

BARNABY RUDGE

By CHARLES DICKENS

Barnaby was to die. There was no hope. It is not the least evil attendant upon the frequent exhibition of this last dread punishment, of Death, that it hardens the minds of those who deal it out, and makes them, though they be amiable men in other respects, indifferent to, or unconscious of, their great responsibility.

They had tried to save him. The locksmith had carried petitions and memorials to the fountain-head, with his own hands. But the well was not one of mercy, and Barnaby was to die.

From the first, his mother had never left him, save at night; and with her beside him, he was as usual contented. On this last day, he was more elated and more proud than he had been yet; and when she dropped the book she had been reading to him aloud, and fell upon his neck, he stopped in his busy task of folding a piece of crepe about his hat, and wondered at her, anguish. Grip uttered a feeble croak, half in encouragement, it seemed, and half in remonstrance, but he wanted heart to sustain it, and lapsed abruptly into silence.

With them, who stood upon the brink of the great gulf which none can see beyond, Time, so soon to lose itself in vast Eternity, rolled on like a mighty river, swollen and rapid as it nears the sea. It was morning but now, they had sat and talked together in a dream; and here was evening. The dreadful hour of separation, which even yesterday had seemed so distant, was at hand.

They walked out into the courtyard, clinging to each other, but not speaking. Barnaby knew the jail was a dull, sad, miserable place, and looked forward to to-morrow, as to a passage from it to something bright and beautiful. He had a vague impression too, that he was expected to brave—that he was a man of great consequence, and that the prison people would be glad to make him weep. He trod the ground more firmly as he thought of this, and bade her take heart and cry no more, and feel how steady his hand was. "They call me silly, mother. They shall see—to-morrow!"

Dennis and Hugh were in the courtyard. Hugh came forth from his cell as they did, stretching himself as though he had been sleeping. Dennis sat upon a bench in a corner, with his keen chin huddled together, and rocked himself to and fro like a person in severe pain.

The mother and son remained on one side of the court, and these two men upon the other. Hugh strode up and down, glancing fiercely every now and then at the bright summer sky, and looking round, when he had done so, at the walls.

"No reprieve, no reprieve! Nobody comes near us. There's only the night left now!" moaned Dennis faintly, as he wrung his hands. "Do you think they'll reprieve me in the night, brother? I've known reprieves come in the night afore now. I've known 'em come as late as five, six, and seven o'clock in the morning. Don't you think there's a good chance yet—don't you? Say you do. Say you do, young man," whined the miserable creature, with an imploring gesture towards Barnaby, "or I shall go mad!"

"Better be mad than sane, here," said Hugh. "Go mad." "But tell me what you think!" cried the wretched object, "so mean, and wretched, and despicable, that even Pity's self might have turned away, at sight of such a being in the likeness of a man—isn't there a chance for me, isn't there a good chance for me? Isn't it likely they may be doing this to frighten me? Don't you think it is? Oh!" he almost shrieked, as he wrung his hands, "won't anybody give me comfort!"

"You ought to be the best, instead of the worst," said Hugh, stopping before him. "Ha, ha, ha! See the hangman, when it comes home to him!" "You don't know what it is," cried Dennis, actually writhing as he spoke. "I do. That I should come to be worked off! I! I! That I should come!"

"And why not?" said Hugh, as he thrust back his matted hair to get a better view of his late associate. "How often, before I knew your trade, did I hear you talking of this as if it was a treat?" "I ain't inconsistent," screamed the miserable creature; "I'd talk so again, if I was hangman. Some other man has got my old opinions at this minute. That makes it worse. Somebody's longing to work me off. I know by myself that somebody must be!"

"He'll soon have his longing," said Hugh, resuming his walk. "Think of that, and be quiet."

Although one of these men displayed, in his speech and bearing, the most reckless hardihood; and the other, in his every word and action, testified such an extreme of abject cowardice that it was humiliating to see him; it would be difficult to say which of them would most have repelled and shocked an observer. Hugh's was the dogged desperation of a savage at the stake; the hangman was reduced to a condition little better, if any, than that of a bound with the halter round his neck. Yet, as Mr. Dennis knew and could have told them, these were the two commonest states of mind in persons brought to their pass. Such was the wholesale growth of the seed sown by the law, that this kind of harvest was usually looked for, as a matter of course.

