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# newsboy



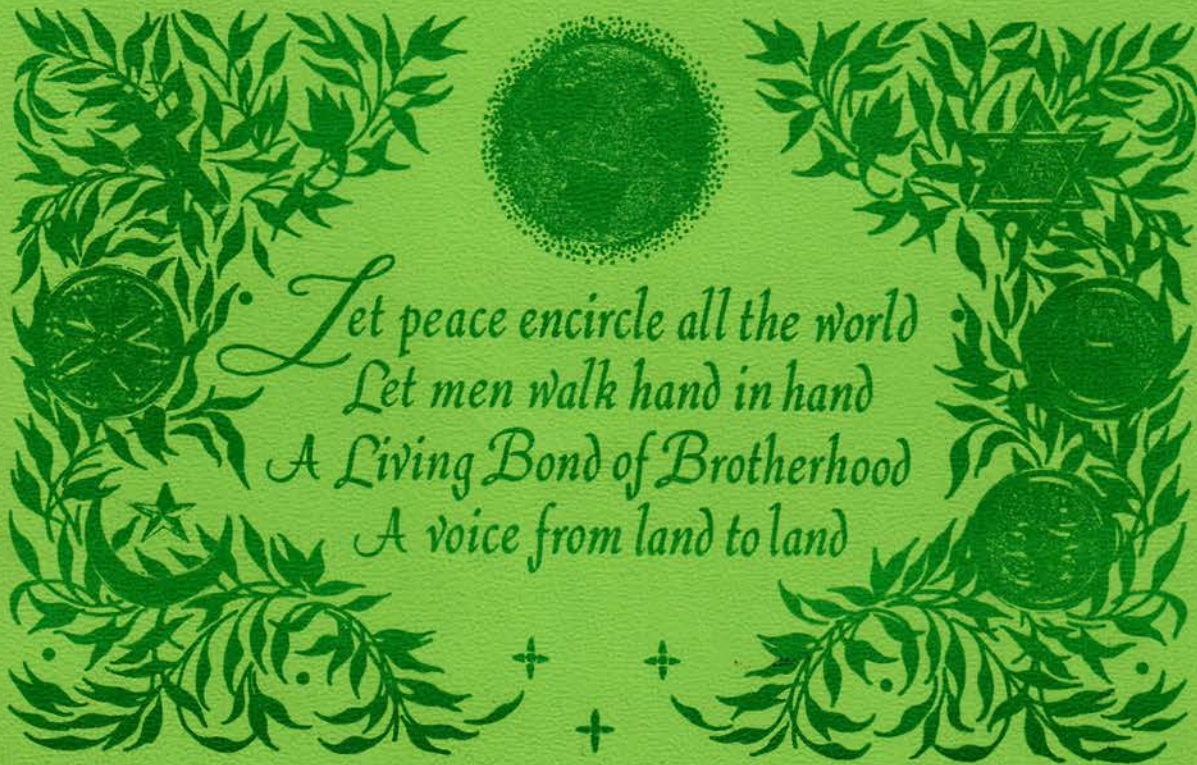
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Monthly Newsletter of  
the HORATIO ALGER  
SOCIETY. The World's  
Only Publication Devot-  
ed to That Wonderful  
World of Horatio Alger.



Founded 1961 by Forrest Campbell & Kenneth Butler



*A wish for you and all mankind*

*Peace and happiness in the New Year*



## HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY

TO FURTHER THE PHILOSOPHY OF HORATIO ALGER JR., AND TO ENCOURAGE THE SPIRIT OF STRIVE AND SUCCEED THAT FOR HALF A CENTURY GUIDED ALGER'S UNDAUNTED HEROES - LADS WHOSE STRUGGLES EPITOMIZED THE GREAT AMERICAN DREAM AND FLAMED HERO IDEALS IN COUNTLESS MILLIONS OF YOUNG AMERICANS.

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The NEWSBOY, The official organ of the HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY, is published monthly and is distributed free to Society members. Membership fee for any twelve month period is \$5.00

NEWSBOY recognizes Ralph D. Gardner's HORATIO ALGER, OR THE AMERICAN HERO ERA, published by Wayside Press, 1964, as the leading authority on the subject.

Please use membership roster for mailing addresses of our officers and members.  
SECRETARY'S REPORT

As your secretary and Editor for the past few years, I would like to give my thanks to all of you for your patience when the Newsboy is late, your understanding when I don't answer your letters and your help in keeping the HAS a growing and viable organization. I especially appreciate our members that contribute to the Newsboy with their articles and stories. At times we find it hard to decide what to print from the material recieved but please keep it coming.

In a past issue I told you that the HAS will have to raise its dues in the coming year. With the raise in postage due it will cost from .16¢ to .32¢ for each issue depending on size. Printing runs about .20¢ per copy. So as you see with 10 issues at .50¢ each cost, dues only covers the Newsboy. It leaves very little for promotion, new title lists, Roster, etc. We do sell a few items which helps defray some of the expenses. The officers would appreciate your comments for our next meeting.

Carl Hartmann

CAST UPON THE BREAKERS by Horatio Alger Jr.  
With a Foreword by Ralph D. Gardner

HORATIO ALGER'S LAST HERO -- DISCOVERED IN  
STORY LOST SINCE 1893 -- SUCCEEDS AGIAN

*Although Horatio Alger Jr. -- America's chief Nineteenth Century exponent of LUCK AND PLUCK, STRIVE AND SUCCEED and RISEN FROM THE RANKS -- was born on a Friday, January 13th. (in 1832), Doubleday and Company celebrates the event this year on Friday, January 11th. 1974, with publication of a long lost Alger novel that appeared pseudonymously as a weekly serial in 1893, but never as a book or under the author's real name.*

So starts the Press release from  
Doubleday and Company.

## NOW THE GREAT NEWS!!!!

The Horatio Alger Society has arranged with Doubleday to purchase 50 (fifty) first editions of CAST UPON THE BREAKERS which will be shipped directly to your Secretary.

If you would like one or more copies of this book send \$6.95 plus .25 for postage and handling to:

Horatio Alger Society  
% Carl T. Hartmann  
4907 Allison Dr.  
Lansing, Mi. 48910

Please make the checks payable to the  
HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY.

All orders must be in by January 1st, 1974.

Orders will be filled as they arrive, first come first serve. Please allow 3 weeks for delivery.

William G. Thompson, Editor for Doubleday has assured me that we will fill all orders recieved by January 1st.

DO IT NOW - DO IT NOW

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Judson S. Berry  
P.O. Box 81E  
Sioux Falls, S.Dak. 57100

Past President Judson has now moved into new quarters with a 40 x 63 building for his books and antiques. He, along with all past and present officers wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN  
by bob bennett

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR



The year 1973, now drawing to a close, has proved to be a most exciting year for Alger Enthusiasts. Many of us have added to and enhanced our personal collections, but more importantly, several new discoveries have sparked our interest.

The year began on a high note with the Doubleday publication of Silas Snobden's Office Boy. This story had previously appeared only in serial form and was the first Alger first edition to be published in 63 years. The book enjoyed a good sale and went through three editions. This prompted the Doubleday firm to schedule the publication of a second unpublished Alger novel, Cast Upon the Breakers. The latter tale will be released on January 11, 1974. Our own Ralph Gardner, PF-053 wrote the forward for both books.

Gilbert Westgard, PF-024 brought us some exciting news when he announced his discovery of seven previously unknown Alger novels which had appeared in the New York Sun, 1857-59. Stanley Pachon, PF-087 announced two additional stories which appeared in the Sun in 1860. Pachon's article in the Dime Novel Round-Up, Sept. 1973 gives much valuable information about the Sun.

Much new bibliographic information concerning Alger's short stories and poems was discovered and will appear in subsequent issues of Newsboy.

Many Algerites promoted Alger in their own way during the past year. Forrest Campbell, PF-000; Jack Bales, PF-258; Gary Lemon, PF-313; Dave Kanarr, PF-314; Jack Schorr, PF-342 were the most prolific of the writers about Alger and his works. Their efforts in sharing information of this nature is deeply appreciated by all.

Les Poste, PF-334 did much to enhance the Alger image and name by getting the town fathers of Geneseo, N.Y. to proclaim February 2, 1973 as "Horatio Alger Day" in that community. Ralph Gardner appeared as the feature speaker for this fine event celebrating the Doubleday publication of Silas Snobden's Office Boy.

The 1973 convention, held in Indianapolis, Indiana and hosted by Paul and Ida House was a smashing success. Each

year, our conventions seem to get bigger and better.

In June, the largest and most important auction of Alger's works ever took place at the Sotheby, Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York City. This event was attended by many of our members and several treasures were obtained in the spirited bidding.

HAS is continuing to grow and flourish and membership has now passed the 200 mark. We now have membership in 35 states, led by New York with 28 active members.

I wish all of you a happy holiday season and an eventful and prosperous Alger year in 1974.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

PF-404 Philip G. Atkins  
712 Carswell Terrace  
Arlington, Texas 76010  
T-63

Philip is interested in anything to do with Alger. His other interests are gardening and antiques.

