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SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the library of an old worn-out southern plantation, known as the Barony. The place is to be sold, and the history and that of the owners, the Quintards, is the subject of discussion by Jonathan Crenshaw, a business man, a stranger known as Bladen, and Bob Yancy, a farmer, when Hannibal Wayne Hazard, a mysterious child of the old southern family, makes his appearance. Yancy tells how he adopted the boy, Nathaniel Ferris buys the Barony, but the Quintards deny any knowledge of the boy. Yancy to keep Hannibal, Captain Murrell, a friend of the Quintards, appears and asks questions about the Barony. Yancy is rescued by Bruce Carrington. Hannibal is kidnapped by Dave Blount, Captain Murrell's agent. Yancy overtakes Blount, gives him a thrashing and secures the boy. Yancy appears before Squire Balaam, and is discharged with costs for the plaintiff. Betty Malroy, a friend of the Ferrisses, has an encounter with Captain Murrell, who forces his attentions on her, and is rescued by Bruce Carrington. Betty sets out for her Tennessee home. Carrington takes the same stage. Yancy and Hannibal disappear, with Murrell on their trail. Hannibal arrives at the home of Judge Slossom Price. The Judge recognizes in the boy a grandson of an old time friend. Murrell arrives at Judge's home. Cavendish family on raft rescue Yancy, who is apparently dead. Price breaks jail. Betty and Carrington arrive at Belle Plain. Hannibal's rifle discloses some startling things to the Judge. Hannibal and Betty meet again. Murrell arrives in Belle Plain. Is playing for big stakes. Yancy awakes from long dreamless sleep on board the raft. Judge Price makes startling discoveries in looking up land titles. Charley Norton, a young planter, who assists the Judge, is mysteriously assaulted. Norton informs Carrington that Betty has promised to marry him. Norton is mysterious about. More light on Murrell's plot. He plans uprising of negroes. Judge Price, with Hannibal, visits Betty, and she keeps the boy as a companion. In a stroll Betty takes with Hannibal they meet Bess Hicks, daughter of the overseer, who warns her of danger and counsels her to leave Belle Plain at once. Betty, terrified, acts on Bess' advice, and Murrell, who has been watching her, follows her carriage to a stopping place. The pair are taken to Hicker's cabin, in an almost inaccessible spot, and there Murrell visits Betty and reveals his part in the plot and his object. Betty spurns his proffered love and the interview is ended by the arrival of Ware, terrified at possible outcome of the crime. Judge Price, hearing of the abduction, plans action. The Judge takes charge of the abduction, and search for the missing ones is instituted. Carrington visits the Judge and allies are discovered. Judge Price visits Colonel Pentress, where he meets Yancy and Cavendish. Becoming enraged, Price dashes a glass of whisky into the colonel's face and a duel is arranged.

THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

By VAUGHAN KESTER
ILLUSTRATIONS BY D. MELVILLE

considered signaling Bess to return. Slossom must be told of Murrell's arrest; but he was sick with apprehension, some trap might have been prepared for him, he could not know; and the impulse to act foretook him.

He smote his hands together in a hopeless, beaten gesture. And Murrell had gone weak—with his own eyes he had seen it—Murrell—whom he believed without fear! He felt that he had been grievously betrayed in his trust and a hot rage poured through him. At last he climbed into the saddle and, swaying like a drunken man, galloped off.

When he reached the river road he paused and scanned its dusty surface. Hues and his party had turned south when they issued from the wood path. No doubt Murrell was being taken to Memphis. Ware laughed harshly. The outlaw would be free before another dawn broke.

He had halted near where Jim had turned his team the previous night after Betty and Hannibal had left the carriage; the marks of the wheels were as plainly distinguishable as the more recent trail left by the four men, and as he grasped the significance of that wide half circle his sense of injury overwhelmed him again. He hoped to live to see Murrell hanged!

He was so completely lost in his bitter reflections that he had been unaware of a mounted man who was coming toward him at a swift gallop, but now he heard the steady pounding of hoofs and, startled by the sound, looked up. A moment later the horseman drew rein at his side.

"Ware!" he cried.

"How are you, Carrington?" said the planter.

"You are wanted at Belle Plain," began Carrington, and seemed to hesitate.