In one respect they all agreed. The wanderer; and uncontrollable train of thought, suggesting sudden recollections of things distant and long forgotten and remote from each other—the vague restless craving for somebody undefined, which nothing could satisfy—the swift flight of the minutes, fusing themselves into hours, as if by enchantment—the rapid coming of the solemn night—the shadow of death always upon them, and yet so dim and faint that objects the meanest and most trivial started from the gloom beyond, and forced themselves upon the view—the impossibility of holding the mind, even if they had been so disposed, to penitence and preparation, or of keeping it to any point while one hideous fascination tempted it away—these things were common to them all, and varied only in their outward tokens.

"Fetch me the book I left within—upon your bed," she said to Barnaby, as the clock struck. "Kiss me first!" He looked in her face, and saw there that the time was come. After a long embrace, he tore himself away, and ran to bring it to her, bidding her not to stir till he came back. He soon returned, for a shriek recalled him—but she was gone.

He ran to the gate and looked through. They were carrying her away. She had said her heart would break. It was better so.

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"Don't you think," whimpered Dennis, creeping up to him, as he stood with his feet rooted to the ground, gazing at the blank walls—"don't you think there's still a chance? It's a dreadful end; it's a terrible end for a man like me. Don't you think there is a chance? I don't mean for you; I mean for me. Don't let him hear us" (meaning Hugh); "he's so desperate."

"Now, then," said the officer, who had been lounging in and out with his hands in his pockets, and yawning as if he were in the last extremity for some subject of interest; "it's time to turn in, boys!"

"Not yet," cried Dennis, "not yet. Not for an hour yet."

"I say, your watch goes different from what it used to," returned the man. "Once upon a time it was always too fast. It's got the other fault now."

"My friend," cried the wretched creature, falling on his knees, "my dear friend—you always were my friend—there's some mistake. Some letter has been mislaid, or some messenger has been stopped upon the way. He may have fallen dead, I saw a man once, fall down dead in the street, myself, and he had papers in his pocket. Send to inquire. Let somebody go to inquire. They never will hang me. They never can—Yes, they will," he cried, starting to his feet with a terrible scream. "They'll hang me by a tick, and keep the pardon back. It's a plot against me. I shall lose my life!" And uttering another yell, he fell in a fit upon the ground.

"See the hangman when it comes home to him!" cried Hugh again, as they bore him away—"Ha, ha, ha! Courage, bold Barnaby, what care we? Your hand! They do well to put us out of the world, for if we get loose a second time, we wouldn't let them off so easy, eh? Another shake! A man can die but once. If you wake in the night, sing that out lustily, and fall asleep again. Ha, ha, ha!"

Barnaby glanced once more through the grate into the empty yard, and then watched Hugh as he strode to the steps leading to his sleeping-cell. He heard him shout, and burst into a roar of laughter, and saw him flourish his hat. Then he turned away himself, like one who walked in his sleep; and, without any sense of fear or sorrow, lay down on his pallet, listening for the clock to strike again.

CHAPTER XIX. The time wore on. The noises in the streets became less frequent by degrees, until silence was scarcely broken save by the bells in church towers, marking the progress—softer and more steady while the city slumbered—of that Great Watcher with the hoary head, who never sleeps or rests. In the brief interval of darkness and repose which feverish towns enjoy, all busy sounds were hushed; and those who awoke from dreams lay listening in their beds, and longed for dawn, and wished the dead of the night were passed.

Into the street outside the jail's main wall, workmen came straggling at this solemn hour, in groups of two or three, and meeting in the centre, cast their tools upon the ground and spoke in whispers. Others soon issued from the jail itself, bearing on their shoulders, planks, and beams; these materials being all brought forth, the rest bestirred themselves, and the dull sound of hammers began to echo through the stillness.