\*\*\*\*\*

PF-405 Percy H. Seamans  
Box 377  
Lake Delton, Wisc. 53940  
Hazel T-76

Percy is interested in Book collecting and Paper Americana with a real enjoyment of Alger's stories and of contemporary writing of his time.

\*\*\*\*\*

PF-406 Russel E. Sackreiter, JR.  
2909 Bray  
Columbia, Md. 65201  
Cheryl T-15

Russel loves to travel and his main interest in Alger is Historical.

\*\*\*\*\*

PF-407 Ira B. Marshall  
718 Gray Ave.  
Greenville, Ohio  
Dorores T-100

Interested in building a good Alger collection, Ira has over 250 Algers now. He also collects C & I prints.

\*\*\*\*\*

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:  
George C. Clarke  
C/O Howland  
27 Franklin Rd.  
Cromwell, Conn. 06416

## THOSE WERE THE DAYS

by Jack Schorr

When you pick up an Alger its really like walking into a room in which a fresh-cut pine tree has been placed before Christmas. All the memories of less complicated days come rushing back to you. Those were the days to me when the ice wagon came rattling down the street and us boys used to jump up on back and grab a piece of ice. Really, Alger is refreshing. His clear-cut absolutes spelled out what was right, what was wrong, and the consequences. You knew what the answer was with Alger if you did wrong. There was no confusing middle ground. Wrong had its consequences. I don't know who changed it, but there is a different attitude about that now.

When I pick up an Alger now it brings back memories of those happy Christmas mornings when I would find four Alger books under our tree, all prettily wrapped. I got a lot of books for Christmas in those days. After I read my first Alger, I started getting them each year. An Alger reminds me of that tree with the candles placed so carefully as to not burn the branches. Nothing is as pretty as candles on the tree. My father was very, very careful and they were extinguished after we all had a good look. As I remember the Christmas mornings I can remember the bindings, and I find the reprints now I recognize the ones I got, the less expensive reprints by Burt. In between times I filled in with S & S paperbacks. Wish I had them now, I had a whole box full then.

I wasn't the only boy to get Algers. Kids on one side of me got some and across the street too. After I loaned them a few, we loaned each other books. I was always considered a crank because I never liked to get them back with chocolate on them.

After a day of trying to help people help themselves in solving their problems I come home and pick up a juvenile book, often an Alger, and it whisks me away from the neon lights, the incessant telephone, the

lights, the incessant telephone, the asphalt, the freeways, to cobblestones, dirt roads, horse and carriages, young men working to support someone less fortunate, building a life for themselves. Its like opening a window and breathing in the air after a summer rain.

I was so happy to see "Silas Sonbden's Office Boy" in Argosy. I think that is simply great. It will give so many people a glimpse of values that have become by today's standards, simplistic. Ralph Gardner did a superb job in the introduction to the story.

It makes one proud to belong to an organization that brings these values to the attention of the public and reminds them that thousands and thousands of boys of yesteryears read these books and these values influenced their lives.



### H.A.S. THE BOOK MART



OFFERED BY: Paul J. Fisher  
18 Ritchie Rd.  
Binghamton, N.Y. 13901

The Train Boy	Burt Delux	fine	6.00
Randy of the River	G & D	fine	9.00
Nelson the Newsboy	G & D	Fine	
(front end paper missing)			8.00
*****			

OFFERED BY: Rohima Walter  
1307 Greenbush St.  
LaFayette, Ind. 47904

The following titles are published by Hurst and in good condition. \$3.00 ea.

Driven From Home  
Charlie Codman's Gruise  
The Erie Train Boy  
Helping Himself  
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The Store Boy  
Tony the Tramp  
Paul The Peddler  
Paul Prescott's Charge  
Wait and Hope

Slow & Sure	Burt	E	15.00
Stuggling Upward	P & C	G	25.00
Paul Prescott's Charge	Wins.	G	15.00
Charlie Codman's Cruise	Wins.	G	20.00
Herbert Carter's Legacy	Hurst	E	5.00

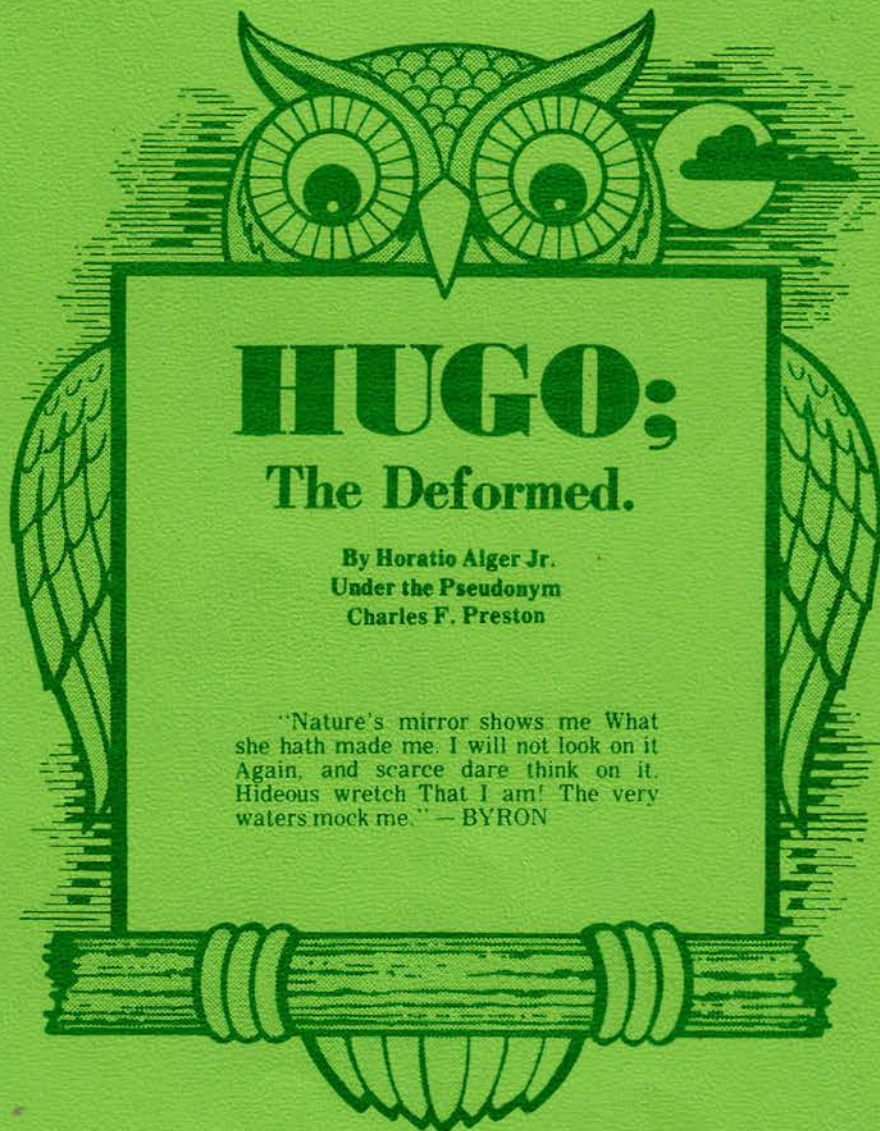
**HORATIO ALGER SOCIETY**

**NEWSBOY**

Presents

**Our first time exclusive—Limited Edition  
SURE-FIRE WINNER**

**Alger's First Novel**



**HUGO;**  
**The Deformed.**

By Horatio Alger Jr.  
Under the Pseudonym  
Charles F. Preston

"Nature's mirror shows me What  
she hath made me. I will not look on it  
Again, and scarce dare think on it.  
Hideous wretch That I am! The very  
waters mock me." — BYRON

## CHAPTER I

The business of the day was at length over. Night brought with it a temporary cessation from toil, and a period of quiet: which could not be otherwise than grateful to the exhausted energies of the wearied multitudes who had been on the alert from early dawn.

The numerous clerks employed in the large warehouse of James Harcourt had one by one left it, and repaired to their several homes. The two last to go were Henry Harcourt, the bookkeeper and nephew of the head of the firm, and Hugo Ring, who, next to him, held the chief place of trust.

There could scarcely be a greater contrast than these two exhibited. Henry Harcourt had a fine open countenance, which at first sight impressed one in his favor. His lithe and active figure was built in the noblest mould of manly beauty, and his frank smile might well convince the veriest skeptic that in his heart falsehood and meanness had no place.

Hugo Ring, on the contrary, was short and thick set, with a disproportionately large head, which was forced somewhat forward by a slight hump, which was sufficient to disfigure him; his face wore a crafty and subtle expression, while an habitual scowl rendered more ugly his large and coarse features, which were, to say the least, irredeemably plain. Undoubtedly his painful consciousness of deformity had served to increase and foster a feeling of misanthropy, and aided to sour his disposition.

In spite of these personal disadvantages, he had undoubted business abilities, and enjoyed the confidence of his employer. For this reason he was respected by his fellow-clerks, although none of them liked him. He kept himself apart from them as far as the requirements of business would allow, and, with the exception of Henry Harcourt, none took pains to extend their intercourse with him. The latter, following the promptings of his social nature, would sometimes invite himself to accompany Hugo home, and spend a portion of the evening with him. Possibly he was influenced in part by a feeling of compassion for the physical misfortunes of his fellow clerk, but, if so, such was his natural delicacy, that he never allowed this feeling to appear.