"Yes—yes, I am going there at once—now—" stammered Ware, and gathered up his reins with a shaking hand.

"You've heard, I take it?" said Carrington slowly.

"Yes," answered Ware, in a hoarse whisper. "My God, Carrington, I'm heart sick; she has been like a daughter to me—"

was a foregone conclusion; but the insurrection he had planned was at an end. Hues had dealt its death blow. Moreover, though the law might be impotent to deal with Murrell, he could not hope to escape the vengeance of the powerful class he had plotted to destroy; he would have to quit the country. Ware gloated in this idea of craven flight. Thank God, he had seen the last of him!

But, as always, his thoughts came back to Betty. Slossom would wait at Hues' place for the man Murrell had promised him, and, falling the messenger, for the signal fire, but there would be neither; and Slossom would be left to determine his own course of action. Ware felt certain that he would wait through the night, but as sure as the morning broke, if no word had reached him, he would send one of his men across the bayou, who must learn of Murrell's arrest, escape, flight—for in Ware's mind these three events were indissolubly associated. The planter's teeth knocked together. He was having a terrible acquaintance with fear, its very depths had swallowed him up; it was a black pit in which he sank from horror to horror. He had lost all faith in the Clan which had terrorized half a dozen states, which had robbed and murdered with apparent impunity, which had marked its hundreds of stolen slaves. He had utterly collapsed at the first blow dealt the organization, but he was still seeing Murrell, pallid and shaken.

A step sounded in the hall and an instant later Hicks entered the room without the formality of knocking. Ware recognized his presence with a glance of indifference, but did not speak. Hicks slouched to his employer's side and handed him a note which proved to be from Pentress. Ware read and tossed it aside.

"If he wants to see me why don't he come here?" he growled.

"I reckon that old fellow they call Judge Price has sprung something sudden on the colonel," said Hicks. "He was out here the first thing this morning; you'd have thought he



"The jail ain't built that'll hold him!" muttered Hicks.

"Of course he can't be held," agreed Ware. "And he'll never be brought to trial; no lawyer will dare appear against him, no jury will dare to find him guilty; but there's Hues, what about him?" He paused. The two men looked at each other for a long moment.

"Where did they carry the captain?"

"I don't know."

"It looks like the Clan was in a hell-fired hole—but, shucks! What will be easier than to fix Hues?—and while they're fixing folks they'd better not overlook that old fellow Price. He's got some notion about Pentress and the boy." Mr. Hicks did not consider it necessary to explain that he was himself largely responsible for this.

"How do you know that?" demanded Ware.

"He as good as said so." Hicks looked uneasily at the planter. He knew himself to be compromised. The stranger named Cavendish had forced an admission from him that Murrell would not condone if it came to his knowledge. He had also acquired a very proper and wholesome fear of Judge Slossom Price. He stepped close to Ware's side. "What'll come of the girl, Tom? Can you figure that out?" he questioned, sinking his voice almost to a whisper. But Ware was incapable of speech, again his terrors completely overwhelmed him. "I reckon you'll have to find another overseer. I'm going to strike out for Texas," said Hicks.

Ware's eyes met his for an instant. He had thought of flight, too; was still thinking of it, but greed was as much a part of his nature as fear; Belle Plain was a prize not to be lightly cast aside, and it was almost his. He lurched across the room to the window. If he were going to act, the sooner he did so the better, and gain a respite from his fears. The road down the coast slid away before his heavy eyes; he marked each turn, then a palsy of fear shook him, his heart beat against his ribs, and he stood gnawing his lips while he gazed up at the sun.

"Do you get what I say, Tom? I am going to quit these parts," said Hicks. Ware turned slowly from the window.

"All right, Hicks. You mean you want me to settle with you, is that it?" he asked.

"Yes, I'm going to leave while I can; maybe I can't later on," said Hicks stolidly. He added: "I am going to start down the coast as soon as it turns dark, and before it's day again I'll have put the good piles between me and these parts."

"You're going down the coast?" and Ware was again conscious of the quickened beating of his heart. Hicks nodded. "See you don't meet up with John Murrell," said Ware.

"I'll take that chance. It seems a heap better to me than staying here."

Ware looked from the window. The shadows were lengthening across the lawn.

"Better start now, Hicks," he advised.

"I'll wait until it turns dark."

