

BARNABY RUDGE

By CHARLES DICKENS

The widow, scarcely venturing to breathe, rose from her seat. The man glided from the closet and extinguished the light.

"The on," cried Grip, suddenly struck with an idea and very much excited. "The on, Hurr! Polly put the ket-tle on, we'll all have tea."

They stood rooted to the ground, as though it had been a voice from the grave.

But even this failed to awaken the sleeper. He turned over towards the fire, his arm fell to the ground and his head drooped heavily upon it.

The widow and her unwelcome visitor gazed at him and at each other for a moment, and then she motioned him towards the door.

"Stay," he whispered. "You teach your son well."

"I have taught him nothing that you heard to-night. Depart instantly or I will rouse him."

"You are free to do so. Shall I rouse him?"

"I dare do anything, I have told you. He knows me well, it seems. At least I will know him."

"Would you kill him in his sleep?" cried the widow, throwing herself between them.

"Woman," he returned between his teeth, as he motioned her aside, "I would see him nearer, and I will. I want one of us to kill the other, wake him."

With that he advanced, and bending down over the prostrate form, softly turned back the head and looked into the face.

"Observe," he whispered in the widow's ear. "In him, of whose existence I was ignorant until to-night, I have you in my power. Be careful how you use me. I am destitute and starving and a wanderer upon the earth."

He pointed, as he left her, to the slumbering form, and stealthily withdrawing, made his way into the street. She fell on her knees beside the sleeper, and remained like one stricken into stone, until the tears which fear had frozen so long, came tenderly to her relief.

"Oh Thou," she cried, "who hast taught me such deep love for this one remnant of the promise of a happy life, out of whose affliction, even, perhaps the comfort springs that he is ever a relying, loving child to me—never growing old or cold at heart, but needing my care and duty in his manly strength as in his cradle-time—help him, in his darkened walk through this sad world, or he is doomed, and my poor heart is broken!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Gliding along the silent streets, and holding his course where they were darkest and most gloomy, the man who had left the widow's house crossed London Bridge and arriving in the city, plunged into the back ways, lanes, and courts, between Cornhill and Smithfield, with no more fixedness of purpose than to lose himself among their windings, and baffle pursuit, if any one were dogging his steps.

It was the dead time of the night, and all was quiet. Now and then a drowsy watchman's footsteps sounded on the pavement, or the lamplighter on his rounds went flashing past, leaving behind a little streak of smoke mingled with glowing morsels of his hot red link. He hid himself even from these partakers of his lonely walk, and shrinking in some arch or doorway while they passed, issued forth again when they were gone and so pursued his solitary way.

To be shelterless and alone in the open country, hearing the wind moan and watching for day through the whole long weary night; to listen to the falling rain, and crouch for warmth beneath the lee of some old barn or rick, or in the hollow of a tree, are dismal things—but not so dismal as the wandering up and down where shelter is, and beds and sleepers are by thousands; a houseless rejected creature. To pace the echoing stones from hour to hour, counting the dull chimes of the clocks; to watch the lights twinkling in chamber windows, to think what happy forgetfulness each house shuts in that there are children coiled together in their beds, ere youth, here age, here poverty, here wealth, all equal in their sleep, and all at rest; to have nothing in common with the slumbering world around, not even sleep, Heaven's gift to all its creatures, and be akin to nothing but despair; to feel, by the wretched contrast with everything on every hand, more utterly alone and cast away than in a trackless desert; this is a kind of suffering on which the rivers of great cities close full many a time, and which the solitude in crowds alone awakens.

The miserably man paced up and down the streets—so long, so weary, so like each other—and often cast a wistful look towards the east, hoping to see the first faint streaks of day. But obdurate night had yet possession of the sky, and his disturbed and restless walk found no relief.

One house in a back street was bright with the cheerful glare of lights; there was the sound of music in it too, and the tread of dancers, and there were cheerful voices, and many a burst of laughter. To this place—to be near something that was awake and glad—he returned again and again; and more than one of those who left it with the merriment was at its height, left it a cheat upon their mirthful mood to see him sitting to and fro like an uneasy ghost. At last the guests departed, one and all, and then the

house was close shut up, and because as dull and silent as the rest.

His wanderings brought him at one time to the city jail. Instead of hastening from it as a place of ill omen, and one he had cause to shun, he sat down on some steps hard by, and resting his chin upon his hand, gazed upon its rough and frowning walls as though even they became a refuge in his jaded eyes.

He paced it round and round, came back to the same spot, and sat down again. He did this often, and once, with a hasty movement, crossed to where some men were watching in the prison lodge, and had his foot upon the steps as though determined to accost them. But looking round he saw that the day had begun to break, and falling in his purpose, turned and fled.