In spite of these advances, there was no one whom Hugo more thoroughly detested than Henry. Sensitive as he was to his own deformity, he hated him for the contrast which his fresh open face afforded to his own sallow countenance. Besides, Henry was next in place above him, and kept him out of the situation which he would otherwise have held. He was, however, too polite to show his hatred openly. But, concealed as it was in the innermost recesses of his heart, it was none the less fierce, and only waited for an opportunity to manifest itself.

We have omitted to say that the father of Henry Harcourt had died penniless, leaving his only son to the care of his uncle, who at once placed him at school, on leaving which he was appointed to the post of book keeper.

The diligence and attention to business hitherto exhibited by his nephew, satisfied his uncle that his kindness had not been ill bestowed.

One thing more. Our story would not be complete without a heroine. Luckily we shall not need to look far. Younger by three years than her cousin Henry, Ida Harcourt was in mind and person all that a woman need to be. The habits of intimacy in which she had lived with her cousin had almost unconsciously led to a warm interchange of affection, which was observed with satisfaction by Mr. Harcourt. Having the highest confidence in his nephew, he knew of no one on whom he would more willingly bestow his daughter. At present, however, he considered both parties too young for marriage.

It was on such a footing that Henry Harcourt lived in his uncle's family, and it was with such feelings that he was regarded by both father and daughter.

But we must return to Henry and Hugo, who it will be remembered were on the point of leaving the warehouse together.

"So the labor of the day is over," said Henry, cheerfully. "I feel in the mood for some amusement. I wonder what they are going to have at the theatres tonight. Henry IV., with Wallack as Falstaff. Nothing can be better. Come, let us go. What do you say, Hugo?"

"I have no taste for such things," said Hugo, shortly.

"No taste, man? You don't give yourself a chance to acquire a taste. I dare say you have not been in a theatre for the last three years."

"You are right there. I have not."  
"Possibly you have some scruples against it. I grant that it is not well to go too often. Occasionally, however, I think it is actually improving to witness the impersonation of some great actor. I don't see why the stage may not become a great moral teacher. For example, I was present the other evening when Richard III was brought out. I believe the representation excited in me a stronger detestation of treachery and meanness; as I saw them portrayed in the character of the hump-backed tyrant."

Hump-backed! At this unconscious allusion to his defect, Hugo darted a vindictive scowl at Henry Harcourt, who, unconscious of having given offense, continued—

"Well, Hugo, won't you go this one evening? Once in three years can't be considered going to extremes."

"I have something else to attend to."

"Very well, I will not urge you, though I should be glad of your company. However, we need not separate just yet, as our way is in part the same. By the way, do you observe that building yonder?"

"The one brilliantly lighted?"

"Yes, do you know its character?"

"No."

"It is a gambling-house."

"How do you know?" inquired Hugo, half eagerly.



Evil places constantly hover in the backgrounds of the heroes. They never give in to the siren call to the pleasures of "segars," wine and billiards, but the villain is almost always in touch with these undercurrents.

"Not knowing its character, I dropped in there the other evening at the request of a companion. Finding myself there, I resolved to stay long enough to gratify my curiosity. To my astonishment I recognized among those who were gaming not a few clerks of my acquaintance. I had no idea that the habit was so prevalent."

"Were you invited to play?" asked Hugo, looking askance.

"Yes, repeatedly."  
"And did you?" inquired his companion in a tone of assumed indifference, but with a quick, stealthy glance.

"Did I?" repeated Henry in surprise. "Certainly not. I hope you think better of me than that."

"I beg your pardon. It was an idle question. I should not have asked it."

"Oh, for that matter, there's no harm done," said Harcourt cheerfully. "You won't go to the theatre? Then we must part here. Good night, Hugo."

"Good night."  
Hugo stood for a moment, looking through the gathering darkness at the rapidly retreating form of his late companion, who was carolling a gay song to himself; and stealthily shaking his fist, he muttered below his breath, "I hate you! I hate you!"

When he again looked down, he saw a child poorly dressed, gazing at him with a look of mingled wonder and alarm. Angry at having been detected, he said roughly:

"What are you staring at me for? What do you want?"

"Something to buy bread with," said the child timidly. "I have had none today."

"Pooh! I can't be troubled with beggars."

And Hugo gathered his cloak about him, and turned into a side street which opened into the main thoroughfare.

## CHAPTER II.

Hugo did not immediately return to his own room. By a round-about course he retraced his steps until he stood once more before the warehouse which he had left but half an hour before.

First looking round to satisfy himself that there were no observers, he drew from his pocket a key and quickly unlocked the door, which he immediately closed after him again.

He made his way to his employer's desk which, as he was aware, contained two thousand dollars, which would have been lodged in the bank, but that it had been received since banking hours.

Producing from his pocket another key of smaller size, he opened the desk and drew out the roll of bills. With the exception of one or two fifties, they were all in one hundred dollar notes.

Hugo slowly counted them over, his eyes glittering with avarice.

"Oh that I could take them without fear of detection!" he muttered to himself. "How much easier it would be then to plod year after year, as I am compelled to do, for a few paltry hundreds. If it were not for Henry Harcourt, I should be in his place with a salary of five hundred dollars more. It is mine by right. Why should his uncle set aside my claims, who have served him faithfully for years, and put over my head a youth with no experience and seven years my junior! What right had he to do it? But that is not to the purpose. I hate Henry Harcourt for a thousand other reasons. I hate him for his straight form and handsome face. Why should he be gifted with these, and I

doomed to bear through life this hideous sallow face and this unsightly hump? Why should I be doomed to have even the very children stare at me in the streets, as if I were something less than human? Things shall be made more equal between us, or my efforts will go unrewarded."

Closing his employer's desk, but not replacing therein the bills which he had taken out, he directed his steps to another desk near by.

It was that of Henry Harcourt.

He drew from his pocket another key, and fitted it to the lock. It flew open immediately and Hugo looked in.

"What will Mr. Harcourt say tomorrow, when he finds that his money has been purloined, and discovers it, as I will take care that he shall, in the desk of his immaculate newpew? Eh! Mr. Henry won't be quite so light-hearted, I imagine, tomorrow at this time."

He laughed a short discordant laugh, and then, after a moment's pause, added reflectively,

"There's one thing that must be guarded against. Henry will probably go to his desk before the theft is discovered. He must not be the first to find the money here. Otherwise he will make a show of innocence and disclose it. How shall I manage it?"

He pondered a moment and then resumed — "Stay, I have it. Here is an old ledger stowed away in one corner, which has not been in use for months. There will be no danger of his lighting upon it there. I think that will be the best place to put it."

Drawing up the ledger, he opened it,

and began to dispose of the bills between the leaves. He had nearly finished his task, when a new thought appeared to strike him. There was no reason why one half would not answer the purpose as well as the whole; and as for the rest, he might appropriate it to himself, without fear of discovery, since it would be thought that Henry had made way with that likewise.

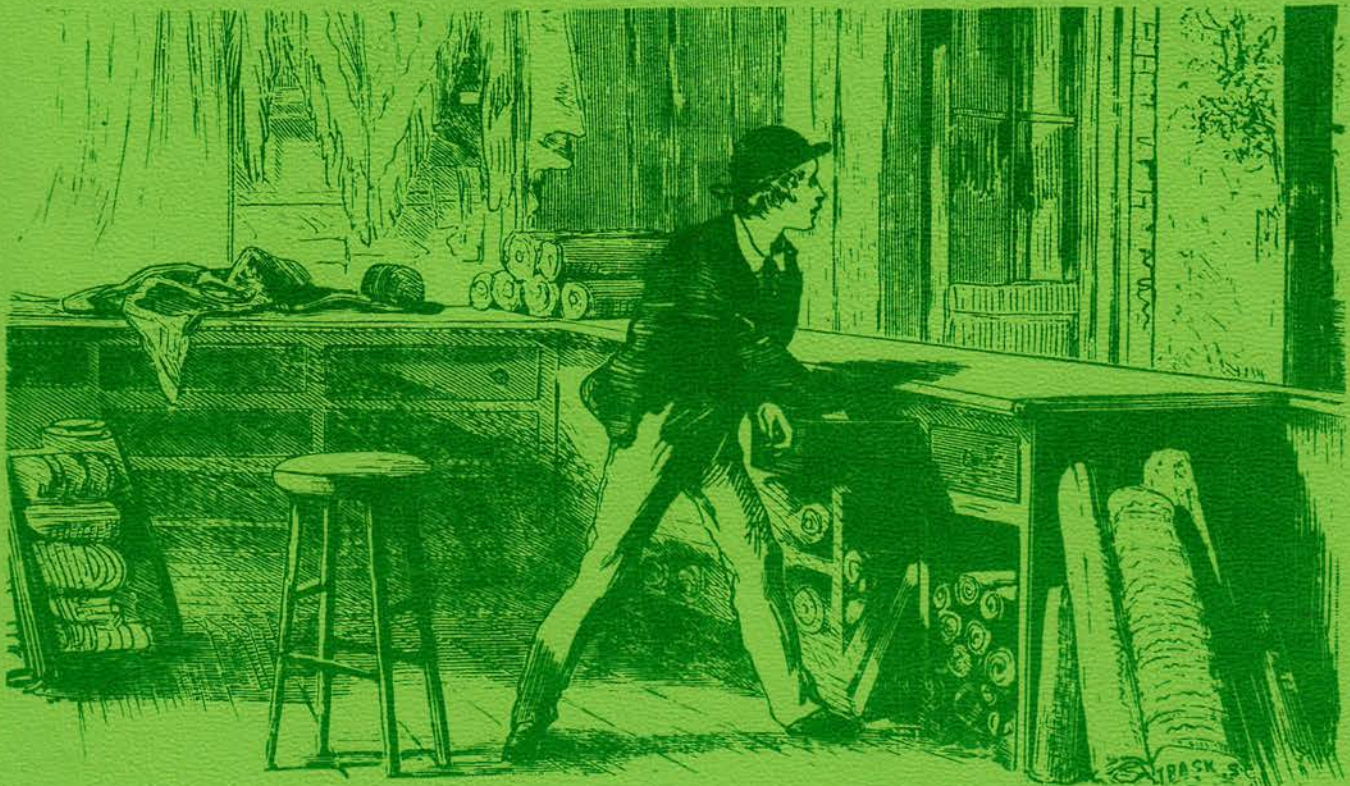
Hugo, as has been said, was animated by a strong thirst for gain, than which nothing but his desire of revenge was stronger. Here was an opportunity for gratifying both. It would be idle to suppose that one intent upon such a project as now engaged him would be deterred by any scruples of conscience from committing still another crime.