"You'll need a horse."

"I was going to help myself to one. This ain't no time to stand on ceremony," said Hicks shortly.

"Slossom shouldn't be left in the lurch like this—or your brother's folks—"

"They'll have to figure it out for themselves, same as me," rejoined Hicks.

"You can stop there as you go by."

"No," said Hicks. "I never did believe in this damn foolishness about the girl, and I won't go near George's—"

"I don't ask you to go there; you can give them the signal from the head of the bayou. All I want is for you to stop and light a fire on the shore. They'll know what that means. I'll give you a horse and fifty dollars for the job."

Hicks' eyes sparkled, but he only said:

"Make it twice that and maybe we can deal."

Racked and tortured, Ware hesitated; but the sun was slipping into the west; his windows blazed with the hot light.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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VETERINARY SURGEON.

A graduate of the University of Penna's Office at Palace Livery Stable, Bellefonte, Pa. Both 'phones. Oct. 1, 1917.



The Planter's Knees Knocked Together.

ter to me—"

"I think I understand your feeling," said Carrington, giving him a level glance.

"Then you'll excuse me," and the planter clapped spurs to his horse. Once he looked back over his shoulder; he saw that Carrington had not moved from the spot where they had met.

At Belle Plain, Ware found his neighbors in possession of the place. They greeted him quietly and spoke in subdued tones of their sympathy.

When he could he shut himself in his room. He had experienced a day of maddening anxiety; he had not slept at all the previous night; in mind and body he was worn out; and now he was plunged into the thick of this sensation. He must keep control of himself.

He sought to forecast the happenings of the next few hours. Murrell's friends would break jail for him, that

owned Belle Plain. There was a couple of strangers with him, and he had me in and fired questions at me for half an hour; then he hiked off up to The Oaks."

"Murrell's been arrested," said Ware in a dull level voice. Hicks gave him a glance of unmixed astonishment.

"No!"

"Yes, by God!"

"Who'd risk it?"

"Risk it? Man, he almost fainted dead away—a damned coward. Hell!"

"How do you know this?" asked Hicks, appalled.

"I was with him when he was taken—it was Hues—the man he trusted more than any other." Ware gave the overseer a ghastly grin and was silent, but in that silence he heard the drumming of his own heart. He went on. "I tell you, to save himself, John Murrell will implicate the rest of us; we've got to get him free, and then, by hell—we ought to knock him in the head; he isn't fit to live!"

Was Fun to Choose.
A number of drivers of racing cars who were in Louisville to participate in the motor races were present at a luncheon in honor of one of the leading contestants, who told several automobile stories.

"But my best story," said the racer, "is about a taxicab chauffeur. This man was discharged for reckless driving and so became a motorman on a trolley car.

"As he was grumbling over his fallen fortunes a friend said:
"Oh, what's the matter with you? Can't you run over people just as much as ever?"

"Yes," the ex-chauffeur replied, "but formerly I could pick, and choose."

NO MEDICINE
But Change of Food Gave Final Relief.

Most diseases start in the alimentary canal—stomach and bowels.

A great deal of our stomach and bowel troubles come from eating too much starchy and greasy food.

The stomach does not digest any of the starchy food we eat—white bread, pastry, potatoes, oats, etc.—these things are digested in the small intestine, and if we eat too much, as most of us do, the organs that should digest this kind of food are overcome by excess of work, so that fermentation, indigestion, and a long train of ills result.

Too much fat also is hard to digest and this is changed into acids, sour stomach, belching gas, and a bloated, heavy feeling.

In these conditions a change from indigestible foods to Grape-Nuts will work wonders in not only relieving the distress but in building up a strong digestion, clear brain and steady nerves. A Wash. woman writes:

"About five years ago I suffered with bad stomach—dyspepsia, indigestion, constipation—caused, I know now, from overeating starchy and greasy food.

"I doctored for two years without any benefit. The doctor told me there was no cure for me. I could not eat anything without suffering severe pain in my back and sides, and I became discouraged.

"A friend recommended Grape-Nuts and I began to use it. In less than two weeks I began to feel better and inside of two months I was a well woman and have been ever since.

"I can eat anything I wish with pleasure. We eat Grape-Nuts and cream for breakfast and are very fond of it." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs. "There's a reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest. Adv.