

BARNABY RUDGE

By CHARLES DICKENS

Of course the night when Joe would ride toward the side of the chaise, and when Mrs. Varden would insist upon his going back again, was not forgotten—nor the night when Dolly fainted on his name being mentioned—nor the times upon times when Mrs. Varden, ever watchful and prudent, had found her pining in her own chamber. In short, nothing was forgotten, and everything by some means or other brought them back to the conclusion, that that was the happiest hour in all their lives, consequently that everything must have occurred for the best, and nothing could be suggested which would have made it better.

While they were in the full glow of such discourse as this, there came a startling knock at the door, opening from the street into the workshop which had been kept closed all day that the house might be more quiet. Joe, as in duty bound, would hear of nobody but himself going to open it, and accordingly left the room for that purpose.

It would have been odd enough, certainly, if Joe had forgotten the way to open the door, and even if he had as it was a pretty large one and stood straight before him, he could not easily have missed it. But Dolly, perhaps because she was in the flutter of spirits before mentioned, or perhaps because she thought he would not be able to open it with his one arm—she could have had no other reason—buried out after him; and they stopped so long in the passage—no doubt owing to Joe's entreaties, that she would not expose herself to the draught of July air which must infallibly come rushing in on this same door being opened—that the knock was repeated, in a yet more startling manner than before.

"Is anybody going to open that door?" cried the locksmith. "Or shall I come?"

Upon that Dolly went running back into the parlor, all dimples and blushes, and Joe opened it with a mighty noise, and other superfluous demonstrations of being in a violent hurry.

"Well," said the locksmith, when he reappeared, "what is it? eh Joe? what are you laughing at?"

"Nothing, sir. It's coming in."

"Who's coming in? what's coming in?" Mrs. Varden, as much at a loss as her husband, could only shake her head in answer to his inquiring look; so, the locksmith wheeled his chair round to command a better view of the room door, and stared at it with his eyes wide open, and a mingled expression of curiosity and wonder shining in his jolly face.

Instead of some person or persons straightway appearing, divers remarkable sounds were heard, first in the workshop and afterwards in the little dark passage between it and the parlor, as though some unwieldy chest or heavy piece of furniture were being brought in, by an amount of human strength inadequate to the task. At length after much struggling and bumping, and brushing of the wall on both sides, the door was forced open as by a battering-ram, and the locksmith, steadily regarding what appeared beyond, smote his thigh, elevated his eyebrows, opened his mouth, and cried in a loud voice expressive of the utmost consternation.

"Damme, if it ain't Miggs come back!"

The young damsel whom he named no sooner heard these words than, deserting a very small boy and a very large box by which she was accompanied, and advancing with such precipitation that her bonnet flew off her head, burst into the room, clasped her hands (in which she held a pair of pattens, one in each), raised her eyes devotedly to the ceiling, and shed a flood of tears.

"The old story!" cried the locksmith, looking at her in inexpressible desperation. "She was born to be a damper, this young woman! nothing can prevent it!"

"Ho master! ho mim!" cried Miggs, "can I constrain my feelings in these here once again united moments! Ho Mr. Warsen, here's blessedness among relations, sir! Here's forgiveness of injuries, here's amicableness!"

The locksmith looked from his wife to Dolly, and from Dolly to Joe, and from Joe to Miggs, with his eyebrows still elevated, and his mouth still open. When his eyes got back to Miggs, they rested on her, fascinated.

"To think," cried Miggs with hysterical joy, "that Mr. Joe, and dear Miss Dolly, has raly come together after all as has been said and done contrary! To see them two a-settin' along with him and her, so pleasant and in all respects so affable and mild and me not knowing of it, and not being in the ways to make no preparations for their teas. Ho what a cutting thing it is, and yet what sweet sensations it awoke within me!"

Either in clasping her hands again, or in an ecstasy of pious joy, Miss Miggs clinked her pattens after the manner of a pair of cymbals, at this juncture, and when resumed, in the softest accents:

"And did my missus think—ho goodness, did she think—as her own Miggs, which supported her under so many trials, and understood her nature when them as intended well but acted rough, went so deep into her feelings—did she think as her own Miggs would ever leave her? Did she think as Miggs, though she was but a servant, and knewed that servitudes was no inheritances, would forget that she was the humble instruments as always made it comfortable between them two when they fell out, and always told master of the meekness and forgiveness of her blessed dispositions! Did she think as Miggs had no attachments? Did she think that wages was her only object?"

