A DARK NIGHT

By SARAH ORNE JEWETT

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CHAPTER I.

Many years ago two men were talking together one morning in the private room of a bank in the west of England. The junior partner of the house, a white-haired, sage-looking financier, was cautioning his companion, who evidently had their business enterprise very much at heart. There was something eager and adventurous in the younger man's appearance, in spite of the look that betrayed the country 'squire and lawyer that he was. The bank, personified by the elder man, was making an investment quite apart from its usual steady customs, to join the 'squire, who was putting a good bit of money into a venture by sea. This money was to be forwarded to the port of Bristol to be shipped, and the two capitalists had received news from the captain of the vessel that he was sailing much sooner than had been his first intention. The difficulty was to find a proper messenger at such short notice, and the 'squire, who was something of a sportsman, had come to say that he had fallen in unexpectedly with a horse dealer, a very honest man, fearless and a good rider, whom he had known for many years, and who, fortunately was on his way to Bristol the next day but one.

"The only defect he has is in being a stranger to the roads hereabouts; I mean between here and Bristol," said the 'squire. "But Rogers, you say, can go with him, and knows the way well. Weymouth has an English tongue in his head, but with so much gold to carry a man is sometimes glad to take a short cut, or a different turn, especially in these days where there is so much tramping and thievery. You never know whom you fall in with on the road. I must say I never liked the looks of Rogers—"

The 'squire turned quickly from the window where he stood with hands deep in his pockets, looking out in the street, and saw Rogers himself, who had come, soft-coated as a cat, from the outer room to stand behind the senior partner. The 'squire stared at him angrily.

"I knocked, sir," said Rogers, deferentially.

"I should hope so," answered the 'squire with coldness. But the clerk seemed to take no offense, and departed on tiptoe after handing some checks to his chief. The old man flushed a little and was disturbed. Rogers was his daily companion and made himself quite indispensible. To the 'squire he was only a subordinate, and apt to be presuming and curious.

"I don't like him, in spite of all you say," the 'squire grumbled to the senior partner a moment after the door was softly closed.

"Well, perhaps not as a companion," agreed the old gentleman with a smile. "I thought he looked crafty and sneakish myself at first sight, but he has been perfectly faithful and steady these six or eight years now, and I long ago gave up suspecting Rogers. He is curious, perhaps, but harmless, harmless."

"He'll wait forever for his chance, but he'll take it when he gets it," said the 'squire. "That is, if I know anything of human nature. I wish we had our money all in notes instead of so much gold, but we cannot risk the chance of our changing the notes in Bristol before the Mary and Bell sets sail. And my man Weymouth can hold his own, I'll warrant him. I hope he'll be prompt about starting. He as much as told me that it was not all business that keeps him here; he is paying attention to a young woman whom he hopes to marry. But he's a man of his word. 'Tis a good bit of work for him and money easily earned, as you may say, since he was going to Bristol a day later, at any rate."

Two Mounted Messengers.

The 'squire took his riding stick and gloves from the table and bade his old friend good morning. They shook hands heartily and had a cheerful word or two about their business and its probable success.

"See that they start at 6 o'clock Sunday morning, or even earlier," the younger man turned back to say. "The roads are heavy already with so much rain, and if I don't mistake the signs there's more coming. They can't get to Bristol at best before night. I don't know what sort of a mount Rogers will get. He'll soon worry a good horse out of his wits, I should think. Tell him that Fenderson is set upon sailing early."

"He'll wait a tide for his money," said the senior partner with assurance, tapping the arm of his chair. "He's a prompt man, is Fenderson, and an excellent shipmaster, but eighteen hundred pounds is a good sum to miss; his luck depends on getting it, you know. Still, I'll tell Rogers. Take a glass of Madeira before you go; will you join me, sir, 'tis toward noon!"