Here and there among this knot of laborers, one, with a lantern or a smoky link, stood by to light his fellows' at their work, and by its doubtful aid, some might be dimly seen taking up the pavement of the road, while others held great upright posts, or fixed them in the holes thus made for their reception. Some dragged slowly on towards the rest, an empty cart, which they brought rumbling from the prison yard; while others erected strong barriers across the street. All were busily engaged. Their dusky figures moving to and fro, at that unusual hour, so active and so silent, might have been taken for those of shadowy creatures toiling at midnight on some ghostly unsubstantial work, which, like themselves, would vanish with the first gleam of day, and leave but morning mist and vapor.

While it was yet dark, a few lookers-on collected, who had plainly come there for the purpose and intended to remain; even those who had to pass the spot on their way to some other place, lingered, and lingered yet, as though the attraction of that were irresistible. Meanwhile the noise of saw and mallet went on briskly, mingled with the clattering of boards on the stone pavement of the road, and sometimes with the workmen's voices as they called to one another. Whenever the chimes of the neighboring every quarter of an hour—a strange sensation, instantaneous and indescribable, but perfectly obvious, seemed to pervade them all.

Gradually, a faint brightness appeared in the east, and the air, which had been very warm all through the night, felt cool and chilly. Though there was no daylight yet, the darkness was diminished, and the stars looked pale. The prison, which had been a mere black mass with little shape or form, put on its usual aspect, and ever and anon a solitary watchman could be seen upon its roof stopping to look down upon the preparations in the street. This man, from forming, as it were, a part of the jail, and knowing, or being supposed to know, all that was passing within, became an object of as much interest, and was as eagerly looked for, and as awfully pointed out, as if he had been a spirit.

By and by the feeble light grew stronger, and the houses with their sign-boards and inscriptions stood plainly out, in the dull gray morning. Heavy stage-wagons crawled from the inn-yard opposite, and travellers peeped out, and as they rolled sluggishly away, cast many a backward look towards the jail. And now, the sun's first beams came glancing into the street, and the night's work, which, in its various stages and in the varied fancies of the lookers-on had taken a hundred shapes, wore its own proper form—a scaffold and a gibbet.

As the warmth of cheerful day began to shed itself upon the scanty crowd, the murmur of tongues was heard, shutters were thrown open, and blinds drawn up, and those who had slept in rooms over against the prison, where places to see the execution were let at high prices, rose hastily from their beds. In some of the houses, people were busy taking out the window-sashes for the better accommodation of spectators; in others the spectators were already seated and beguiling the time with cards, or drink, or jokes among themselves. Some had purchased seats upon the house-tops, and were already crawling to their stations from parapet and garret window. Some were yet bargaining for good places, and stood in them in a state of indecision, gazing at the slowly swelling crowd, and

cried out. It were as easy to detect the motion of lips in a seashell. Three-quarters past eleven! Many spectators who had retired from the windows, came back refreshed, as though their watch had just begun. Those who had fallen asleep roused themselves, and every person in the crowd made one last effort to better his position—which caused a press against the sturdy barriers that made them bend and yield like twigs. The officers, who until now had kept together, fell into their several positions, and gave the words of command. Swords were drawn, muskets shouldered, and the bright steel winding its way among the crowd, gleamed and glittered in the sun like a river. Along this shining path, two men came hurrying on, leading a horse, which was speedily harnessed to the cart at the prison door. Then a profound silence replaced the tumult that had so long been gathering, and a breathless pause ensued. Every window was now choked up with heads; the house-tops teemed with people—clinging to chimneys, peering over gable-ends, and holding on where the sudden loosening of any brick or stone would dash them down into the street. The church tower, the church roof, the churchyard, the prison leads, the very water-spouts and lamp-posts—every inch of room—swarmed with human life.

At the first stroke of twelve the prison bell began to toll. Then the roar—mingled with cries of "Hats off!" and "Poor fellows!" and, from some specks in the great concourse, with a shriek or groan—burst forth again. It was terrible to see—if any one in that distraction of excitement could have seen—the world of eager eyes, all strained upon the scaffold and the beam.

The hollow murmuring was heard within the jail as plainly as without. The three were brought forth into the yard, together, as it resounded through the air. They knew its import well.