To none of these interrogatories, whereof every one was more pathetically delivered than the last, did Mrs. Varden answer one word; but Miggs, not at all abashed by this circumstance, turned to the small boy in attendance—her eldest nephew—son of her own married sister—born in Golden Lion Court, number twenty-seven, and bred in the very shadow of the second bell-handle on the right-hand door post—and with a plentiful use of her pocket handkerchief, addressed herself to him, requesting that on his return home he would console his parents or the loss of her, his aunt, by delivering to them a faithful statement of his having left her in the bosom of that family, with which as his aforesaid parents well know, her best affections were incorporated, that he would remind them that nothing less than her imperious sense of duty, and devoted attachment to her old master and missis, likewise Miss Dolly and young Mr. Joe, should ever have induced her to decline that pressing invitation which they, his parents, had, as he could testify, given her, to lodge and board with them, free of all cost and charge, forevermore; lastly, that he would help her with her box upstairs, and then repair straight home, bearing her blessing and her strong injunctions to mingle in his prayers a supplication that he might in course of time grow up a locksmith, or a Mr. Joe, and have Mrs. Varden, and Miss Dollys for his relations and friends.

Having brought this admonition to an end—upon which, to say the truth, the young gentleman for whose benefit it was designed, bestowed little or no heed, having to all appearance his faculties absorbed in the contemplation of the sweetmeats—Miss Miggs signified to the company in general that they were not to be uneasy, for she would soon return, and with her nephew's aid, prepared to bear her wardrobe up the staircase.

"My dear," said the locksmith to his wife, "do you desire this?"

"I desire it!" she answered. "I am astonished—I am amazed—at her audacity. Let her leave the house this moment."

Miggs, hearing this, let her end of the box fall heavily to the floor, gave a very loud snuff, crossed her arms, screwed down the corners of her mouth, and cried, in an ascending scale, "Ho, good gracious!" three distinct times.

"You hear what your mistress says my love," remarked the locksmith. "You had better go, I think. Stay; take this with you, for the sake of old service."

Miss Miggs clutched the bank-note he took from his pocket-book and held out to her, deposited it in a small, red leather purse, put the purse in her pocket (displaying as she did so, a considerable portion of some under garment, made of flannel, and more black cotton stocking than is commonly seen in public), and tossing her head, as she looked at Mrs. Varden, repeated:

"Ho, good gracious!"

"I think you said that once before, my dear," observed the locksmith.

"Time is changed, is they, mim!" cried Miggs, bridling; "you can spare me now, can you? You can keep 'em down without me? You're not in wants of any one to scold, or throw the blame upon, no longer, ain't you, mim? I'm glad to find you've grown so independent. I wish you joy, I'm sure!"

With that she dropped a courtesy, and keeping her head erect, her eye toward Mrs. Varden, and her eye on the rest of the company, as she alluded to them in her remarks, proceeded:

"I'm quite delighted, I'm sure, to find such independency, feeling sorry though, at the same time, mim, that you should have been forced into submission when you couldn't help yourself—he he he! It must be great vexations, specially considering how ill you always spoke of Mr. Joe—to have him for a son-in-law at last; and I wonder Miss Dolly can put up with him either, after being off and on for so many years with a coach-maker. But I have heard say, that the coach-maker thought twi about it—he he he!—and that he told a young man as was a friend of his, that he hoped he knowed better than to be drawn into that, though she and all the family did pull uncommon strong!"

Here she paused for a reply, and receiving none, went on as before:

"I have heard say, mim, that the illness of some ladies was all pretensions, and that they could faint away stone dead whenever they had the inclinations so to do. Of course I never see such cases with my own eyes—ho no! He he he! Nor master neither—ho no! He he he! I have heard the neighbors make remark as some one as they was acquainted with, was a poor good-natured, mean-spirited creature, as went out fishing for a wife one day, and caught a Tartar. Of course I never to my knowledge see the poor person himself. Nor did you neither, mim—ho no. I wonder who it was—don't you, mim? No

doubt you do, mim. Ho yes. He he he!"

Again Miggs paused for a reply, and none being offered, was so oppressed with teeming spite and spleen that she seemed like to burst.