Congratulating himself upon this lucky thought, he immediately proceeded to put it into execution.

Dividing the money into two equal portions he concealed one half in the old ledger, and placed the other in his own pocketbook. He then carefully restored the ledger to its place, and having locked up the desk, opened the door of the warehouse, and quickly securing it behind him, glided cautiously away.

"Tomorrow will tell the story," said he gleefully to himself.

Meantime his intended victim, unconscious of the plot which had so artfully been woven for his ruin, was at the theatre, yielding himself to the enchantment of that great magician, Shakespeare — before whom so many thousands bend in homage.



Stealing from the money drawer, a temptation to which all upright and responsible folks are open, is constantly used as a plot device in Alger's work. The hero, of course, never thinks of doing

this dishonest and disdainful deed. Ah, but the villain is never below such a task. As in "Hugo," the evil-doer somehow casts a shadow on the upright with his nefarious schemes.

### CHAPTER III.

It was at ten o'clock the next morning, that Mr. Harcourt came down to his warehouse. Henry and Hugo were busily engaged in their respective duties. The former was as lively and cheerful as usual. Hugo, too appeared as usual; but a close observer would have noticed that he was a shade paler. This, however, his swarthy complexion rendered it difficult to distinguish.

"Has any one been to the bank this morning, Hugo?" asked Mr. Harcourt.

"No, sir."

"Very well. You may send Wallace to me. I wish to have deposited the two thousand dollars received yesterday.

"Very well, sir, I will send him to you."

"Wallace," said he in a business-like tone, "Mr. Harcourt wishes you to come to his desk. He has an errand for you at the bank."

The boy came as directed.

Meanwhile Mr. Harcourt leisurely opened his desk, and glanced at the compartment where he recollected having put the money. To his surprise it was not to be seen.

He hastily turned over the various articles which his desk contained, in hopes of stumbling upon the lost parcel. But it was no where to be found.

"This is very strange," said he to himself in a low tone. "I certainly put it here."

"Hugo!" said he, hastily, walking over to the counter, behind which he was standing, "do you happen to recollect seeing me put away the parcel of bills which we received yesterday?"

"Yes sir," said Hugo, promptly, "you put them in your desk."

"You are quite sure?"

"Positive?"

"Do you recollect whether I locked the desk immediately?"

"You did, sir. But why do you ask?"

"Because, Hugo, they are nowhere to be found, now."

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Hugo, counterfeiting the greatest surprise.

"Come and see."

Assisted by Hugo, he once more searched his desk, but, as the reader will conjecture, with no better success than before.

"You see it is not here," said Mr. Harcourt, at length.

"Yes sir," said Hugo. "It has, undoubtedly, been taken."

"Taken? Do you think so?"

"It must be so; there is no other way," said Hugo, shaking his head.

"But who can it be?"

"Mr. Harcourt," said Hugo, with a look of mystery, "let me advise you to search the other desks."

"The other desks!" There are but three — your's, Henry's and Dinsmore's."

"Nevertheless, it is due to us that you should satisfy yourself that we have had nothing to do with this robbery, for such undoubtedly there has been."

"Of course, I do not suspect you. I never thought of it."

"Still, sir, the money could not have got off without hands to take it off, and you must admit that we are more in

your confidence than the other clerks, and should have greater opportunities than any others to purloin this money. For my own party, I will willingly submit to the trial, and I am sure your nephew and Dinsmore will."

"Very well, merely as a matter of form, let it be so. Call Dinsmore and my nephew hither."

This commission Hugo undertook with alacrity.

Mr. Harcourt, having explained the condition of affairs in which he found himself placed, and the proposal which had been made by Hugo, it was at once cheerfully acceded to by both.

They first proceeded to Hugo's desk. They were about to make a very cursory examination, but Hugo insisted that it should be rigid and thorough. Nothing, of course, was discovered. The examination of Dinsmore's desk resulted in a similar manner.

"Of course," said Mr. Harcourt, "it is as I expected. It is a mere matter of form."

Henry's desk came next in order. Nothing at first was found. They were about to close it, when Hugo directed their attention to the old ledger which lay half concealed in the corner.

"Who knows," said he, in a bantering, but slightly unnatural manner, which at another time might have attracted notice — "who knows but the bills may be concealed here?"

So saying, he carelessly opened it, and there between the leaves was a bank note for one hundred dollars!

"Do you keep your money here?" said he, turning towards Henry.

The latter uttered an exclamation of astonishment, while Hugo, rapidly turning over the leaves of the ledger, drew out bill after bill, until one thousand dollars lay before him.

"As Heaven is my witness," said Henry earnestly, "I know not how this money found its way here."

"Unhappy boy," said his uncle sorrowfully, "what could have tempted you to such a crime? Hush!" he said, as Henry was about to remonstrate, "this must not be known to the other clerks. Hugo and Dinsmore. I rely upon your entire secrecy. Breathe a word of this discovery, and that instant you leave my employment. As to you, misguided boy! Go to the house immediately, and I will soon follow. We will speak together then, and you shall tell me what motive prompted you to the commission of such an error."

Pale, but self-possessed, Henry took his hat, and bowing to his uncle, left the store.

"Hugo," said Mr. Harcourt, sorrowfully, "can you throw any light upon this unhappy affair? Have you seen anything in my nephew that should lead you to suspect him of such a crime? For what purpose could he want money? He



The "Discovery," when our hero is confronted with the results of some villainous act. All fingers point to him as the obvious guilty party. Is there a chance for vindication, when circumstances conspire against the boy?



has a liberal salary. Can you conceive any?"

"I do not know of any," said Hugo, with pointed evasion.

"Do not know! But do you guess? Can you conjecture? Has he ever appeared embarrassed for want of money?"

"No, sir," said Hugo; "I will do him the justice to say that he has not. But" — Here he hesitated artfully, knowing that Mr. Harcourt would question him further.

"Do not hesitate, Hugo. I am his uncle, and have a right to be made acquainted with any suspicion you may have been led to form."

"I would not wish to make things look darker for him than they now do."

"The truth is better than to be left a prey to undefined suspicions."

"I could not say anything without in a measure violating your nephew's confidence," said Hugo, with apparent reluctance. "I do not wish you to be angry with him."

"I shall not be angry, but shall be inexpressibly sorry. You do not know how I have loved that boy, Hugo."

"I know how well I love him!" thought Hugo.

"Then," said he, "if you insist on it, I am afraid that your nephew gambles."

"Gambles!" repeated Mr. Harcourt, starting back. "That would indeed account for his want of money. But on what evidence do you suspect this to be the case?"

"His own words."

"His own words!"

"Yes; when in conversation with him last evening, he admitted that he has been at a gambling house, and spoke of meeting acquaintances there."

"Can this be true?" exclaimed Mr. Harcourt, thunderstruck.

"I wish it were not, sir," said Hugo, in a tone of the greatest apparent regret; "I sincerely wish it were not."

Very much troubled in mind, Mr. Harcourt left his counting-room, and bent his steps homeward for the purpose of holding an interview with his nephew.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Meanwhile Henry, who had preceded his uncle home, was walking up and down the long parlor in great perplexity, vainly endeavoring to account for the discovery of the morning.

"It is evident," he thought, "that the money must have been placed in my desk, but who could have done it? I know of no one disposed to do me an injury, and even if there were say, both my own and my uncle's desks were securely locked."

He was busying himself with such conjectures when his uncle returned.