As night was falling two mounted messengers, spattered with mud from cap to stirrup, were riding wearily along a deep, worn country lane. They were in the north part of the county of Somerset, near the waters of the Severn. The lane itself, deserted enough that night, was a great thoroughfare for those who came from the south and west to cross over into Wales. By this immemorial stream of travel and the wearing of the weather it had been worn like a swift stream's channel, deep below the level of the country. One of the riders kept glancing fearfully at the bushy banks above him, as if he expected to see a head in the thicket peering down. The other man rode straight and stern in his saddle, and took no notice of anything but his horse and the slippery road.

As they came, riding northward side by side, to the top of a little hill, Rogers, who wore a strangely pale and craven look, gave a sigh of relief, and his horse, which limped and bore the marks of having been on his knees, whinnied as if in sympathy. The wide, gray Severn spread before them; the high headlands sloped gently away on the right, and fell off like a cliff on the left; below the land was edged by a long line of dyke which fenced the sea from marsh and meadows that stretched away from the coast. Over the wide water drifted low clouds of fog and rain, and in the southwest a dull red gleam of fading winter sunset lightened but little the cold and stormy color of the sky. High above the Severn, at the road's end, stood a group of low buildings perched on the headland together, like a convent or a place of military defense.

As the travelers rode into the yard of the old Black Eagle inn in the twilight, the inn itself and all its stables and outhouses seemed deserted. There was a bare and empty look everywhere. The sunset just struck a last whip of rain at the two tired men, and Weymouth called impatiently to the hostler, and then got stiffly to the ground and stamped his feet and stretched himself as he stood holding his horse's bridle. The creature dropped his head low and steamed in the cool air.

There were two windows in the inn itself, dimly lighted, as if by firelight, and in another window in the landward corner a candle flickered faintly. The whole place seemed dull and unfriendly with its stony walls and roofs. Rogers grumbled with a plaintive whine, his companion shouted again with a strong, honest voice, and presently a stable door was flung open and two men came out. Inside, the light of an early lantern beamed comfortably, and the horses turned their heads that way, as if eager for their supper and warm bedding. There was no sound from within of stamping hoofs or cry of crowded and biting horses. The business was evidently at lowest ebb.

"Rub them down well and give them good feed as soon as you dare; full oats and scant hay. We must be on our way again two hours from this at least; we lost the road and were in haste at any rate," said Weymouth. "I'll come out and look after them in an hour. Mind they're not in the wind," he added. "Come, get down," he said in a colder tone to his fellow-traveler, who, through weariness or uncertainty, still sat his horse like a drooping statue. "Strike the mud off you; here, I'll help you, then," as the man gave a groan and tried to dismount. "After the first wrench you're all right. Come! you're none the worse for your cropper into clay and mud! Queer inn they keep here," he said, angrily, as they crossed the yard toward the door whither one of the hostlers had pointed them. They could hear a woman's scolding voice inside before it was opened.

As the mistress flung it open wide and stood on the threshold, she bade her guests good evening in a civil tone, but insisted somewhat ostentatiously that she desired no guests that night. She had ceased to keep the tavern since the travel had all gone, or been stolen away to the lower ferry. She had some people already whom she must make a shift to care for, old Welsh folk who had been put into the only room that could be used. She was giving up her lease to leave the place—

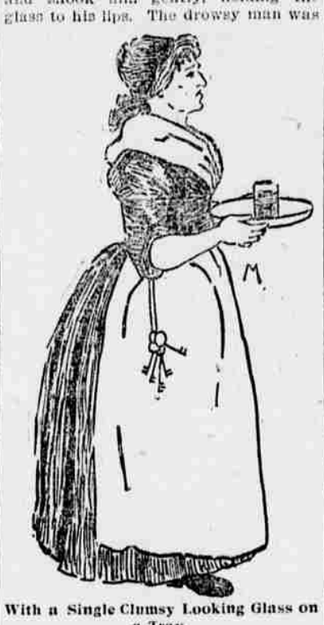
"We only ask for supper and a fire, 'tis but to rest our horses," said Weymouth, boldly making his way into the inner kitchen where the firelight looked cheerful. Rogers followed ruefully, limping and holding his shoulder as if he were badly hurt. When he sank into the corner of the settee his head dropped back as if he were ill, and his eyes shut as if their sight swam with giddiness. Such distress of weariness and squalor of mud and wet could not but appeal to the beholder.