"I'm glad Dolly can laugh," cried Miggs with a feeble titter. "I like to see folks a-laughing—so do you, mim? And you always did your best to keep 'em cheerful, didn't you, mim? Though there ain't such a great deal to laugh at now, either; is there, mim? It ain't so much of a catch, after looking so sharp ever since she was a little chit, and costing such a deal in dress and show, to get a poor common soldier, with one arm, is it, mim? He he! I wouldn't have a husband with one arm, anyways. I would have two arms. I would have two arms, if it was me, though instead of hands they'd only got hoofs at the end, like our dustman!"

Miss Miggs was about to add, and had, indeed, begun to add, that, taking them in the abstract, dustmen were far more eligible mates than soldiers, though, to be sure, when people were past choosing their mates, and take the best they could get, and take themselves well off too; but her vexation and chagrin being of that internally bitter sort which finds no relief in words, and is aggravated to madness by want of contradiction, she could hold out no longer, and burst into a storm of sobs and tears.

In this extremity she fell on the unlucky nephew, tooth and nail, and plucking a handful of hair from his head, demanded to know how long she was to stand there to be insulted, and whether or no he meant to help her to carry out the box again, and if he took a pleasure in hearing his family reviled; with other inquiries of that nature, at which disgrace and provocation, the small boy, who had been all this time gradually lashed into rebellion by the sight of unattainable pastry, walked off indignantly, leaving his aunt and the box to follow at their leisure. Somehow or other, by dint of pushing and pulling, they did attain the street at last, where Miss Miggs, all blowed with the exertion of getting there, and with her sobs and tears, sat down upon her property to rest and grieve, until she could insure some other youth to help her home.

"It's a thing to laugh at, Martha, not to care for," whispered the locksmith, as he followed his wife to the window, and good-humoredly dried her eyes. "What does it matter? You had seen your fault before. Come! Bring us Toby again, my dear; Dolly shall sing us a song; and we'll be all the merrier for this interruption!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

Another month had passed, and the end of August had nearly come, when Mr. Haredale stood alone in the mail-coach office at Bristol. Although but a few weeks had intervened since his conversation with Edward Chester and his niece in the locksmith's house and he had made no change in the meantime, in his accustomed style of dress, his appearance was greatly altered. He looked much older, and more careworn. Agitation and anxiety of mind scatter wrinkles and grey hairs with no sparing hand, but deeper traces follow on the silent uprooting of old habits, and severing of dear, familiar ties. The affections may not be so easily wounded as the passions, but their hurts are deeper, and more lasting. He was now a solitary man, and the heart within him was dreary and lonesome.

He was not the less alone for having spent so many years in seclusion and retirement. This was no better preparation than a round of social cheerfulness; perhaps it even increased the keenness of his sensibility. He had been so dependent upon her for companionship and love; she had come to be so much a part and parcel of his existence; they had had so many cares and thoughts in common, which no one else had shared, that losing her was beginning life anew, and being required to summon up the hope and elasticity of youth, amid the doubts, distrusts, and weakened energies of age.

The effort he had made to part from her with seeming cheerfulness and hope—and they had parted only yesterday—left him the more depressed. With these feelings, he was about to revisit London for the last time, and look once more upon the walls of their old home, before turning his back upon it, forever.

The journey was a very difficult one, in those days, from what the present generation find it; but it came to an end, as the longest journey will, and he stood again in the streets of the metropolis. He lay at the inn where the coach stopped, and resolved, before he went to bed, that he would make his arrival known to no one, would spend but another night in London, and would spare himself the pang of parting, even with the honest locksmith.

Such conditions of the mind as that to which he was a prey when he lay down to rest, are favorable to the growth of disordered fancies, and uneasy visions. He knew this, even in the horror with which he started from his first sleep, and threw up the window to dispel it by the presence of some object, beyond the room, which had not been, as it were, the witness of his dream. But it was not a new terror of the night; it had been present to him before, in many shapes; it had haunted him in bygone times, and visited his pillow again and again. If it had been but

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an ugly object, a childish spectre, haunting his sleep, its return, in its old form, might have awakened a momentary sensation of fear, which, almost in the act of waking, would have passed away. This disquiet, however, lingered about him, and would yield to nothing. When he closed his eyes again, he felt it hovering near, as he slowly sank into a slumber, he was conscious of its gathering strength and purpose, and gradually assuming its recent shape, when he sprang up from his bed, the same phantom vanished from his heated brain, and left him filled with a dread against which reason and waking thought were powerless.