"Henry," said his uncle, sadly, "I would rather have lost half my fortune than have made the discovery I have this morning. Until now I have never doubted your integrity. If you wanted money, why could you not have applied to me? I supposed your salary quite sufficient."

"And so it was, sir; more than sufficient. You have always been liberal with me. Nothing grieves me more than

to know that you have ceased to believe in my integrity."

"I would willingly believe in it, Henry, if there were any possibility of doing so. But the evidence, as you are aware, is overwhelming — I cannot doubt that."

"But, uncle, why should I be tempted to take money? I have already more than I make use of."

"Alas! I can account too well for that."

"In what way, uncle?"

"You have, I doubt not, met with losses at the gaming table, and have taken this money for the purpose of paying them."

"Losses at the gaming table! What can you mean, uncle?" exclaimed Henry, really astounded.

"Merely that I have learned within the last hour where you have been in the habit of spending your evenings — you, Henry, whom I have always held in such high regard. How would my poor brother have been struck with anguish had he lived to witness this day! And yet his sorrow is scarcely greater than mine, for I have always looked upon you as a son, and have cherished the hope that you would become so in reality."

"You speak of losses at the gaming-table. Tell me in pity, uncle, what you mean. You cannot think that I — your brother's son, who, as you say, have hoped to stand, in a still nearer relation to you — would prove myself so unworthy of your favor."

"I would not believe it, if it were possible to doubt."

"Uncle, here is some terrible mistake. I assure you there is. I have never gambled. I have never, even for a moment, entertained the thought of doing so. From whom did you obtain your information?"

"From Hugo."

"Hugo! What could induce him to volunteer such a falsehood?"

"He did not volunteer it. On the contrary, it was with the greatest difficulty that I extorted it from him."

"Hugo!" repeated Henry, more bewildered than ever. "I do not understand it at all. Even if I were guilty of the crime of which you accuse me, how should he know it?"

"By your own admission."

"I am more in the dark than ever."

"Did you not acknowledge to him, only last night, that you were in the habit of frequenting the gambling-house, and that you had made many acquaintances there?"

"I! Never."

"He assured me that you did."

"I understand now," said Henry, a light breaking in upon his mind. "I did say something to Hugo which he either strangely misunderstood, or has most cruelly perverted. It was in this way that it happened. As we were walking together, we passed a large building brilliantly lighted. I pointed it out to Hugo, and added that I, not knowing its character, had entered it a few evenings before, and, to my surprise, found that it was a gambling saloon. I furthermore said that I remained for a short time, and that in looking about me, I recognized, to my astonishment, some clerks

with whom I was already acquainted."

"Did you not acknowledge to him that you played?"

"No. He asked me the question and I positively denied it, expressing my surprise that he should ask at all. It is impossible that he could have misunderstood me. He must be actuated by some malicious motive, for which I am quite unable to account."

"That cannot be," said his uncle. "So far from this, Hugo was very reluctant to tell me what he did. He said he did not wish to violate your confidence."

"Then," said Henry, warmly, "he is a greater knave than I thought him. He is evidently plotting my ruin, and has added hypocrisy to falsehood."

"Henry," said his uncle, in a tone of mingled sorrow and anger, "is it not enough that you have disgraced the family name, but you must also throw suspicion on an honest man? I could not have believed this of you."

"Uncle, you will drive me mad. Fate seems to be against me. I can see no way of extricating myself from the net which has been woven about me."

"Let me implore you then to make a full confession. Do that, Henry, and promise sincerely that you will never again leave the right path, and I will again receive you into favor."

"You will believe me guilty," said Henry, sorrowfully. "How can I convince you of my innocence?"

"By explaining how the money came into your desk, and what has become of the remainder. Two thousand dollars were missing, and of these but one has been found."

"That I cannot explain. It is utterly out of my power."

"Consider, Henry, what you are about to do. I offer you free pardon in return for a frank, unreserved confession. Do not lightly reject it."

"Dear uncle, I am, believe me, deeply sensible of the generosity of this offer, believing me guilty as you necessarily must. But imagine for a moment that I am innocent, and would you have me, even for the sake of your favor, make a false confession?"

"Most certainly not."

"Then uncle, you have confirmed me in my resolution; I cannot, even for the restoration of your good opinion, confess what I have not committed."

Mr. Harcourt paced up and down the apartment in great perplexity. His nephew's word and manner almost convinced him; but then, again, the overwhelming nature of the evidence against him would recur to his mind, and he was again tempted to doubt.

"I do not know what to believe," he said at length. "I would gladly believe in your innocence, Henry. Heaven knows, in comparison with that, I value not the few hundred dollars I have lost. But"—

"Say no more, uncle," said the young man sadly. "I understand what you would say. Appearances are against me, I admit, and I am hardly surprised that you should be influenced by them. I am only sorry — deeply sorry that it should be so."

"I will at least give you the benefit of a doubt, Henry. You shall still remain

in my counting room, and I will try to trust you as before."

"I thank you for your generosity, uncle. There are few who would show the same. But how can I remain with you, knowing as I do that not only you, but Hugo and Dinsmore, believe me guilty of a crime which is in ordinary cases expiated by confinement in the State's Prison? No, uncle, while suspicion rests upon my name, I will not remain in your employ."

The old merchant wiped away a tear from his eye.

"This is an unmanly weakness," he said, but you almost persuade me to believe in your innocence, Henry."

"I would that you could wholly do so, uncle."

"Then you will not remain with me?"

"I cannot, uncle."

"What will you do?"

"I will use every possible means to ferret out the perpetrator of this crime; and then, when I can do so in honor, I will return."

"You have my wishes for your success, Henry. But you will need money. Here are a thousand dollars, the remainder of that unhappy sum — but no matter."

"I thank you, uncle, but I shall not need it. I have saved enough for my purpose from the liberal salary which you have allowed me. But there is another request I have to make."

"It is granted before it is asked."

"I should wish to see my cousin Ida before I go forth, perhaps not to return."

"Ida? Is it not better that she should not know of this?" faltered the uncle.

"No, uncle; secure in my innocence, I do not fear to tell her what suspicions are entertained respecting me; she at least will believe me innocent."

"You will not take advantage of my permission to influence her to any improper step?"

"I, uncle! You may trust me fully. And yet how can you, with the suspicion you have of my integrity?"

"I will, Henry. Remain here; I will send Ida to you."

"Thank you, uncle. You have never treated me otherwise than kindly, except in one instance, and for that I cannot blame you."

Mr. Harcourt left the room and went up stairs in search of Ida. Merely telling her that her cousin wished to see her in the parlor, he hastily turned away, lest she should see the trouble depicted in his countenance, and inquire the cause.

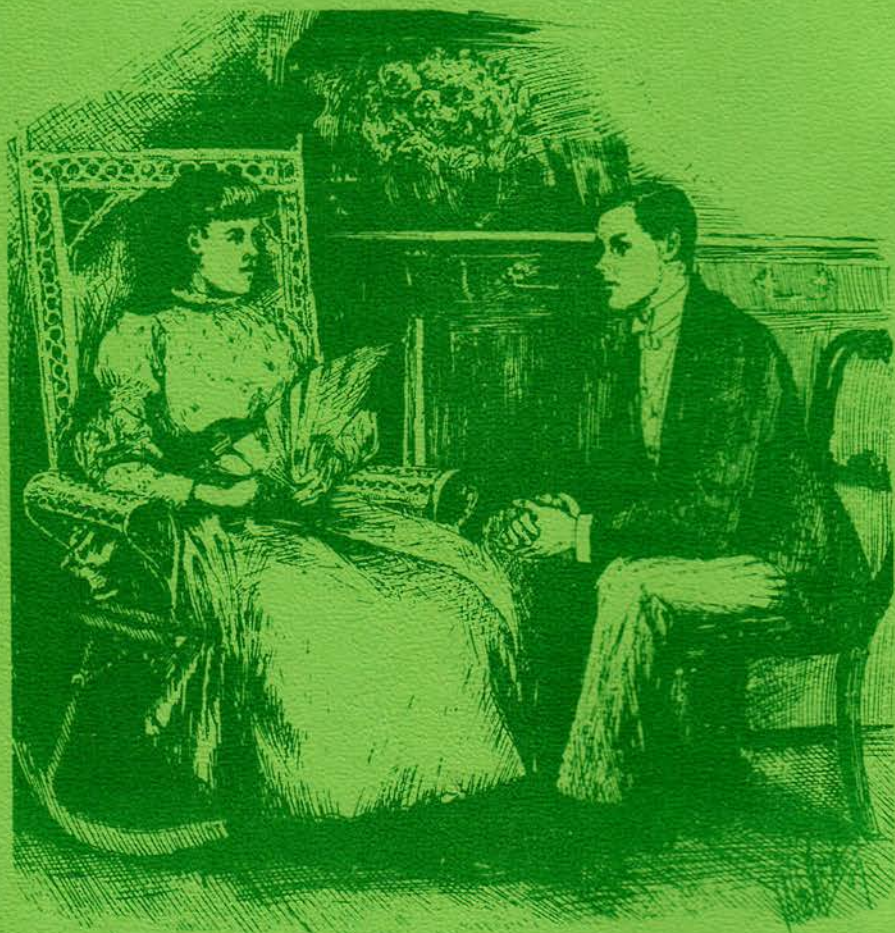
Wondering what could be the matter, and why Henry did not come for her himself, Ida, hastily glancing at the mirror, which "told a flattering tale," descended the stairs and entered the room where Henry was awaiting her.

