

BARNABY RUDGE

By CHARLES DICKENS

The way was wet and dismal, and the night so black, that if Mr. Willet had been his own pilot, he would have walked into a deep horsepond within a few hundred yards of his own house...

case, that even Mr. Willet was surprised. "You did quite right," he said, at the end of a long conversation, "to bid them keep this story secret. It is a foolish fancy on the part of this weak-brained man, bred in his fears and superstition. But Miss Haredale, though she would know it to be so, would be disturbed by it if it reached her ears; it is too nearly connected with a subject very painful to us all, to be heard with indifference. You were most prudent, and have laid me under a great obligation. I thank you very much."

"The old room," said John, looking timidly upward. "Mr. Reuben's own apartment, God be with us! I wonder his brother likes to sit there, so late at night—on this night too?" "Why, where else should he sit?" asked Hugh holding the lantern to his breast, to keep the candle from the wind, while he trimmed it with his fingers. "It's snug enough, ain't it?" "Snug!" said John indignantly. "You have a comfortable idea of snugness, you have, sir. Do you know what was done in that room, you ruffian?" "Why, what is it the worse for that?" cried Hugh, looking into John's fat face. "Does it keep out the rain, and snow, and wind, and the less for that? Is it less warm or dry, because a man was killed there? Ha, ha, ha! Never believe it, master. One man's no such matter as that comes to."

"What do you mean by splashing your drink about a gentleman's house, sir?" said John. "I'm drinking a toast," Hugh replied, holding the glass above his head, and fixing his eyes on Mr. Haredale's face; "a toast to this house and its master." With that he muttered something to himself, and drank the rest, and setting down the glass, preceded them without a word. John was a good deal scandalized by this observance, but seeing that Mr. Haredale took little heed of what Hugh said or did, and that his thoughts were otherwise employed, he offered no apology, and went in silence down the stairs, across the walk, and through the garden-gate. They stopped upon the outer side for Hugh to hold the light while Mr. Haredale locked it on the inner; and then John saw with wonder (as he often afterwards related), that he was very pale, and that his face had changed so much and grown so haggard since their entrance, that he almost seemed another man.

"Begging pardon, sir," said John, "I knew you sat up late, and made hold to come round, having a word to say to you." "Willet—is it not?" "Of the Maypole—at your service, sir."

They were in the open road again, and John Willet was walking on behind his escort, as he had come, thinking very steadily of what he had just now seen, when Hugh drew him suddenly aside, and almost at the same instant three horsemen swept past—the nearest brushed his shoulder even then—who, checking their steeds as suddenly as they could, stood still, and waited for their coming up.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"You are a late visitor, Willet. What is the matter?" "Nothing to speak of, sir," said John. "An idle tale, I thought you ought to know of; nothing more."

When John Willet saw that the horsemen wheeled smartly round, and drew up three abreast in the narrow road, waiting for him and his man to join them, it occurred to him with unusual precipitation that they must be highwaymen; and had Hugh been armed with a blunderbuss, in place of his stout cudgel, he would certainly have ordered him to fire off at a venture, and would, while the word of command was obeyed, have consulted his own personal safety in immediate flight. Under the circumstances of disadvantage, however, in which he and his guard were placed, he deemed it prudent to adopt a different style of generalship, and therefore whispered his attendant to address them in the most peaceable and courteous terms. By way of acting up to the spirit and letter of this instruction, Hugh stepped forward, and flourishing his staff before the very eyes of the rider nearest him, demanded roughly what he and his fellows meant by so nearly galloping over them, and why they scoured the king's highway at that late hour of night.

"Come in," he said, beckoning to old John, who remained bowing at the door. "Not you, friend," he added hastily to Hugh, who entered also. "Willet, why do you bring that fellow here?" "Why, sir," returned John, elevating his eyebrows, and lowering his voice to the tone in which the question had been asked him, "he's a good guard, you see."