"D'ye hear?" cried Hugh, undaunted by the sound. "They expect us! I heard them gathering when I woke in the night, and turned over on t'other side and fell asleep again. We shall see how they welcome the hangman, now that it comes home to him. Ha, ha, ha!"

The Ordinary coming up at this moment, reproved him for his indecent mirth, and advised him to alter his demeanor.

"And why, master?" said Hugh. "Can I do better than bear it easily? You bear it easily enough. Oh! never tell me," he cried, as the other would have spoken, "for all your sad look and your solemn air, you think little enough of it! They say you're the best maker of lobster salads in London. Ha, ha! I've heard that, you see, before now. Is it a good one, this morning—is your hand in? How does the breakfast look? I hope there's enough, and to spare, for all this hungry company that'll sit down to it, when the sight's over."

"I fear," observed the clergyman, shaking his head, "that you are incorrigible."

"You're right. I am," rejoined Hugh, sternly. "Be no hypocrite, master! You make a merry-making of this, every month; let me be merry, too. If you want a frightened fellow there's one that'll suit you. Try your hand upon him!"

He pointed, as he spoke, to Dennis, who, with his legs trailing on the ground, was held between two men, and who trembled so that all his joints and limbs seemed racked by spasms. Turning from this wretched spectacle, he called to Barnaby, who stood apart.

"What cheer, Barnaby? Don't be downcast, lad. Leave that to him." "Bless you," cried Barnaby, stepping lightly towards him, "I'm not frightened, Hugh. I'm quite happy."

Up to this time they had been very quiet, comparatively silent, save when the arrival of some new party at a window, hitherto unoccupied, gave them something new to look at or to talk about. But, as the hour approached, a buzz and hum arose, which, deepening every moment, soon swelled into a roar, and seemed to fill the air. No words or even voices could be distinguished in this clamor, nor did they speak much to each other, though such as were better informed upon the topic than the rest, would tell their neighbors, perhaps, that they might know the hangman when he came out, by his being the shorter one; and that the man who was to suffer with him was named Hugh, and that it was Barnaby Rudge who would be hanged in Bloomsbury Square.

The hum grew, as the time drew near, so loud that those who were at the windows could not hear the church clock strike, though it was close at hand. Nor had they any need to hear it, either, for they could see it in the people's faces. So surely as another quarter chimed, there was a movement in the crowd—as if something had passed over it—as if the light upon them had been changed—in which the fact was readable as on a brazen dial, figured by a giant's hand.

Three-quarters past eleven! The murmur was now deafening, yet every man seemed mute. Look where you would among the crowd, you saw strained eyes and lips compressed; it would have been difficult for the most vigilant observer to point this way or that, and say that yonder man had

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The first when she is just budding from girlhood into the full bloom of womanhood.

The second period that constitutes a special drain on the system is during pregnancy.

The third and the one most liable to leave heart and nerve troubles is during "change of life."

In all three periods Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills will prove of wonderful value to tide over the time. Mrs. James King, Cornwall, Ont., writes: "I was troubled very much with heart trouble—the cause being to a great extent due to 'change of life.' I have been taking your Heart and Nerve Pills for some time, and mean to continue doing so, as I can truthfully say they are the best remedy I have ever used for building up the system. You are at liberty to use this statement for the benefit of other sufferers."

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at the workmen as they rested listlessly against the scaffold—affecting to listen with indifference to the proprietor's eulogy of the commanding view his house afforded, and the surpassing cheapness of his terms.

A fairer morning never shone. From the roofs and upper stories of these buildings, the spires of city churches and the great cathedral dome were visible, rising up beyond the prison into the blue sky, and clad in the showing in the clear atmosphere their every scrap of tracery and fretwork, and every niche and loophole. All was brightness and promise, excepting in the street below, into which (for it yet lay in shadow) the eye looked down as into a dark trench, where, in the midst of so much life, and hope, and renewal of existence, stood the terrible instrument of death. It seemed as if the very sun forbore to look upon it.