He was soon in the quarter he had lately traversed, and pacing to and fro again as he had done before. He was passing down a mean street, when from an alley close at hand some shouts of revelry arose, and the madcaps, whooping and calling to each other, who, parting noisily, took different ways and dispersed in smaller groups.

Hoping that some low place of entertainment which would afford him a safe refuge might be near at hand, he turned into this court when they were all gone, and looked about for a half-opened door, or lighted window or other indication of the place whence they had come. It was so profoundly dark, however, and so ill-favored, that he concluded they had but turned up there, missing their way, and were pouring out again when he observed them. With this impression, and finding there was no outlet but that by which he had entered, he was about to turn, when a grating near his feet opened and a sudden stream of light appeared, and the sound of talking came.

He retreated into a doorway, to see who these talkers were, and to listen to them.

The light came to the level of the pavement as he did this, and a man ascended bearing in his hand a torch. This figure unlocked and held open the grating as for the passage of another, who presently appeared, in the form of a young man of small stature and uncommon self-importance, dressed in an absolute and very gaudy fashion.

"May I see where that door leads to and what is beyond?" said the man, glancing keenly round. "You will not mind that?"

"I will show you myself. Follow me, or go before. Take your choice."

He bade him lead the way, and by the light of the torch which his conductor held up for the purpose, inspected all three cellars narrowly. Assured that the blind man had spoken the truth, and that he lived there alone, the visitor returned with him to the first, in which a fire was burning, and flung himself with a deep groan upon the ground before it.

His host pursued his usual occupation without seeming to heed him any further. But directly he fell asleep—and he noted his falling into a slumber, as readily as the keenest-

"A lodging at this time!" returned Stagg, pointing towards the dawn as though he saw it. "Do you know the day is breaking?"

"I know it," rejoined the other, "to my cost. I have been traversing this iron-hearted town all night."

"You had better traverse it again," said the blind man, preparing to descend, "till you find some lodgings suitable to your taste. I don't let my."

"Stay!" cried the other, holding him by the arm.

"I'll beat this light about that hangdog face of yours (for hangdog it is, if it answers to your voice), and rouse the neighborhood besides, if you detain me," said the blind man. "Let me go. Do you hear?"

"Do you hear!" returned the other, chinking a few shillings together, and hurriedly pressing them into his hand. "I beg nothing of you. I will pay for the shelter you give me. Death! Is it much to ask of such as you! I have come from the country, and desire to rest where there are none to question me. I am faint, exhausted, worn out, almost dead. Let me lie down, like a dog, before your fire. I ask no more than that. If you would be rid of me, I will depart to-morrow."

"If a gentleman has been unfortunate on the road," muttered Stagg, yielding to the other, who, pressing on him, had already gained a footing on the steps—and cast pay for his accommodation to him.

"I will pay you with all I have. I am just now past the want of food, God knows, and wish but to purchase shelter. What companion have you below?"

"None."

"Then fasten your grate there, and show me the way, Quick!"

The blind man complied after a moment's hesitation, and they descended together. The dialogue had passed as hurriedly as the words could be spoken, and they stood in his wretched room before he had had time to recover from his first surprise.

"May I see where that door leads to and what is beyond?" said the man, glancing keenly round. "You will not mind that?"

"I will show you myself. Follow me, or go before. Take your choice."

He bade him lead the way, and by the light of the torch which his conductor held up for the purpose, inspected all three cellars narrowly. Assured that the blind man had spoken the truth, and that he lived there alone, the visitor returned with him to the first, in which a fire was burning, and flung himself with a deep groan upon the ground before it.

His host pursued his usual occupation without seeming to heed him any further. But directly he fell asleep—and he noted his falling into a slumber, as readily as the keenest-

cried through the glass door, standing among the rusty locks and keys like love among the roses—for which apt comparison the historian may by no means take any credit to himself, the same being the invention, in a sentimental mood, of the chaste and modest Miggs, who, beholding him from the doorsteps she was then cleaning, did in her maiden meditation, give utterance to the simile.

The locksmith, who happened at the moment to have his eyes thrown upward and his head backward, in an intense comming with Toby, did not see his visitor, until Mrs. Varden, more watchful than the rest, had desired Sim Tappertit to open the glass door and give him admission—from which untoward circumstances the good lady argued (for she could deduce a precious moral from the most trifling event) that to take a draught of small ale in the morning was to observe a pernicious, irreligious, and Pagan custom, the result whereof should be left to swine, and Satan, or at least to Popish persons, and should be shunned by the righteous as a work of sin and evil.