The sun was up, before he could shake it off. He rose late, but not refreshed, and remained within doors all that day. He had a fancy for paying his last visit to the old spot in the evening, for he had been accustomed to walk there at that season, and desired to see it under the aspect that was most familiar to him. At such an hour as would afford him time to reach it a little before sunset, he left the inn, and turned into the busy street.

He had not gone far, and was thoughtfully making his way among the noisy crowd, when he felt a hand upon his shoulder, and turning, recognized one of the waiters from the inn, who begged his pardon, but he had left his sword behind him.

"Why have you brought it to me?" he asked, stretching out his hand, and yet not taking it from the man, but looking at him in a disturbed and agitated manner.

The man was sorry to have disobliterated him, and would carry it back again. The gentleman had said that he was going a little way into the country, and that he might not return until late. The roads were not very safe for single travellers after dark, and since the riots, gentlemen had been more careful than ever not to trust themselves unarmed in lonely places.

"We thought you were a stranger, sir," he added, "and that you might believe our roads to be better than they are; but perhaps you know them well and carry firearms."

He took the sword, and putting it up at his side, thanked the man and resumed his walk.

It was long remembered that he did this in a manner so strange, and with such a trembling hand, that the messenger stood looking after his retreating figure, doubtful whether he ought not to follow and watch him.

It was long remembered that he had been heard pacing his bedroom in the dead of the night; that the attendants had men lored to each other in the morning, how fevered and how pale he looked, and that when this man went back to the inn he had observed in this short interview lay very heavy on his mind, and that he feared the gentleman intended to destroy himself, and would never come back alive.

With a half-consciousness that his manner had attracted the man's attention (remembering the expression of his face when they parted), Mr. Haredale quickened his steps; and arriving at a stand of coaches, bargained with the driver of the best to carry him so far on his road as the point where the footway struck across the fields, and to await his return at a house of entertainment which was within a stone's throw of that place. Arriving there in due course, he alighted and pursued his way on foot.

He passed so near the Maypole that he could see its smoke rising from among the trees, while a flock of pigeons—some of its old inhabitants, doubtless—sailed gayly home to roost, between him and the unclouded sky.

"The old house will brighten up now," he said, as he looked towards it, "and there will be a merry fire-side beneath its ivied roof. It is some comfort to know that everything will not be blighted hereabouts. I shall be glad to have one picture of life and cheerfulness to turn to, in my mind!"

He resumed his walk, and bent his steps towards the Warren. It was a clear, calm, silent evening, with hardly a breath of wind to stir the leaves, or any sound to break the stillness of the time, but drowsy sheep-bells tinkling in the distance, and, at intervals, the far-off lowing of cattle, or bark of village dogs. The sky was radiant with the softened glory of sunset; and on the earth, and in the air, a deep repose prevailed.

At such an hour he arrived at the deserted mansion which had been his home so long, and looked for the last time upon its blackened walls.

The ashes of the commonest fire are melancholy things, for in them there is an image of death and ruin—of something that has been bright, and is but dull, cold, dreary dust—with which our nature forces us to sympathize. How much more sad the crumbled embers of a home, the casting

down of that great altar, where the worst among us sometimes perform the worship of the heart, and where the best have offered up such sacrifices, and done such deeds of heroism, as, chronicled, would put the proud temples of old Time, with all their vaunting annals, to the blush.

He resumed himself from a long train of meditation, and walked slowly round the house. It was by this time almost dark.

He had hardly made the circuit of the building, when he uttered a half-suppressed exclamation, started, and stood still. Reclining, in an easy attitude, with his back against a tree, and contemplating the ruin with an expression of pleasure—a pleasure so keen that it overcame his habitual indolence and command of feature, and displayed itself utterly free from all restraint or reserve—before him, on his own ground, and triumphing then, as he had triumphed in every misfortune and disappointment of his life, stood the man whose presence, of all mankind, in any place, and least of all in that, he could the least endure.

Although his blood so rose against this man, and his wrath so stirred within him, that he could have struck him dead, he put such fierce constraint upon himself that he passed him without a word or look. Yes, and he would have gone on, and not turned, though to resist the Devil who poured such hot temptation in his brain, required an effort scarcely to be achieved, if this man had not himself summoned him to stop, and that with an assumed compassion in his voice which drove him well-nigh mad, and in an instant routed all the self-command it had been anguish—acute, poignant anguish—to sustain.