The man whom he addressed was beginning an angry reply in the same strain, when he was checked by the horseman in the centre, who, interposing with an air of authority, inquired in a somewhat loud but not harsh or unpleasant voice: "Pray, is this the London road?" "If you follow it right, it is," replied Hugh, roughly. "Nay, brother," said the same person, "you're but a churlish Englishman, if Englishman you be—which I should much doubt but for your tongue. Your companion, I am sure, will answer me more civilly. How say you, friend?" "I say it is the London road, sir," answered John. "And I wish," he added in a subdued voice, as he turned to Hugh, "that you was in any other road, you vagabond. Are you tired of your life, sir, that you go trying to provoke three great neck-or-nothing chaps, that could keep on running over us, backwards and forwards till we was dead, and then take our bodies up behind 'em, and draw us ten miles off?" "The same far is it to London?" inquired the same speaker. "Why, from here, sir," answered John, persuasively, "it's thirteen very easy miles."

"Thirteen miles!" That's a long distance!" which was followed by a short pause of indecision.

"Pray," said the gentleman, "are there any inns here about?" "At the words 'inns,'" John plucked up his spirit in a surprising manner, his fears rolled off like smoke, all the landlord stirred within him. "There are no inns," rejoined Mr. Willet, with a strong emphasis on the plural number; "but there's a Inn—no Inn—the Maypole Inn. That's a Inn indeed. You won't see the like of that inn often."

"You keep it, perhaps?" said the horseman, smiling. "I do, sir," replied John, greatly wondering how he had found this out. "And how far is the Maypole from here?" "About a mile"—John was going to add that it was the easiest mile in all the world, when the third rider, who had hitherto kept a little in the rear, suddenly interposed: "And have you one excellent bed, landlord? Hem! A bed that you can recommend—a bed that you are sure is well aired—a bed that has been slept in by some perfectly respectable and unexceptionable person?"

"We do not take in no tagrag and bobtail at our house, sir," answered John. "And as to the bed itself"—"Say, as to three beds," interposed the gentleman who had spoken before; "for we shall want three if we stay, though my friend only speaks of one."

"No, no, my lord; you are too good, you are too kind; but your life is of far too much importance to the nation in these portentous times, to be placed upon a level with one so useless and so poor as mine. A great cause, my lord, a mighty cause, depends on you. You are its leader and its champion, its advanced guard and its van. It is the cause of our altars and our homes, our country and our faith. Let me sleep on a chair—the carpet—anywhere. No one will reprove if I take cold or fever. Let John Grueby pass the night beneath the open sky—no one will reprove for this. But forty thousand men of his or our island in the wave (exclusive of women and children) rivet their eyes and thoughts on Lord George Gordon; and every day, from the rising up of the sun to the going down of 'em, same, pray for his health and vigor. My lord," said the speaker, rising in his stirrups, "it is a glorious cause, and must not be forgotten. My lord, it is a mighty cause, and must not be endangered. My lord, it is a holy cause, and must not be deserted."

"It is a holy cause," exclaimed his lordship, lifting up his hat with great solemnity. "Amen!" "John Grueby," said the long-winded gentleman, in a tone of mild reproach, "his lordship said Amen!" "I heard my lord, sir," said the man, sitting up like a statue on his horse. "And do not you say Amen, likewise?" To which John Grueby made no reply at all, but sat looking straight before him.

"You surprise me, Grueby," said the gentleman. "At a crisis like the present, when Queen Elizabeth, her tomb, and Bloody Mary with a brow of gloom and shadow, stalks triumphant!" "Oh, sir," cried the man, gruffly, "where's the use of talking of Bloody Mary, under such circumstances as the present, when my lord's wet through and tired with hard riding? Let's either go on to London, sir, or put up at once; or that unfortunate Bloody Mary will have more to answer for—and she's done a deal more harm in her grave than she ever did in her lifetime, I believe."

By this time Mr. Willet, who had never heard so many words spoken at one time, or delivered with such volubility and emphasis as by the long-winded gentleman, and whose brain, being wholly unable to sustain or compass them, had quite given itself up for lost; recovered so far as to observe that there was ample accommodation at the Maypole for all the party, good beds; neat wines; excellent entertainment for man and beast; private rooms for large or small parties; diners dressed upon the shortest notice; choice stabling, and a lock-up coach-house; and, in short, to run over such recommendations scraps of language as were painted up on various portions of the building, and which, in the course of some forty years, he had learned to repeat with tolerable correctness. He was considering whether it was at all possible to insert any novel sentences to the same purpose, when the gentleman who had first, turning to him of the long wind, exclaimed, "What say you, Gashford? Shall we tarry at this house he speaks of, or press forward? You shall decide."

