

# THE MASTER OF MAN :-: By Sir Hall Caine

An Outspoken and Moving Study of a Deep Sex Problem by the Noted Author of "The Manxman," "The Deemster," "The Eternal City," "The Woman Thou Gavest Me," Etc.

**PERSONS OF THE STORY**  
**VICTOR STOWELL**—A brilliant young advocate, appointed despite his youth Deemster, or chief judge, of the Isle of Man, in which position he has to sit in judgment on a felon-sinner. He is high in a felon's esteem, though in a moment of mutual passion he has, to great later penitence over the secret sin, had illicit relations with—  
**BESSIE COLLISTER**—A handsome but illiterate peasant girl. She has a child which is accidentally smothered on the night of its birth. She is arrested for murdering her babe. Bessie really loves—  
**ALICE GELL**—A graceful but somewhat cold, who persuades Bessie to betray herself to her father despite the opposition of her father.  
**SPEAKER GELL**—The rich and tyrannical head of the Manx Parliament.  
**FENELLA STANLEY**—A great-hearted and beautiful girl with advanced ideas on women's rights who is in love with Victor and he with her. She is the daughter of—  
**GENERAL STANLEY**—Governor of the Isle of Man.  
**DAN BALDROMMA**—A brutal forger, stepfather of Bessie, and who tries to use her trouble, for which he thinks Gell is responsible, as a lever to advance his own fortune.



Dan went staggering down the drive, shaking his fist at the house

"Perhaps it is, perhaps it isn't," said Fenella. "I intend to follow it up anyway."  
 "How?" said Stowell, but rather with his mouth than his voice.  
 "I'm already on the track of something."  
 "On the track. . . ."  
 "Yes. It seems that somebody has been telling the girl left home (shut out by her abominable stepfather, you know), she went to the house of a Mrs. Quayle, living on the south shore in Ramsey."  
 Stowell's heart thumped and his lips quivered.  
 "Mrs. Quayle?"  
 "Why, that must be the housekeeper at your chambers, dear," said Janet, busy with her teacups.  
 "You know her? . . . But then everybody knows everybody in the Isle of Man," said Fenella.  
 "With a sense of duplicity, Stowell found himself saying, 'Well?'  
 "Well, I'm going to see this Mrs. Quayle on my way home to Government House. She'll be able to tell me how long the girl stayed with her, who took her away, and where she went to."  
 Stowell dropped his head, feeling that he wanted to escape from the room, and Fenella indignantly, passionately, vehemently went on to denounce the guilty man.  
 "Of course the girl is shielding him. A woman always does that. I should do it myself if I were in the same position. But oh, how I should like to finish him out! Even if he has taken no part in the actual crime, how I should like to punish him—to expose him! You must sit on this case—you really must."  
 "Yes?"  
 When the time came for Fenella to go Janet took her upstairs to look at some new decorations that had been made in the room that was to be her boudoir. Stowell remained in the library, and the sound of Fenella's step on the floor above beat on his stunned brain with the drumming noise of a train.  
 He had a sense of cowardice which he had never felt before. At one moment he wanted to tell Fenella everything, thinking that would be the end of his tortures. But at the next he reflected that it would be the beginning of hers—inflicting an incurable wound upon her affection. And then if Bessie were going to be acquitted, as seemed possible (the evidence being so unconvincing), why should he enlarge the area of the shameful secret?  
 When Fenella returned (saying, as she came downstairs, how beautiful her room was and how proud she would be of it) he took her out to the carriage.

To be continued tomorrow  
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LATER in the day Stowell was alone in the library reading the depositions. In his secret heart he knew that a wicked temptation had come to him—the temptation to get Bessie off, and to stop the flood of evil which would surely follow if Deemster Taubman tried her and she were condemned. But even his same he was struggling to drown his gains in contempt of the case against her.

How little there was to it! The direct evidence was almost chivalric. The medical testimony was the only thing of consequence, but how sloppy, how inconclusive! Was there anything against Bessie which he, if he had been the advocate for the defense, could have relied with as many holes as there were in a colander? Then why shouldn't he sit on her case?

