly.

Annie went up to him and laid her hand affectionately on his shoulder. With tears in her eyes, she said:

"Let me tell you something, judge. His father was right when he said I took advantage of him. I did. I saw that he was sentimental and self-willed, and all that. I started out to attract him. I was tired of the life I was living, the hard work, the loneliness, and all the rest of it, and I made up my mind to catch him if I could. I didn't think it was wrong then, but I do now. Besides," she went on, "I'm older than he is—five years older. He thinks I'm three years younger, and that he's protecting me from the world. I took advantage of his ignorance of life."

Judge Brewster shrugged his shoulders impatiently.

"If boys of 25 are not men they never will be." Looking down at her kindly, he went on: "'Pon my word! if I was 25, I'd let this divorce go through and marry you myself."

"Oh, judge!"

That was all she could say, but there was gratitude in the girl's eyes. These were the first kind words any one had yet spoken to her. It was nice to know that some one saw some good in her. She was trying to think of something to say, when suddenly there was the click of a key being inserted in a yale lock. The front door opened, and Howard appeared.

"Well, judge!" he exclaimed, "this is a surprise!"

The lawyer looked at him gravely.

"How do you do, young man?" he said. Quizzingly he added: "You look very pleased with yourself!"

"This is the first oportunity I've had to thank you for your kindness," said Howard, cordially.

"You can thank your wife, my boy, not me!" Changing the topic, he said: "So you're going abroad, eh?"

"Yes, did Annie tell you? It's only for a few months."

The lawyer frowned. Tapping the floor impatiently with his cane, he said:

"Why are you going away?"

Taken aback at the question, Howard stammered:

"Because—because—"

"Because I want him to go," interrupted Annie quickly.

The lawyer shook his head, and looking steadily at Howard, he said sternly:

"I'll tell you, Howard, my boy. You're going to escape from the scandalmongers and the gossiping busybodies. Forgive me for speaking plainly, but you're going away because your wife's conduct is a topic of conversation among your friends—"

Howard interrupted him.

"You're mistaken, judge; I don't care a hang what people say—"

"Then why do you leave her here to fight the battle alone?" demanded the judge, angrily.

Annie advanced, and raised her hand deprecatingly. Howard looked at her as if now for the first time he realized the truth.

"To fight the battle alone?" he echoed.

"Yes," said the judge, "you are giving the world a weapon with which to strike at your wife!"

Howard was silent. The lawyer's words had struck home. Slowly he said:

"I never thought of that. You're right! I wanted to get away from it all. Father offered me the chance and Annie told me to go—"

Annie turned to the judge.

"Please, judge," she said, "don't say any more." Addressing her husband, she went on: "He didn't mean what he said, Howard."

Howard hung his head.

"He's quite right, Annie," he said, shamefacedly. "I never should have consented to go; I was wrong."

Judge Brewster advanced and patted him kindly on the back.

"Good boy!" he said. "Now, Mrs. Jeffries, I'll tell your husband the truth."

"No!" she cried.

"Then I'll tell him without your permission," he retorted. Turning to the young man, he went on: "Howard, your wife is an angel! She's too good a woman for this world. She has not hesitated to sacrifice her good name, her happiness, to shield another woman. And that woman—the woman who called at Underwood's room that night—was Mrs. Jeffries, your stepmother!"

Howard stared back in amazement.

"It's true, then, I did recognize her voice!" he cried.

Turning to his wife, he said: "Oh, Annie, why didn't you tell me? You saved my stepmother from disgrace, you spared my father! Oh, that was noble of you!" In a low tone he whispered: "Don't send me away from you, Annie! Let me stay and prove that I'm worthy of you!"

To the young wife it all seemed like a dream, almost too good to be real. The dark, troubled days were ended. A long life, bright with its promise of happiness, was before them.

"But what of the future, Howard?" she demanded, gently.

Judge Brewster answered the question.

"I've thought of that," he said. "Howard, will you come into my office and study law? You can show your father what you can do with a good wife to second your efforts."

Howard grasped his outstretched hand.

"Thanks, judge, I accept," he replied, heartily.

Turning to his wife, he took her in his arms. Her head fell on his shoulder. Looking up at him shyly and smiling through her tears, she murmured, softly:

"I am happy now—at last!"

THE END.

Daniel's Companions in the Fiery Furnace

Sunday School Lesson for Sept. 17, 1911

Specially Arranged for This Paper

LESSON TEXT.—Daniel 3.

MEMORY VERSES, 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."—Heb. 13:6.

TIME.—The Septuagint account states that the occasion was "the organizing cities and countries, and all the inhabitants of the earth from India to Ethiopia," and places the date in the 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar. This would put the event in the last part of B. C. 588, immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem, on the king's return to Babylon.

PLACE.—Babylon, the plain of Dura, somewhere in the vicinity of the city.

PLACE IN THE HISTORY.—Jerusalem destroyed. The Jews in captivity throughout the Babylonic empire. Daniel in the service of the empire in some part. Jeremiah in Jerusalem. King Zedekiah and Jehoiachin captives at Babylon. Ezekiel at Chebar in Babylonia.

So far as we can learn, Nebuchadnezzar's great assemblage of people from all over his empire had for its object the consolidation of his whole kingdom. He had just returned from a triumphant campaign against his enemies in the west and south—against Egypt, Syria and Arabia—and he celebrated his return by the erection of a colossal image and a grand religious festival. The golden image might mark the close of a period of conquest and inaugurate a period of peace. The victories of peace were to absorb the remaining half of his reign.

The empire was composed of various countries and races, diverse from one another in disposition, character and interests. They were united by no natural affinity, but by conquest. The whole empire might easily fall to pieces.