Weymouth stood before the fire steaming like the horse he had just left and regarding his companion with pity and surprise. Then he gave himself another stretch, and yawned comfortably, and taking off his short cloak spread it carefully upon a bench. There was a stout leather wallet at his side which he unslung and put by the cloak at the fireside, handling it as lightly as he could, but not concealing the fact of its weight, or that such a broad-shouldered man as himself was glad to get rid of it. As he turned again he saw that the landlady had stopped her work among pans and crocks at the table and was watching him sharply, but Rogers groaned as if in his sleep and Weymouth repented his contempt and harsh words on the way. His fellow-messenger had been officious in his pretense of knowing every turn of road that would bring them quick and safe to Bristol, but he had taken the worst of his mistake with so bad a fall, if the color of his face were any sign, and it grew plain that Weymouth must somehow or other find the rest of the way of Bristol alone. In his heart he flinched for a moment, knowing what he carried and that he was a stranger; yet for some reason he had all that day distrusted the smiling clerk and his bland and double manner, and wished more than once that he were riding with a better man.

"Get me some brandy," said Weymouth to the landlady, "and a glass for him when he wakes, a good stiff glass. When he wakes, you know, he'll need all that he can drink, 'twas a hard ride for so poor a horseman. I'll leave him here tonight; neither he nor his horse can go further. I must be on my way by ten or as soon as my horse is fit and has had his feed."

"Oh, no, poor lad!" exclaimed the woman, but there was something disturbed and dissatisfied in her tone. "He'll get to no Bristol tonight," she added, as she trotted off with more willingness than she had shown before and came back with a single clumsy-looking glass on a tray. Weymouth thanked her and took it in his hand and offered it again with much gallantry; but she shook her head, not displeased, and went back to her work.

Then the guest cast another glance at his fellow-traveler, who just at that moment stirred and groaned again, uneasily. Weymouth bent toward him, and shook him gently, holding the glass to his lips. The drowsy man was quick to know the welcome odor, and drank the brandy down with eagerness, opening his eyes wide and making a queer face as he finished.



With a Single Clumsy Looking Glass on a Tray.

"What's this?" said he.

"'Tis brandy, said Weymouth, laughing boyishly. "So you've forgotten how it tastes since noon!"

"'Twat not for him!" exclaimed the woman coming back from her cupboard angrily. "You might have choked a sleeping man!" she railed at Weymouth, and clenched her fist like a fury.

"Sleep, then," she said to Rogers, who laughed a little and gazed at her stupidly, but much startled. "What's the odds, Betsy?" he faltered, as if he knew her well.

"Betsy me none of your Betsys," said the rough-mannered mistress of the house, sharply; then, controlling herself, she caught up the empty glass, and her tone changed. "Some other drink would have done for him just as well," she said, in a wheedling whisper, and, returning to her shelf, she filled a second glass. Weymouth observed that it was fuller than the first, and accepted it amiably. The cross-grained creature had meant to pay him a pretty compliment in pouring him her best grog, and he thanked her civilly, with a proper toast to her good fortune, as he raised the glass to his lips.

He was still standing before the fire; something crossed his mind at that moment. The woman was by her table where she could see him, and with his hand covering the glass he tossed his head back gayly and pretended to drink. She turned away with a queer sigh. Rogers had shut his eyes again, and quick as a flash Weymouth threw the brandy behind him into the ashes.

[To Be Continued.]

Stead and the Late Czar.