Guilty? Perhaps she was; but, even so, was it not the theory of the law that she had to be proved guilty—that a person should have a fair legal trial and be convicted or acquitted according to the evidence before the Court? Why shouldn't he?

Suddenly he became aware of a tumult at the front door. Somebody was hawling in a loud voice.

"I'll see the Deemster if I have to beat the house down!"

It was Dan Baldromma. Stowell stepped into the hall and said to the housemaid, who was barring the door against the intruder.

"Let him come in, Jane."

Dan, with his short, gross figure, rolled into the house without remembering to take his hat off.

"Well, what do you want?" said Stowell—he was quivering with anger.

"I want to know what is to be done for me?" said Dan.

"For you?"

"For my daughter then—my step-daughter. I had seen Mr. Sto'ill last—it was at his office in Ramsey—he had warned him that the man who had got his daughter into disgrace had got to marry her. But had he? No! He had refused—he must have done. And that was the reason why she did what they say. But, behold you, who was being blamed for it? Himself! Yes, people were looking back at him and saying he had thrown the girl into the way of temptation.

That was not the worst of it either. He had expected decent treatment about the farm when he became father-in-law to the man who would come into it by beheriship. But now the girl was in Castle Rushen, and if they sent her over the water the Spaker would be turning him out of house and home."

"He's after threatening it already—to show me the road at Hollantide . . . What's that you say, sir? Thinking of myself, am I?"

"I saw them, and what for shouldn't I? Near is my shirt but nearer is my skin, they're saying."

Stowell, swept by gusts of passion, was doing his best to control himself.

"Well, what have you come to me for?" he asked.

Dan thrust forward his thick neck with his bull-like gesture, and said:

"To tell you to get her off."

"Even if she is guilty?"

"Chut! Who's to know that if the courts acquit her? They are wayses and wayses. Lawyers are mortal clever at twisting the law when they're wanting to. Our Deemster now, and the bosom friend of the man that got my girl into this trouble has got to get her out of it."

"So," said Stowell, breathing hard, "you have come to ask me to disregard Justice" (Dan made a grunt of contempt), "not to save the girl but to protect you—you and your rag of a character?"

Dan drew himself up with a short laugh, half bitter and half triumphant.

"Rag, is it? Take care what you're saying, Mr. Sto'ill, sir. You may be a big man in the island now, but there's them that's bigger and that's the people."

Stowell pointed a quivering hand to the clock on the landing, and said:

"Look at that clock. If you're gone out of this house in one minute . . ."

Dan's laugh rose to a cry of derision.

"So that's it, is it? That's what the first Justice of the Peace in the Isle of Man is, eh? Son of the old Deemster, too? The grand old holy saint as they're."

But before he could finish, Stowell, with a shout that drowned Dan's laugh as if it had been the whimper of a baby girl, laid hold of the man by the collar of his coat and the slack of his trousers and flung him out of the open door and crashed it after him.

Dan, who had rolled and tumbled and bumped on the path like a fat hog's-head kicked from the tail of a cart, picked himself up and went staggering down the drive, shaking his fist at the house and pouring his maledictions upon it in a voice that was like the broken howl of a limping dog.

Janet came running from her room, and seeing Stowell with his eyes aflame and panting for breath, said:

"Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Now you'll be worse."

"On the contrary, I'll be better—better in every way," he said.

His resolution was taken. Never would he sit on Bessie's case. Nothing should tempt him to do so.

But Fate had not yet done with him. On the afternoon of the following day Stowell walked for a long hour on the shore, trying to deaden the tumult in his brain in the loud surge of the sea.

Returning to Ballamoor he found the Governor's carriage outside the house. Had the Governor come to see him? It was Fenella. She was at tea with Janet in the library.

Although she rose to greet him with all the sunshine of her smile, he could see that her face was feverish.

"We come to the north on three or four to see yourself, of course."