But it was better, grim and sombre in the shade, than when, the day being more advanced, it stood confessed in the full glare and glory of the sun, with its black loathsome garlands. It was better in the solitude and gloom of midnight with a few forms clustering about it, than in the freshness and the stir of morning; the centre of an eager crowd. It was better haunting the street like a spectre, when men were in their beds, and influencing perchance the city's dreams, than braving the broad day, and thrusting its obscene presence upon their waking senses.

Five o'clock had struck—six—seven—and eight. Along the two main streets at either end of the cross-way, a living stream had now set in, rolling towards the marts of gain and business. Carts, coaches, wagons, trucks, and barrows, forced a passage through the outskirts of the throng, and clattered onward in the same direction. Some of these which were public conveyances and had come from a short distance in the country, stopped, and the driver pointed to the gibbet with his whip, though he might have spared himself the pains, for the heads of all the passengers were turned that way without his help, and the coach windows were stuck full of staring eyes. In some of the carts and wagons, women might be seen, glancing fearfully at the same unsightly thing, and even the children were held up above the people's heads to see what kind of toy a gallows was, and learn how men were hanged.

Two rioters were to die before the prison, who had been concerned in the attack upon it; and one directly afterwards in Bloomsbury Square. At nine o'clock a strong body of military marched into the street, and formed and lined a narrow passage into Holborn, which had been indifferently kept all night by constables. Through this, another cart was brought (the one already mentioned had been employed in the construction of the scaffold), and wheeled up to the prison gate. These preparations made, the soldiers stood at ease; the officers lounged to and fro, in the alley they had made, or talked together at the scaffold's foot, and the concourse, which had been rapidly augmenting for some hours, and still received additions every minute, waited with an impatience which increased with every chime of St. Sepulchre's clock, for twelve at noon.

Up to this time they had been very quiet, comparatively silent, save when the arrival of some new party at a window, hitherto unoccupied, gave them something new to look at or to talk about. But, as the hour approached, a buzz and hum arose, which, deepening every moment, soon swelled into a roar, and seemed to fill the air. No words or even voices could be distinguished in this clamor, nor did they speak much to each other, though such as were better informed upon the topic than the rest, would tell their neighbors, perhaps, that they might know the hangman when he came out, by his being the shorter one; and that the man who was to suffer with him was named Hugh, and that it was Barnaby Rudge who would be hanged in Bloomsbury Square.

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"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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Larger sizes \$1 and \$2—all druggists. DR. T. A. SLOCUM, Limited, Toronto.

I wouldn't desire to live now if they would let me. Look at me. Am I afraid to die? Will they see me tremble?"

Hugh gazed for a moment at his face, or which there was a strange unearthly smile; and at his eye, which sparkled brightly, and interposing between him and the Ordinary, grimly whispered to the latter—

"I wouldn't say much to him, master, if I were you. He may spoil your appetite for breakfast, though you are used to it."

He was the only one of the three who had washed or trimmed himself that morning. Neither of the others had done so since their doom was pronounced. He still wore the broken feathers in his hat; and all his usual scraps of finery were carefully disposed about his person. His kindling eye, his firm step, his proud and resolute bearing, might have graced some lofty act of heroism; some voluntary sacrifice, born of a noble cause and pure enthusiasm, rather than that felon's death.

(To Be Continued.)

An End to Bilious Headache.—Biliousness, which is caused by excessive bile in the stomach, has a marked effect upon the nerves, and often manifests itself by severe headache. This is the most distressing headache one can have. There are headaches from cold, from fever, and from other causes, but the most excruciating of all is the bilious headache. Parlee's Vegetable Pills will cure it—cure it almost immediately. It will disappear as soon as the Pills operate. There is nothing surer in the treatment of bilious headache.

Ex-Governor James Stephen Hogg of Texas, a famous man, died on the 3rd inst. at Houston, Texas. He was very popular.

Always a Good Friend.—In health and happiness we need no friends, but when pain and prostration come we look for friendly aid from sympathetic hands. These hands can serve us no better than in rubbing in Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, for when the Oil is in the pain is out. It has brought relief to thousands who without it would be indeed friendless.

FOURTH MONTH 30 DAYS April THE RESURRECTION 1906. Table with columns: DAY OF MONTH, DAY OF WEEK, COLOR OF VESTMENT, and religious observances for the month of April 1906.



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