In a recent article, the irrepressible Mr. Stead boasted of enjoying a private conversation with the late czar, "as frank and unreserved as I ever held with any man." It was during a visit to St. Petersburg. As Stead had complimented Alexander in the Pall Mall Gazette at a time when other British papers were reviling him, the czar was induced to favor the journalist with an interview. It was stipulated, however, that it should not last more han fifteen minutes. At the end of that time, the emperor looked at his watch and arose to indicate that the interview should cease. "But, your majesty," protested Mr. Stead, "you have not said a word." "No," said the czar; "you haven't given me a chance."

Origin of a Noted Proverb.

The famous French woman Mme. du Deffand, in a letter to Horace Walpole under date of June 6, 1787, relates that Cardinal Polignac, with great solemnity and faith, told her the story of St. Denis, the patron saint of France; how, after he had suffered martyrdom by decapitation, he had picked up his head, replaced it and walked two leagues to the spot where a church was afterward erected in commemoration of the event. The cardinal laid great stress on the distance passed over by the saint. "Ah," replied the lively French woman, "la distance n'y fait rien; il n'y a que le premier pas qui coute." "The distance is nothing; it is only the first step that costs."

American Citizens Preferred.

New Jersey has passed a law for the benefit of trolley and street car employes. None but American citizens must be employed, and the day's work is fixed at eleven hours, with forty-five minutes off for lunch.

RAILROAD TIME-TABLES

Central Railroad of New Jersey.

(Lehigh and Susquehanna Division)

Anthracite coal used exclusively, insuring cleanliness and comfort.

TIME TABLE IN EFFECT MARCH 25, 1895.

Trains leave Scranton for Pittston, Wilkes-Barre, etc., at 8.20, 9.15, 11.30 a.m., 12.45, 2.00, 3.05, 5.00, 7.25 p. m. Sundays, 9.00 a. m., 1.00, 2.15, 7.10 p. m.

For Atlantic City, 8.20 a.m.

For New York, Newark and Elizabeth, 8.20 (express) a.m., 12.45 (express with Buffet parlor car), 3.05 (express) p.m. Sunday, 2.15 p.m.

For Mauch Chunk, Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton and Philadelphia, 8.20 a.m., 12.45, 3.05, 5.00 (except Philadelphia) p.m. Sunday, 2.15 p.m.

For Long Branch, Ocean Grove, etc., at 8.20 a.m., 12.45 p.m.

For Reading, Lebanon and Harrisburg, via Allentown, 8.20 a.m., 12.45, 5.00 p.m. Sunday, 2.15 p.m.

For Pottsville, 8.20 a.m., 12.45 p.m.

Returning, leave New York, foot of Liberty street, North river, at 9.10 (express) a.m., 1.10, 1.30, 4.30 (express with Buffet parlor car) p.m. Sunday, 4.30 a.m.

Leave Philadelphia, Reading Terminal, 9.00 a.m., 2.00 and 4.30 p.m. Sunday 6.27 a.m.

Through tickets to all points at lowest rates may be had on application in advance to the ticket agent at the station.

H. P. BALDWIN, Gen. Pass. Agent.

J. H. OLHAUSEN, Gen. Supt.

Del., Lack. and Western.

Trains leave Scranton as follows: Express for New York and all points East, 1.40, 2.50, 5.15, 8.00 and 9.55 a.m.; 12.55 and 3.50 p.m.

Express for Easton, Trenton, Philadelphia and the south, 5.15, 8.00 and 9.55 a.m., 12.55 and 3.50 p.m.

Washington and way stations, 3.55 p.m.

Tobyhanna accommodation, 6.10 p.m.

Express for Binghamton, Oswego, Elmira, Corning, Bath, Dansville, Mount Morris and Buffalo, 12.10, 2.35 a.m. and 1.24 p.m., making close connections at Buffalo to all points in the West, Northwest and Southwest.

Bath accommodation, 9 a.m.

Binghamton and way stations, 12.37 p.m.

Nicholson accommodation, at 5.15 p.m.