Nebuchadnezzar would bind these diverse elements by the power of religious worship, at a common center, of one chief god over all the multitude idols. As the Jews were bound together by a magnificent temple at their capital, Jerusalem, whither all went up to worship, so Nebuchadnezzar would place at his capital a huge and costly image, the glory and attraction of the empire. His making Babylon a magnificent city would aid this work. Great fortifications, towers, walls, temples, gates of bronze, hanging gardens, palaces, public buildings of blue, red, yellow and white, the Tower of the Seven Spheres, the Wonder of Mankind palace—all these would attract people to the capital, as Mohammedans are drawn to Mecca.

The multitudes were gathered on the plain around the golden image glittering and radiant in the sun. Besides the officers in their richly colored attire, there was a motley gathering of tribes from every direction. All diversities of speech and dress and manners were there.

Heralds cried aloud their proclamation in all languages, that when the bands struck their martial music all the people must fall down and worship the golden image: "And whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

The bands played, and the whole multitude bowed their faces to the ground. Then a strange thing took place; three men stood up alone, and were conspicuous all over the plain, like a city set upon a hill, by their unbowed forms and their splendid robes of office. These three were, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, the three young men who joined with Daniel in refusing to defile themselves with the king's meat.

Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury said: "Now if ye be ready, to obey, the past will be forgiven. But if ye worship not, a burning fiery furnace! Let the music sound. And who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

The three, with truly magnificent and unflinching courage, appear to have answered promptly and without hesitation, showing that they had carefully considered the subject and that with them it was a matter of settled and intelligent principle: "We have no need to answer thee," to explain how God could deliver them, or why they must obey him. There was no time, nor would the king understand. "If it be so, we are cast into the fiery furnace, in spite of all you say, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us."

They were put into the furnace. A writer thinks they were bound hand and foot with their own clothes. The king sat watching the issue of the matter, looked through the door into the furnace, and saw a sight at which he was astonished and terrified. He was astonished that the three men were not consumed; that they were loose; that a fourth was with them. The thought flashed upon him that he has come into conflict with a new and unknown power. He rose up in haste, expressing the strength of his astonishment and terror. The princes saw these men. The deliverance was public, unmistakable, and proved by many witnesses. The king recognized the power of the Jews' God.

The miracle would make such an impression on the princes and people that the king could more easily treat the Jews kindly. Men who were so faithful to their God that they would die rather than do wrong would be faithful to their king, and could be trusted in all matters. Hence they were reinstated in their places with more influence and permanence than ever.

There are still fiery furnaces for those who refuse to worship the golden image—social ostracism, unpopularity, losses of place and honor, failure in business.

Cement Talk No. 3

Concrete is the hardened rock-like product made by using some brand of *Portland cement* with sand, gravel or broken stone and water. The *cement* is the material which binds the sand, gravel or broken stone together; this binding action is produced by water. The terms "*Cement*" and "*Concrete*" thus have different meanings, although they are frequently used interchangeably. While cement is only one of the materials in *concrete*, it is perhaps the most important. To insure the best results in *concrete* work, the highest grade of *Portland cement* should be used. The *concrete* worker may rest assured that he has the best *cement* if he will make certain that the word *UNIVERSAL* is printed on each sack of *cement* that he buys. Representative dealers everywhere handle *UNIVERSAL*.

UNIVERSAL PORTLAND CEMENT CO.
72 W. ADAMS STREET, CHICAGO

ANNUAL OUTPUT 10,000,000 BARRELS

Naughty, but Nice.

Edith, who is eight years old, was invited to a children's party. Her blonde hair was perfectly straight, but becomingly arranged, and she started off in high feather.

But on her return she was rather silent, and, on being questioned as to her experience, said:

"I had a nice time, but it would have been nicer if my hair was kinky. All the other girls' hair was kinky, and I shan't go to another party unless my hair is fixed in kinks."

So the next week, when another invitation came for the little girl, her hair was curled and fluffed out in the most approved style.

Then her mother led her to a mirror, and said: "There, Edith, what do you think of it?"

Edith regarded herself soberly for a moment, and then, turning slowly around, she said: "It's vain, but I like it."

Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use For Over 30 Years.

Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Men Iron Better Than Women.

That men are to take the place of women as hand ironers in St. Louis is predicted by some of the laundry men. It is said that the work can be done better by men and that they can stand the strain very much better than women.

The next time you feel that swallowing sensation gargle Hamlins Wizard Oil immediately with three parts water. It will save you days and perhaps weeks of misery from sore throat.

Heard in St. Louis.

"Let's drop in this restaurant."

"Oh, I don't believe I care to eat anything."

"Well, come in and get a new hat for your old one, anyway."

Good Guess.

Mosquito—I say, you are keeping on that piece of paper as if you liked it.

Fly—Well, to tell the truth, I am stuck on it.

Smokers find Lewis' Single Binder 5c cigar better quality than most 10c cigars.

Time and tide wait for no man—but it's different with an untied woman.

Particularly the Ladies.

Not only pleasant and refreshing to the taste, but gently cleansing and sweetening to the system, Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna is particularly adapted to ladies and children, and beneficial in all cases in which a wholesome, strengthening and effective laxative should be used. It is perfectly safe at all times and dispels colds, headaches and the pains caused by indigestion and constipation so promptly and effectively that it is the one perfect family laxative which gives satisfaction to all and is recommended by millions of families who have used it and who have personal knowledge of its excellence.

Its wonderful popularity, however, has led unscrupulous dealers to offer imitations which act unsatisfactorily. Therefore, when buying, to get its beneficial effects, always note the full name of the Company—California Fig Syrup Co.—plainly printed on the front of every package of the genuine Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna.

For sale by all leading druggists. Price 50 cents per bottle.

100 Years Old Pettit's Eye Salve