#### Chapter V.

Ida tripped lightly into the room, and bowing with mock deference to Henry, said:—

"Your Excellency, I am at your command."

Then, for the first time, noticing his sad gravity, she resumed:— "What in the world makes you look so blue this



It is a serious Henry that faces his beloved, the gay and ever-jesting Ida. When he explains his position to her he seems to realize that their love is lost. But Ida, wise and patient, will help Henry to come into his own, as all heroines help heroes everywhere.

morning? Is it possible that the grand Mufti is dead?"

"Ida," said Henry, "I have sent for you because I have something to divulge which it is my wish that you should know."

"Some mystery, I hope; I was always fond of mysteries. Proceed." And Ida folding her hands, assumed a look of fixed attention.

"What should you say, Ida, if some one accused me of a serious fault—nay, even of a crime?"

"I should say that it was all a lie," said Ida, with a flushed cheek. "You guilty of a crime! But you are jesting, are you not, Henry?" she inquired; her late gayety giving place to a look of anxiety.

"Jesting! I wish it were so. And yet it would be a very sad jest. No, Ida, it is sober earnest. I am charged with a crime."

"What is it?"

"Purloining money from your father's desk. What is more, appearances are against me. So much so, that even my good uncle does not know whether to believe me innocent or guilty."

"But I know you are innocent, Henry. I will not believe it is otherwise, even if you tell me so yourself. But how did it all come about? Perhaps I can help you to find out who really did it."

"Thank you, Ida, for your generous confidence in me. I felt sure that you would stand by me. But let me tell you my story."

Henry proceeded to lay before Ida the circumstances with which the reader is already acquainted.

"You see, Ida," he concluded, "the evidence against me could not well be stronger. Yet in the face of all this, I ask you to believe that I am innocent."

"I know you are. The question is, how shall the guilty one be detected?"

"That puzzles me, I confess. It seems a hopeless undertaking."

"Not so hopeless, perhaps, as you imagine. I have already made up my mind as to who is the real robber."

"Who?"

"Who should it be but Hugo? Isn't his appearance enough to convict him?"

"His appearance is not greatly in his favor I admit," said Henry, faintly smiling. "On the whole, I don't think I shall ever be jealous of him. But then you know that won't prove anything against him in a court of justice."

"Did he not make himself particularly officious in fastening suspicion upon you?"

"Yes, he certainly did. He first suggested that the desks should be searched, and when mine was about to be closed, pulled out the old ledger in which he was first to discover the stolen

money. I remember being surprised at the time that he should think of looking there.

"Depend upon it, it's for the best of all reasons—because he placed it there himself."

"And afterwards, he told my uncle, with a show of reluctance, what he must have known to be a falsehood, that I was in the habit of frequenting a gambling house."

"There is no doubt in my mind. He must have placed the money where it was found."

"But what could have been his motive?"

"As to that, suppose you leave the counting room, who is likely to supply your place?"

"Hugo."

"Then has he not a motive?"

"Cousin Ida, your woman's wit has thrown some light on what was before completely dark. Now, will you tell me how I am to substantiate these suspicions, and convict Hugo of an agency in this affair?"

"Certainly I will. We women are always the smartest, you know. Are the desks usually kept locked?"

"Certainly. We should not be so foolish as to leave their contents exposed."

"Then in order to transfer anything from my father's desk to yours, Hugo must have had keys to each."

"Yes. But how will that help us?"

"Simply that he must have taken impressions of the locks in wax, and had keys made expressly for him."

"Well?"

"Then you have only to carry your key to any locksmith with whom you are acquainted, and inquire whether he recollects having made anything similar lately from a wax impression. If you learn nothing in one quarter, go to another."

"Bravo, cousin Ida! what a capital lawyer you would make. But, compliments aside, you have really eased my heart not a little. I will at once follow out your suggestions. But I must first acquaint my uncle with the course I intend to take."

"Do so, and when you get into trouble again and need advice, apply to the wisest lady of your acquaintance."

"Meaning yourself. Believe me, I will do so. But I must go upon my errand."

"And I must go up and dress for dinner. I look like a positive fright with this gingham dress on. Only look at me!"

"So I will, just as long as you please," said the young man, casting an admiring glance upon his cousin, who never looked more beautiful to him than at that moment.

"There, that will do," said she, blushing slightly. "You have done penance enough for one day. I must positively go."

"Dear Ida," though Henry, "I never loved you so truly as I do at this moment, when perhaps I am destined to lose you forever. But no, I will not believe it. This plan of Ida's looks hopeful and I will try it. But I must first see

my uncle."

Mr. Harcourt approved Henry's proposed course, and fervently hoped that he might be so far successful as to throw off the load of suspicion from his own shoulders. Though the evidence remained unchanged, his conviction of his nephew's innocence became momentarily stronger.

## CHAPTER VI.

In a narrow street, apart from the main thoroughfare, was a small shop, occupied by Nathaniel Updike, a locksmith.

Having on one occasion had a little business done there, Henry bent his steps thither before calling elsewhere—as he thought it more likely that Hugo would apply to some obscure workman, than at a place better known.

"Mr. Updike," said Henry, carelessly holding out the key of his desk, which was somewhat peculiar in its make, "did you ever manufacture a key like this?"

"Yes," said the locksmith, after a cursory examination, "and that not long since."

"Indeed," said Henry, eagerly, "how long since?"

"Only last week."

"But you must make a good many keys. How do you happen to remember this particular one?"

"Because, you see sir, there is something peculiar about it. I never had made a key like it before."

"Did you have one given you as a patter?"

"No, I made it from an impression in wax. I made another at the same time for the same person."

"Indeed! Was the second key at all like this?"

Here Henry exhibited his uncle's key, which he had brought with him.

"It was," said the locksmith unhesitatingly.

"Do you happen to remember the personal appearance of the man who engaged you to this work?"

"I shall not very easily forget him."

"Why? Was there anything peculiar in his appearance?"

"Yes, a great deal. He was short and thick-set, with a dark, sallow face, and a sort of hump on his shoulders."

"Was he good looking?"

"As to that," said the locksmith, laughing, "tastes differ; but for my part I have seen those whose looks I liked better?"

"Would you know him again if you should see him?"

"I should know him among a thousand. That was not the first visit I had received from him."

"Then he has employed you before?"

"Some three months since, upon a large key. I should judge it might be the key of some outer door."

"Well, my friend, you have imparted information which will be essential service to me. I have one favor more to ask—that you call this afternoon at four o'clock, at the house of Mr. James Harcourt, No. 13B—street. I will pay you well for your trouble."

"I will be certain to be present at that hour," said the locksmith.

"I rather think," said he to himself, after Henry had left him, "that that humpbacked chap has got himself into some trouble. I didn't take much of a fancy to him, for, aside from his bad looks, which he can't help, there is a lurking devil about his person. I wonder what he's been up to."

Here the worthy locksmith was called to dinner; which, being unusually savory, for a time interrupted the current of his reflections.

Meantime Henry, in a tumult of joy, returned home, and laid before his uncle the result of his morning's work.

Mr. Harcourt could no longer entertain any doubt of his nephew's integrity; but was shocked beyond expression at the malignity and hypocrisy of Hugo, in whom he had hitherto reposed unbounded confidence.

It was agreed between them that Hugo should be summoned to the house at 4 o'clock, as if to a private interview with his employer when he would be confronted with the locksmith, and, if possible, brought to a confession.

"Hugo," said Mr. Harcourt, some two hours after, as he was about to leave for dinner; "I should like to have you call at my house at four o'clock."

Hugo bowed acquiescence.

"Probably," was his exulting thought, "Mr. Harcourt will dismiss his nephew and promote me to fill his place. No doubt it is to inform me of this that I am summoned to his house."

At the appointed time he presented himself, and was admitted into the presence of the merchant, who motioned him to a seat.

"I have sent for you in relation to the affair of this morning, and to consult about future arrangements," commenced Mr. Harcourt. "My nephew will no longer fill the place of bookkeeper in my establishment."

Hugo's eyes sparkled.

"I wish to ask you candidly," continued the merchant, "whether you think it would be prudent for me longer to retain in my employment one who I am satisfied has abused my confidence and violated the laws."

"Much as it pains me to say so," returned Hugo, "I must reply in the negative."

"You think, then, there is no doubt of my nephew's guilt?"

"None at all, sir."

"But is it not possible that some one might have placed the money in Henry's desk from a malicious motive, with the design of criminating him?"

Hugo glanced at the merchant with a startled look, and then, as if reassured, replied:—"No, sir; certainly not. Who is there to do so?"

"You can think of no one?"

"No, sir."