Binghamton and Elmira Express, 6.05 p.m.

Express for Cortland, Syracuse, Oswego Utica and Richfield Springs, 2.35 a.m. and 1.24 p.m.

Ithaca, 2.35 and Bath 9 a.m. and 1.24 p.m.

For Northumberland, Pittston, Wilkes-Barre, Plymouth, Bloomsburg and Danville, making close connections at Northumberland for Williamsport, Harrisburg, Baltimore, Washington and the South.

Northumberland and intermediate stations, 6.00, 9.55 a.m. and 1.30 and 6.07 p.m.

Nanticoke and intermediate stations, 8.08 and 11.20 a.m. Plymouth and intermediate stations, 3.50 and 8.52 p.m.

Pullman parlor and sleeping coaches on all express trains

For detailed information, pocket time tables, etc., apply to M. L. Smith, city ticket office, 328 Lackawanna avenue, or depot ticket office.

PICTURESQUE LEHIGH VALLEY RAILROAD

Nov. 18, 1894.

Train leaves Scranton for Philadelphia and New York via D. & H. R. R. at 7.45 a.m., 12.05, 2.38 and 11.38 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R., 6.00, 8.08, 11.20 am., and 1.30 p.m.

Leave Scranton for Pittston and Wilkes-Barre, via D., L. & W. R. R., 6.00, 8.08, 11.20 a.m., 3.50, 6.07, 8.50 p.m.

Leave Scranton for White Haven, Hazleton, Pottsville and all points on the Beaver Meadow and Pottsville branches, via E. & W. V. R. R., 6.40 a.m., via D. & H. R. R. at 7.45 a.m., 12.05, 2.38, 4.00 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R., 6.00, 8.08, 11.20 a.m., 1.30, 3.50 p.m.

Leave Scranton for Bethlehem, Easton, Reading, Harrisburg and all intermediate points via D. & H. R. R., 7.45 a.m., 12.05, 2.38, 4.00, 11.38 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R., 6.00, 8.08, 11.20 a.m., 1.30 p.m.

Leave Scranton for Tunkhannock, Towanda, Elmira, Ithaca, Geneva and all intermediate points via D. & H. R. R., 8.45 a.m., 12.05 and 11.35 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R., 8.08, 9.55 a.m., 1.30 p.m.

Leave Scranton for Rochester, Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Detroit, Chicago and all points west via D. & H. R. R., 8.45 a.m., 12.05, 9.15, 11.38 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R. and Pittston Junction, 8.08, 9.55 a.m., 1.30, 8.50 p.m., via E. & W. V. R. R., 2.41 p.m.

For Elmira and the west via Salamanca, via D. & H. R. R., 8.45 a.m., 12.05, 6.05 p.m., via D., L. & W. R. R., 8.08, 9.55 a.m., 1.30, and 6.07 p.m.

Pullman parlor and sleeping or L. V. chair cars on all trains between L. & B. Junction or Wilkes-Barre and New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, and Suspension Bridge.

ROLLIN H. WILBUR, Gen. Supt.

CHAS. S. LEE, Gen. Pass. Agt., Phila., Pa.

A. W. NONNEMACHER, Asst. Gen. Pass. Agt., South Bethlehem, Pa.

"The Jeff" DELAWARE AND HUDSON RAILROAD.

Commencing Monday, day, July 30, all trains will arrive at new Lackawanna avenue station as follows:

Trains will leave Scranton station for Carbondale and intermediate points at 2.20, 5.45, 7.00, 8.25 and 10.10 a.m., 12.00, 2.20, 3.55, 5.15, 6.15, 7.25, 9.10 and 11.20 p.m.

For Farview, Waymart and Honesdale at 7.00, 8.25 and 10.10 a.m., 12.00, 2.20 and 5.15 p.m.

For Albany, Saratoga, the Adirondacks and Montreal at 5.45 a.m. and 2.20 p.m.