"I would submit, my lord, then," returned the person he appealed to, in a silky tone, "that your health and spirits—so important under Providence, to our great cause, our here and truthful cause"—here his lordship pulled off his hat again, though it was raining hard—"require refreshment and repose."

"Go on before, landlord, and show the way," said Lord George Gordon; "we will follow at a footpace." "If you'll give me leave," said John Grueby, in a low voice, "I'll change my proper place, and ride before you. The looks of the landlord's friend are not over honest, and it may be as well to be cautious with him."

"John Grueby is quite right," interposed Mr. Gashford, falling back hastily. "My lord, a life so precarious as yours must not be put in peril. Go forward, John, by all means. If you have any reason to suspect the fellow, blow his brains out."

spoke, bade Hugh push on, and followed close behind him. Then came his lordship, with Mr. Willet at his bridle rein; and, last of all, his lordship's secretary—for that, it seemed, was Gashford's office. Hugh strode briskly on, often looking back at the servant whose horse was close upon his heels, and glancing with a leer at his holster case of pistols, by which he seemed to set great store. He was a square-built, strong-made, bull-necked fellow, of the true English breed; and as Hugh measured him with his eye, he measured Hugh, regarding him meanwhile with a look of bluff disdain. He was much older than the Maypole man, being to all appearance five and forty; but was one of those self-possessed, hard-headed, imperturbable fellows, who, if they ever are beat at fisty-cuffs, or other kind of warfare, never know it, and go on coolly till they win.

"If I led you wrong now," said Hugh, tauntingly, "you'd—ha ha ha!—you'd shoot me through the head, I suppose."

John Grueby took no more notice of this remark than if he had been deaf and Hugh dumb; but kept riding on quite comfortably, with his eyes fixed on the horizon. "Did you ever try a fall with a man when you were young, master?" said Hugh. "Can you make any play at singlestick?" John Grueby looked at him sideways with the same contented air, but designed not a word in answer. "Like this?" said Hugh, giving his sledge one of those skilful flourishes, in which the rustic of that time delighted. "Whoop!"

"Or that," returned John Grueby, beating down his guard with his whip, and striking him on the head with its butt-end. "Yes, I played a little once. You wear your hair too long; I should have cracked your crown if it had been a little shorter."

It was a pretty smart, loud-sounding rap as it was, and evidently astonished Hugh; who for the moment seemed disposed to drag his new acquaintance from his saddle. But his face betokening neither malice, triumph, rage, nor any lingering idea that he had given him offence; his eyes gazing steadily in the old direction, and his manner being as careless and composed as if he had merely brushed away a fly; Hugh was so puzzled, and so disposed to look upon him as a customer of almost supernatural toughness, that he merely laughed, and cried "Well done!" then sheering off a little, led the way in silence.

Before the lapse of many minutes the party halted at the Maypole door, Lord George and his secretary quickly dismounting, gave their horse to their servant, who, under the guidance of Hugh, repaired to the stables. Right glad to escape from the inclemency of the night, they followed Mr. Willet into the common room, and stood warming themselves and drying their clothes before the cheerful fire, while he busied himself with such orders and preparations as his guest's high quality required.

As he bustled in and out of the room, intent on these arrangements, he had an opportunity of observing the two travellers, of whom, as yet, he knew nothing but the voice. The lord, the great personage, who did the Maypole so much honor, was about the middle height, of a slender make, and sallow complexion, with an aquiline nose, and long hair of a reddish brown, combed perfectly straight and smooth about his ears, and slightly powdered, but without the faintest vestige of a curl. He was attired, under his great-coat, in a full suit of black, quite free from any ornament, and of the most precise and sober cut. The gravity of his dress, together with a certain lankness of cheek and stiffness of deportment, added nearly ten years to his age, but his figure was that of one not yet past thirty. As he stood musing in the red glow of the fire, it was striking to observe his very bright large eye, which betrayed a restlessness of thought and purpose, singularly at variance with the studied composure and sobriety of his mien, and with his quaint and sad apparel. It had nothing harsh or cruel in its expression; neither had his face, which was thin and mild, and wore an air of melancholy; but it was suggestive of an indefinable uneasiness, which infected those who looked upon him, and filled them with a kind of pity for the man; though why it did so, they would have had some trouble to explain.