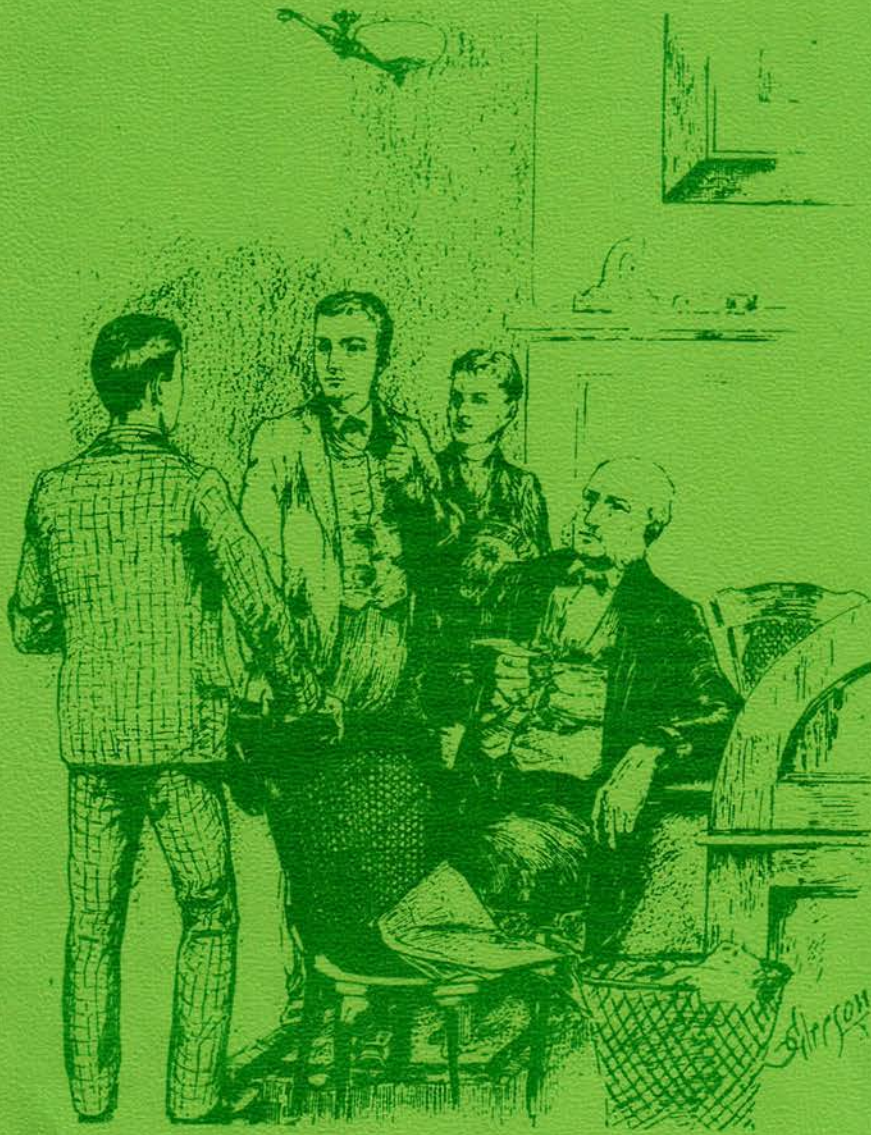
"Then perhaps this gentleman will assist your remembrance."

At the same time he rang the bell, and the locksmith entered the room.

"Do you recognize this man, Mr. Updike?"

"I do."

"Have you ever done any work for



Confrontation is another element of the 19th Century novella. In this segment, evil-doer, hero and the "witness" are brought together in the presence of authority to unwind the tangled threads that have entrapped our hero. The scene in which the evil Hugo will be charged with his villainy.

him?"

"I have."

"Of what kind?"

"I have made him three keys, first and last, from impressions in wax."

"Were they like these?"

Mr. Harcourt handed the locksmith three keys.

"They were, sir, precisely."

"You could swear to them?"

"I could."

"Now, sire," said Mr. Harcourt, wheeling round upon the discomfited Hugo, whose face had grown paler and paler ever since the locksmith entered, you will perhaps recognize in these keys those which open my warehouse, and the desks belonging to my nephew and myself. There is no longer any doubt that you, for purposes of your own, transferred money from my desk to my nephew's, with the intent of criminating him. Confess it freely, and I will not deliver you up to the police. Did you do this?"

"I did," said Hugo, sullenly.

"And appropriated to your own use half of the money aforesaid."

"It is true."

"And what could be your object?"

"I hated him," said Hugo, malignantly, and I wanted his place."

"Unhappy man! I trust you may yet repent of your evil deeds. Meanwhile you must prepare to surrender the money you have purloined. Of course, I can no longer retain you in my employment. You pronounced your own sentence, a few moments since. I will not, however, betray your secret, but hope you may live to make expiation for your crime."

"And now Henry," he said, turning to his nephew, with a roguish smile, "I regret that I can no longer retain you as my bookkeeper, but, if you choose to enter the firm as junior partner, I will have the papers made out immediately."

"I am most grateful, uncle," said

Henry. "There is still another partnership which I should like to form."

"Another!"

"Yes, but it will not interfere with the one you so kindly propose."

"With whom?" asked his uncle, quite in the dark.

"This is the partner I propose," said Henry, leading up the blushing Ida. "What do you think of her? Couldn't I enter into partnership with Ida and yourself on the same day?"

"By Jove, so you shall!" said the old gentleman, laughing heartily, "and may the two partnerships prove equally satisfactory!"

"I am sure, at least, that I shall never regret my share in either," said Henry, turning towards Ida.

During this conversation, Hugo took the opportunity to slip from the room. It was not until the first surprise occasioned by his disappearance was over, that Mr. Harcourt remembered that he had not yet accounted for the thousand dollars he had purloined.

"We shall never hear anything more from Hugo," thought he.

It would have been well for all parties had this proved true. Whether it was so, the succeeding chapters will determine.

## CHAPTER VII

Stung with rage and mortification at the failure of his nefarious scheme, and feeling with intense bitterness that he had only served to advance the interests of one whom, with or without reason, he vindictively hated, Hugo left his employer's house, and hastened to the little room which his economical habits led him to make a choice of as a home.

As he hurried through the streets, prudently choosing the least frequented, his meditations were none of the pleasantest.

"Fool — idiot — dolt!" muttered he, apostrophizing himself, "why could you not rest contented with your present fortune without laying snares for another, in which you yourself have become entangled? How much better are you off for your meddling? You have lost a comfortable situation under such circumstances that it will be long enough before you can get another. And yet I hated him!" he continued slowly, as if each word were pregnant with significance, and was not to be lightly spoken. "From my very soul I hated and still hate him! and after all, the bitterest drop in this cup of my disappointment is that he will reap advantage from it. I was jealous of him because he was book-keeper, and so — forsooth — must help him into the firm! Nor is that all. He has taken advantage of this time to ask for the hand of his cousin, and it has been granted, thus making full the cup of his happiness, while — mine has been dashed to the ground, and broken in ten thousand pieces. Is there no way to establish a greater equality between us? Must I be forever debarred from revenge because this scheme has failed? Curses upon the treacherous locksmith by whose means I have been foiled! But that is all over, and I must consider what course next to pursue. In what other way can I thwart him? How can I break in upon his dear-



It did not need this exclamation to recognize the relationship between this ill-favored pair.

"My own Hugo," said the woman, in a whining tone. "And how does my boy do?"

"What in the fiend's name sent you hither mother?" exclaimed her son, in a tone by no means affectionate.

"And is that the way he speaks to his own mother?" continued the woman, in the same whining tone. "Is that the thanks she gets on coming so far to see him?"

"What made you come? Nobody wanted to see you; and I know well enough that you didn't come for the mere pleasure of seeing me."

"He can say this, after the mother I've been to him!" returned the woman, throwing up her hands in mock expositulation, — "after all that he owes me."

"All that I owe you!" retorted her son, leaping to his feet, and shuffling through the room with an agitated step.

Finally, he stopped before his mother, and said, abruptly, "No one is more sensible what I owe to you than I myself. Shall I tell you, madam, how much?"

"What makes you so violent, Hugo?" said his mother, sinking into a chair feebly.

"Then I will tell you," continued Hugo, unheeding the interruption. "This hideous face that frightens even the children in the streets, these ungainly limbs, this accursed hump, all these deformities that bar me out from my species — for these I am indebted to you. A load of benefits, is it not? So heavy that it weighs me down to the dust."

"I am sure, Hugo," said his mother, "you have no reason to complain. What if you are not so fair and well-shaped as some? You are comfortably off, have a good situation, and a good salary; while I, your mother, am left to privation and suffering."

"Do I not allow you a certain sum yearly?"

est hopes, and dash them to the ground, making him as miserable as I am myself? Ha! there is one way — if it can be accomplished, I must plot and contrive once more, and my triumph, though late, may come after all. Let me think."

Hugo's meditations were here broken in upon by a slight tap at the door.

He started with alarm; for, having the purloined money still in his possession, he feared the police might have been set upon his tracks. Fortunately, the door was locked; and he was disposed to parley before opening it.

"Who is there?" he inquired, raising his voice.

"It is only I — your landlady," was the reply.

Reassured by this intelligence, Hugo threw open the door.