For Wilkes-Barre and intermediate points at 7.45, 8.45, 9.38 and 10.45 a.m., 12.05, 1.20, 2.38, 4.00, 5.10, 6.06, 9.16 and 11.38 p.m.

Trains will arrive at Scranton station from Carbondale and intermediate points at 7.40, 8.40, 9.34 and 10.40 a.m., 12.00, 1.17, 2.34, 3.40, 4.54, 5.55, 7.45, 9.11 and 11.33 p.m.

From Honesdale, Waymart and Farview at 9.34 a.m., 12.00, 1.17, 3.40, 5.55 and 7.45 p.m.

From Montreal, Saratoga, Albany, etc., at 4.54 and 11.33 p.m.

From Wilkes-Barre and intermediate points at 2.15, 8.04, 10.05 and 11.55 a.m., 1.14, 3.14, 4.33, 5.10, 6.08, 7.20, 9.03 and 11.10 p.m.

Erie and Wyoming Valley.

Trains leave Scranton for New York and intermediate points on the Erie railroad at 6.35 a.m. and 3.24 p.m. Also for Honesdale, Hawley and local points at 6.35, 9.45 a.m., and 3.24 p.m.

All the above are through trains to and from Honesdale.

Trains leave for Wilkes-Barre at 6.40 a.m. and 3.41 p.m.

NEW YORK ONTARIO AND WESTERN RAILWAY

SCRANTON DIVISION. In Effect Sept. 16th, 1894.

North Bound.				South Bound.		
205 Local Pass	203 NY Day Express	201 Local Pass	Stations (Trains Daily, Except Sunday)	202 Local Pass	204 Ontario Day Ex	206 Local Pass
	P M		Arrive Leave		A M	
....	7 25	....	N Y Franklin St	....	7 40	....
....	7 10	....	West 42nd St	....	7 55	....
....	7 00	....	Weehawken	....	8 10	....
P M	P M		Arrive Leave	A M	P M	
8 20	1 15	....	Hancock Junc.	6 00	2 05	....
8 10	1 00	....	Hancock	6 06	2 11	....
7 58	12 55	....	Starlight	6 18	2 22	....
7 51	12 46	....	Preston Park	6 25	2 31	....
7 45	12 40	....	Como	6 32	2 41	....
7 38	12 25	....	Poyntelle	6 40	2 50	....
7 33	12 18	....	Belmont	6 45	2 58	....
7 22	12 03	....	Pleasant Mt.	6 55	3 06	....
7 19	f11 59	....	Uniondale	f6 58	3 09	....
7 08	11 49	A M	Forest City	7 10	3 19	P M
6 51	11 34	9 15	Carbondale	7 24	3 34	5 34
6 48	f11 30	9 12	White Bridge	7 27	f3 38	5 37
f6 43	....	f9 06	Mayfield	f7 32	f3 43	f5 42
6 41	11 23	9 03	Jermyn	7 34	3 45	5 45
6 35	11 18	8 57	Archibald	7 40	3 51	5 51
6 32	f11 15	8 54	Winton	7 43	3 54	5 54
6 29	11 11	8 50	Peckville	7 48	3 59	5 59
6 25	11 07	8 44	Olyphant	7 52	4 04	6 04
6 21	11 03	8 41	Dickson	7 54	4 07	6 07
6 19	11 03	8 39	Throop	7 56	4 10	6 10
6 14	11 00	8 36	Providence	8 00	4 14	6 14
f6 13	f10 57	8 33	Park Place	8 02	f4 17	6 16
6 10	10 55	8 30	Scranton	8 05	4 20	6 20
P M	A M	A M	Leave Arrive	A M	P M	P M

All trains run daily except Sunday.

f. signifies that trains stop on signal for passengers.

Secure rates via Ontario & Western before purchasing tickets and save money. Day and Night Express to the West.

J. C. Anderson, Gen. Pass. Agt.

T. Fitzcroft, Div. Pass. Agt., Scranton, Pa.