"She would no doubt have pursued her admonition much farther, and would have foisted it on a long list of precious precepts of inestimable value, but that the young gentleman standing by in a somewhat uncomfortable and discomfited manner while she read her spouse this lecture, occasioned her to bring it to a premature conclusion.

"I'm sure you'll excuse me, sir," said Mrs. Varden, rising and courtesying. "Varden is so very thoughtful, and needs so much reminding—Sim, bring a chair here."

Mr. Tappertit obeyed, with a flourish implying that he did so under protest.

"And you can go, Sim," said the locksmith.

Mr. Tappertit obeyed again, still under protest; and betaking himself to the workshop, began seriously to fear that he might find it necessary to poison his master, before his time was out.

In the mean time, Edward returned suitable replies to Mrs. Varden's courtesies, and that lady brightened up very much; so that when he accepted a dish of tea from the fair hands of Dolly, she was perfectly agreeable.

"I am sure if there is anything we can do—Varden, or I, or Dolly either,—to serve you, sir, at any time, you have only to say it, and it shall be done," said Mrs. V.

"I am much obliged to you, I am sure," returned Edward. "You encourage me to say that I have come here now, to beg your good offices."

Mrs. Varden was delighted beyond measure.

"It occurred to me that probably your fair daughter might be going to the Warren, either to-day or to-morrow," said Edward, glancing at

Table with 4 columns: DAY OF MONTH, DAY OF WEEK, COLOR OF VESTMENTS, and THE SACRED HEART. It lists the calendar for June 1905, including feast days like Ascension of Our Lord, Pentecost, and Trinity Sunday.

LEARN SHORTHAND BY MAIL. A complete course in 20 lessons. The system is easy and practical. Canadian Correspondence College, Limited TORONTO, CAN.

"Nor did I begin it, Martha," added the locksmith, good-humoredly, "I must say that."

"You did not begin it, Varden!" exclaimed his wife, opening her eyes very wide and looking round upon the company as though she would say, "You hear this man! You did not begin it, Varden! But you shall not say I was out of temper, No, you did not begin it, oh, dear, no, not you, my dear!"

"Well, well," said the locksmith. "That's settled then."

"Oh, yes," rejoined his wife, "quite. If you like to say Dolly began it, my dear, I shall not contradict you. I know my duty. I need know it, I am sure. I am often obliged to bear it in mind, when my inclination perhaps would be for the moment to forget it. Thank you, Varden." And so, with a mighty show of humility and forgiveness, she folded her hands, and looked round again, with a smile which plainly said, "If you desire to see the first and foremost among female martyrs, here she is, on view!"

This little incident, illustrative though it was of Mrs. Varden's extraordinary sweetness and amiability, had so strong a tendency to check the conversation and to disconcert all parties but that excellent lady, that only a few monosyllables were uttered until Edward withdrew; which he presently did, thanking the lady of the house a great many times for her condescension, and whispering in Dolly's ear that he would call on the morrow, in case there should happen to be an answer to the note—which, indeed, she knew without his telling, as Barnaby and his friend Grip had dropped in on the previous night to prepare her for the visit which was then terminating.

Gabriel, who had attended Edward to the door, came back with his hands in his pockets, and, after fidgeting about the room in a very uneasy manner, and casting a great many sidelong looks at Mrs. Varden (who with the calmest countenance in the world was five fathoms deep in the Protestant Manual), inquired of Dolly how she meant to go. Dolly, supposed by the stage-coach, and looked at her lady mother, who finding herself silently appealed to, dived down at least another fathom into the Manual, and became unconscious of all earthly things.

"Martha," said the locksmith. "I hear you, Varden," said his wife without rising to the surface.

"I am very sorry, my dear, you have such an objection to the Maypole and old John, for otherways as it's a very fine morning, and Saturday's not a busy day with us, we might have all three gone to Chigwell in the chaise, and had quite a happy day of it."

Mrs. Varden immediately closed the Manual, and bursting into tears, requested to be led up-stairs.

"What is the matter now, Martha?" inquired the locksmith.

To which Martha rejoined, "Oh! don't speak to me," and protested in agony that if anybody had told her so, she wouldn't have believed it.

"But Martha," said Gabriel, putting himself in the way as Dolly was moving off with the aid of Dolly's shoulder, "wouldn't have believed what? Tell me what's wrong now. Do tell me. Upon my soul the locksmith, plucking at his wig in a kind of frenzy, 'nobody does know, I verily believe, but Miggs!'"