Gashford, the secretary, was taller, angularly made, high-shouldered, bony, and ungraceful. His dress, in imitation of his superior, was demure and staid in the extreme; his manner, formal and constrained. This gentleman had an overhanging brow, great hands and feet and ears and a pair of eyes that seemed to have made an unnatural retreat into his head, and to have dug themselves a cave to hide in. His manner was smooth and humble, but very sly and slinking. He wore the aspect of a man who was always lying in wait for something that wouldn't come to pass; but he looked patient—very patient—and fawned like a spaniel dog. Even now, while he warmed and rubbed his hands before the blaze he had the air of one who only presumed to enjoy it in his degree as a commoner, and though he knew his lord was not regarding him, he looked into his face from time to time, and with a meek and deferential manner, smiled as if for practice.

Such were the guests whom old John Willet, with a fixed and leaden eye, surveyed a hundred times, and to whom he, each hand, beseeching them to follow him into a wretched chamber. "For my lord," said John—it is odd enough, but certain people seem to have as great a pleasure in pronouncing titles as their owners have in wearing them—"this room, my lord, isn't at all the sort of place for your lordship, and I have to beg your lordship's pardon for keeping you here, my lord, one minute."

Table with 4 columns: DAY OF MONTH, DAY OF WEEK, COLOR OF VESTMENTS, and names of saints. Includes sections for Twelfth, Thirteenth, and Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

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stop them. John, with the tall candles in his hands, bowed them up to the fireplace; Hugh, striding in with a lighted brand and a pile of fire-wood, cast it down upon the hearth, and set it in a blaze. John Grueby (who had a great blue cockade in his hat, which he appeared to despise mightily) brought in the portmanteau he had carried or his horse and placed it on the floor; and presently all three were busily engaged in drawing out the screen, laying the cloth, inspecting the beds, lighting fires in the bedroom, expediting the supper, and making everything as cozy and as snug as might be, on so short a notice. In less than an hour's time, supper had been served, and ate and cleared away; and Lord George and his secretary, with slippers on feet and legs stretched out before the fire, sat over some hot mulled wine together.

be no doubt of ours being the true one. You feel as certain of that as I do, Gashford, don't you?" "Does my lord ask me?" whined Gashford, drawing his chair nearer with an injured air, and laying his broad flat hand upon the table. "No," he repeated, bending the dark hollows of his eyes upon him with an unwholesome smile, "who, stricken by the magic of his eloquence in Scotland but a year ago, abjured the errors of the Romanish Church, and clung to him as one whose timely hand had plucked me from a pit?" "True. No—no. I—I didn't mean it," replied the other, shaking him by the hand, rising from his seat, and pacing restlessly about the room. "It's a proud thing to lead the people, Gashford," he added as he made a sudden halt. "By force of reason too," returned the pliant secretary. (To be continued.)

"So ends, my lord," said Gashford, filling his glass with great placency. "The blessed work of a most blessed day."

To know is to prevent.—If the miners who work in cold water most of the day would rub their feet and legs with Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil they would escape muscular rheumatism and render their nether limbs proof against the ill effects of exposure to the cold. Those setting out for mining regions would do well to provide themselves with a supply before starting.

"Move them, my lord! Move them! They cried to be led against the Papists, they vowed a dreadful vengeance on their heads, they roared like men possessed."

Remove the smell of paint from a room, leave in it over night a bailful of water into which three or four onions have been sliced. Shut the door and in the morning the smell of paint will have disappeared. Roast a bird with the breast down the greater part of the time; the flesh will then remain more juicy. By adding a few drops of vinegar to the water when poaching eggs they will set more quickly and perfectly. Kerosene should be poured through the drain pipe of a sink at least once a month. It will be found most effective in cutting out collected grease.

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