All consideration, reflection, mercy, forbearance; everything by which a goaded man can curb his rage and passion, fled from him as he turned back. And yet he said, slowly and quite calmly—far more calmly than he had ever spoken to him before:

"Why have you called to me?"

"To remark," said Sir John Chester with his wonted composure, "what an odd chance it is, that we should meet here!"

"It is a strange chance."

"Strange? The most remarkable and singular thing in the world. I never ride in the evening; I have not done so for years. The whim seized me, quite unaccountably, in the middle of last night. How very picturesque this is!" He pointed, as he spoke, to the dismantled house, and raised his glass to his eye.

"You praise your own work very freely."

Sir John let fall his glass, inclined his face towards him with an air of the most courteous inquiry, and slightly shook his head as though he were remarking to himself, "I fear this animal is going mad!"

"I say you praise your own work very freely," repeated Mr. Haredale.

"Work!" echoed Sir John, looking smilingly round. "Mine! I beg your pardon, I really beg your pardon."

"Why, you see," said Mr. Haredale, "those walls. You see those tottering gables. You see on every side where fire and smoke have raged. You see the destruction that has been wanted here. Do you not?"

"My good friend," returned the knight, gently checking his impatience with his hand, "of course I do. I see everything you speak of, when you stand aside, and do not interpose yourself between the view and me. I am very sorry for you. If I had not had the pleasure to meet you here, I think I should have written to tell you so. But you don't bear it as well as I had expected—excuse me—no, you don't indeed."

He pulled out his snuff-box, and addressing him with the superior air of a man who by reason of his higher nature, has a right to read a moral lesson to another, continued:

"For you are a philosopher, you know—one of that stern and rigid school who are far above the weaknesses of mankind in general. You are removed a long way from the frailties of the crowd. You contemplate them from a height, and rail at them with a most impressive bitterness. I have heard you."

"And shall again," said Mr. Haredale.

(Concluded in next issue.)

CURED HER BOY OF PNEUMONIA

Newmarket Mother is loud in her Praises of the Great Consumption Preventative

"My son Laurence was taken down with Pneumonia," says Mrs. A. O. Fisher, of Newmarket, Ont. "Two doctors attended him. He lay for three months almost like a dead child. His lungs became so swollen, his heart was pressed over to the right side. Altogether I think we paid \$140 to the doctors, and all the time he was getting worse. Then we commenced the Dr. Slocum treatment. The effect was wonderful. We saw a difference in two days. Our boy was soon strong and well."

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know—one of that stern and rigid school who are far above the weaknesses of mankind in general. You are removed a long way from the frailties of the crowd. You contemplate them from a height, and rail at them with a most impressive bitterness. I have heard you."

"And shall again," said Mr. Haredale.

CANCER OF THE BREAST.

Stott & Jury, Bowmanville, Ont., will gladly send you the names of Canadians who have tried their painless home treatment for cancer in all parts of the body. Some of the cures are simply marvellous.

A PHILOSOPHER.

A class of little girls at school was asked the meaning of the word philosopher.

Most of the hands were extended, but one child seemed specially anxious to tell.

"Well, Annie, what is a philosopher?" asked the teacher.

"A man what rides a philosophed," was the little girl's answer.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Biliousness Burdens Life.—The bilious man is never a companionable man because his ailment renders him morose and gloomy. The complaint is not so dangerous as it is disagreeable. Yet no one need suffer from it who can procure Parmelee's Vegetable Pills. By regulating the liver and obviating the effects of bile in the stomach they restore men to cheerfulness and full vigor of action.

THE EASTER BONNET.

A new-born April chicken— Such a cunning little fellow! Came hopping out on Sunday In a downy coat of yellow.

His tiny, fluffy noddle— Had an egg-shell cocked upon it. "Oh!" cried the laughing children, "He has on an Easter bonnet!"

—Holiday Magazine.

Table with 4 columns: DAY OF MONTH, DAY OF WEEK, COLOR OF VESTMENT, and religious observances for April 1906. Includes entries for Passion Sunday, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and Low Sunday.

Mission Goods advertisement for W. E. Blake, Church Supplies, 123 Church St., Toronto. Includes phone number M. 2453.