"Miggs," said Mrs. Varden faintly and with symptoms of approaching incoherence, "is attached to me, and is sufficient to draw down her, and turn her to the class before her, and said, 'Can any of you tell me what that looks like?' One boy immediately held up his hand, and the teacher asked: 'Well, Joey, may tell us.' 'It looks like hell, ma'am,' replied Joey, with startling promptness. — Western Watchman.

Great Medicine.—Tontoi, one of the pioneers of French Canada, lost a hand and wore an iron hook as a substitute. He was in the habit of boxing the ears of refractory Indians with this iron hand, and they have remarked that it was "great medicine." Dr. Thomas' Eucletic Oil is a great medicine; it takes hold of pain with an iron hand and knocks it out of the system.



HANDBALL TEAMS, '04-'05.

"Good-night, noble captain," said he with the torch. "Farewell, commander. Good luck, illustrious general!"

In return to these compliments the other bade him hold his tongue, and keep his noise to himself, and laid upon him many similar injunctions, with great fluency of speech and sternness of manner.

"Commend me, captain, to the stricken Miggs," returned the torch-bearer in a lower voice. "My captain flies at higher game than Miggses. Ha, ha, ha! My captain is an eagle, both as respects his eye and soaring wings. My captain breaketh hearts as other bachelors break eggs at breakfast."

"What a fool you are, Stagg!" said Mr. Tappertit, stepping on the pavement of the court, and brushing from his legs the dust he had contracted in his passage upward.

"His precious limbs!" cried Stagg, clasping one of his ankles. "Shall a Miggs aspire to these proportions! No, no, my captain. We will inveigle ladies fair, and wed them in our secret cavern. We will unite ourselves with blooming beauties, captain."

"I'll tell you what, my buck," said Tappertit, releasing his leg. "I'll trouble you not to take liberties, and be akin to nothing but despair; to feel, by the wretched contrast with everything on every hand, more utterly alone and cast away than in a trackless desert; this is a kind of suffering on which the rivers of great cities close full many a time, and which the solitude in crowds alone awakens."

The miserably man paced up and down the streets—so long, so weary, so like each other—and often cast a wistful look towards the east, hoping to see the first faint streaks of day. But obdurate night had yet possession of the sky, and his disturbed and restless walk found no relief.

One house in a back street was bright with the cheerful glare of lights; there was the sound of music in it too, and the tread of dancers, and there were cheerful voices, and many a burst of laughter. To this place—to be near something that was awake and glad—he returned again and again; and more than one of those who left it with the merriment was at its height, left it a cheat upon their mirthful mood to see him sitting to and fro like an uneasy ghost. At last the guests departed, one and all, and then the

sighted man could have done—he knelt down beside him, and passed his hand lightly but carefully over his face and person!

His sleep was checkered with starts and moans, and sometimes with a muttered word or two. His hands were clenched, his brow bent, and his mouth firmly set. All this, the blind man accurately marked; and as if his curiosity were strongly awakened, and he had already some inkling of his mystery, he sat watching him, if the expression may be used, and listening, until it was broad day.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dolly Varden's pretty little head was yet bewildered by various recollections of the party, and her bright eyes were yet dazzled by a crowd of images dancing before them like notes in the sunbeams, among which the edify of one partner in particular did especially figure, the same being a young coachmaker (a master in his own right) who had given her to understand, when he handed her into the chair at parting, that it was his fixed resolve to neglect his business from that time, and die slowly for the love of her—Dolly's head, and eyes, and thoughts, and seven senses, were all in a state of flutter and confusion for which the party was accountable, although it was now three days old, when, as she was sitting listlessly at breakfast, reading all manner of fortunes (that is to say, of married and flourishing fortunes) in the grounds of her tescup, a step was heard in the workshop, and Mr. Edward Chester was des-

"My dear Martha," he said.

"Oh, yes, I dare say," interrupted Mrs. Varden, with a smile of mingled scorn and pleasantry. "Very dear! We all know that."

"No, but my good soul," said Gabriel, "you are quite mistaken. You are indeed. I was delighted to find you so kind and ready. I waited, my dear, anxiously, I assure you, to hear what you would say."

"You waited anxiously," repeated Mrs. V. "Yes! Thank you, Varden. You waited, as you always do, that I might bear the blame, if any came of it. But I am used to it."

"I give you my word, Martha," said Gabriel.

"Let me give you my word, my dear," interposed his wife, with a Christian smile, "that such discussions as these between married people, are much better left alone. Therefore, if you please, Varden, we'll drop the subject. I have no wish to pursue it. I could, I might say a great deal. But I would rather not. Pray don't say any more."

"I don't want to say any more," rejoined the good locksmith.

"Well, then, don't," said Mrs. Varden.