"Do you wish to see me, Mrs. Black?" he inquired of the rather dumpy little figure of whom he rented his apartment.

"No, Mr. Ring, not I, but there is somebody downstairs that has asked to see you."

"Ah!" said Hugo, his fears reviving, "what sort of a person, Mrs. Black? It may be somebody that I don't want to see."

"You wouldn't be so ungallant as to send a lady away," said Mrs. Black, in a jocular tone.

"A lady!" returned Hugo, more surprised than ever.

"Yes, or a woman anyways. She isn't dressed much like a lady."

"Perhaps it is my washerwoman. I owe her something."

"Likely enough. Shall I tell her she may come up?"

"Yes."

"Now, don't you go to making love to her," said Mrs. Black, laughing a fat laugh, and shaking her finger at her lodger, who certainly did not at that moment look as if the caution were needed.

A moment afterwards, and a tall, stooping figure, arrayed in a tattered green cloak, of antique fashion, entered the room. On her head she wore a black hood, which overshadowed her face, so that it was difficult to distinguish her countenance, unless one came close to her.

"Who are you, and what is your business with me?" asked Hugo, advancing towards his visitor.

In reply, the woman pulled off her hood, and disclosed a face singularly repulsive, whose parchment-colored skin was drawn over harsh and angular features, presenting a "tout ensemble" as far from prepossessing as can well be imagined.

"My mother!" exclaimed Hugo, starting back in astonishment.



Hugo's mother comes to call. Even his mother is a wretched, wicked witch, who only drops in when her monthly allowance runs out.

"And what is fifty dollars? How can I supply myself with all that I need, out of that pitiful sum? That was one of the reasons that sent me here today — to ask you if you couldn't allow me more."

"More! I don't know how long I shall have that to give."

"What! Has your salary been reduced?" asked his mother in alarm.

"Reduced! Yes, to nothing. I have lost my situation."

"Lost your situation!" shrieked the old woman with a disconsolate wail. "Oh, Hugo! What have you been doing? Go back at once, I beseech you, and tell them you are sorry for your misconduct, and beg to be taken back again."

"As if I would stoop to such degradation. No, no, it is lost irrevocably! Even if I did as you advise me, it would be useless."

"But what have you done, Hugo?"

"I sought to revenge myself upon a fellow-clerk, and to criminate him, purloined money and put it in his desk. It was discovered, and the blow has fallen upon me."

"O, dear, dear!" sighed the old woman, "then we shall all starve now, that's certain. How could you do such a thing, Hugo? Or if you must do, why didn't you take care not to be found out? How could you be so unchristian?"

"I was playing for a stake, and I lost; that is all. I took all the precautions I thought necessary. Unluckily, they proved insufficient."

"And now your poor mother must starve. Why didn't you think of me, Hugo?"

"Don't prate about starving. I will take care of that."

"Have you got money?" said the old woman on reviving.

"Yes, yes, and some that doesn't belong to me. Unless I take good heed, I shall be arrested and forced to give it up."

"Then fly — fly at once. How much have you got?"

"That doesn't belong to me, do you mean? One thousand dollars."

"That's my brave boy!"

"But, mother, I don't know as I ought to keep it. Only a minute or two since you charged me with being unchristian. Hadn't I better give it up?"

"No, no," said the old woman, hurriedly. "It's better to keep it than to leave your mother to starve. Hadn't you better let me keep it for you?" she continued, in a wheedling tone. "They wouldn't be so likely to suspect me, as you."

"Thank you, mother, for your very disinterested offer," said Hugo, sardonically. "Excuse me for not accepting it, but I think it much safer in my hands than yours."

"Just as you like, Hugo, but take good care not to be taken, for my sake."

"I am quite sure that I shall, for my own sake. But come, if you have no more to say I must ask you to leave me alone. I have much to do."

"And when are you coming out to see me?"

"Very soon. I shall probably need your aid in an enterprise I am meditating."

"That I will give, willingly. But, Hugo, I am wholly out of food, and—"

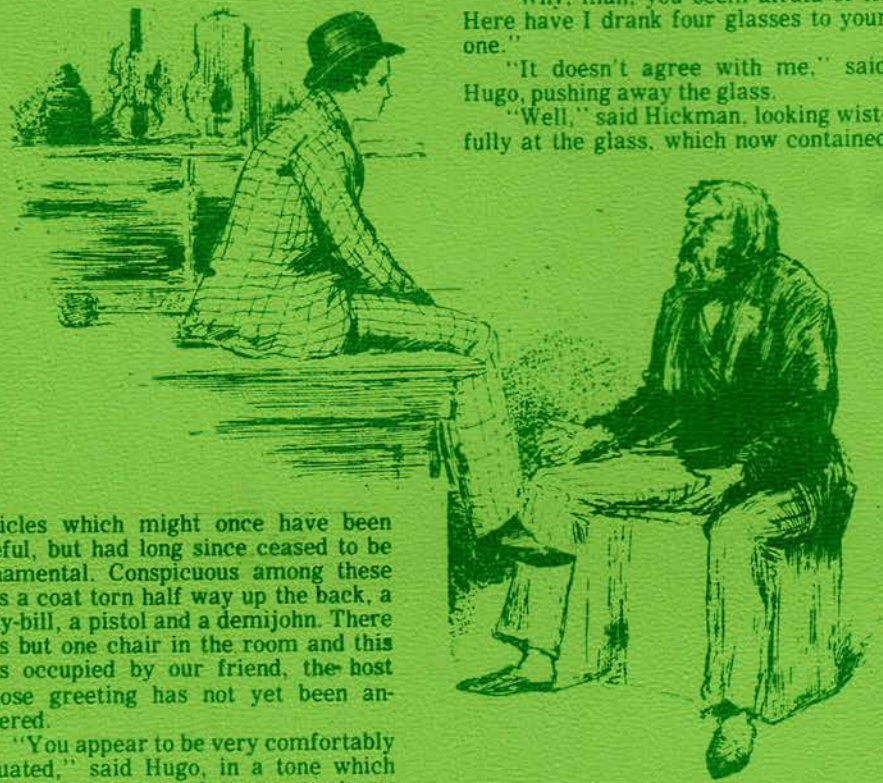
"I knew what you would say. Will that content you?"

Muttering her thanks, the woman carefully put away the piece of gold extended to her, and, putting on her hood, left Hugo once more alone.

#### CHAPTER VIII

"Hello, Hugo! Who'd a thought of seeing you here? However, you're as welcome as — as — well, as a good glass of punch would be at this moment. Can I say more?"

The speaker was a tall, ill-dressed man, who, if his looks did not belie him, had for many years cultivated an intimate acquaintance with brandy and water, or, more probably, brandy without water. He was hardly the sort of customer one would care to meet on a dark night; his bump of conscientiousness, as the phrenologists would say, being very imperfectly developed. His attire, which was shabby in the extreme, seemed very well suited to the appearance of things around him. In the corner was a bed which had not been made since morning. On it was piled an indiscriminate heap of



articles which might once have been useful, but had long since ceased to be ornamental. Conspicuous among these was a coat torn half way up the back, a play-bill, a pistol and a demijohn. There was but one chair in the room and this was occupied by our friend, the host whose greeting has not yet been answered.

"You appear to be very comfortably situated," said Hugo, in a tone which might be interpreted as sarcastic or otherwise.

"Humph!" said Hickman, "that's as one happens to fancy. I have seen accommodations that I thought were slightly superior. But come, man, sit down. Will you take this chair or the sofa?"

As there was but one chair, Hugo was on the point of mentioning the sofa; but on looking about him, could not distinguish any article bearing that name.

"Ha! ha! Can't find the sofa, can you? Well, this is my sofa," indicating the bed, which by a dexterous sweep of his arm he relieved of its burdens, which fell unheeded upon the floor.

Hugo chose to seat himself on the sofa.

"You see," said Hickman, "it's my way to make the most of everything."

Hugo, who for some reason wished to make a favorable impression upon his host, concurred in the wisdom of this course.

"I'd offer you something to drink," said Hickman, suggestively, "but I happen to be out of spirits, and out of money, as well as of credit just now."

Hugo, taking the hint, drew out a one dollar bill, and requested him to use it, if it would be of service to him.

Hickman with alacrity clutched the bill and vanished from the room. In a few minutes he re-appeared with materials, wherewith, in a short space of time, he succeeded in manufacturing a smoking hot bowl of punch, of which he set a portion before Hugo.

The latter, though to do him justice, not by any means addicted to the use of intoxicating drinks, did not decline, but out of good fellowship, sipped a little, now and then, out of the glass before him. The potations of his companion were far more liberal. Observing the abstinence of his visitor, he exclaimed:

"Why, man, you seem afraid of it. Here have I drank four glasses to your one."

"It doesn't agree with me," said Hugo, pushing away the glass.

"Well," said Hickman, looking wistfully at the glass, which now contained

Horrible Hugo plots ever more dreadful skulduggery with an amoral and uncouth friend.

all of the mixture that remained, "it's a pity it should be wasted; so, if you really won't drink it, I will."

A moment afterwards the glass was placed upon the table, empty.

"I'm sorry to find you're not so prosperous as I should like to see you."

"I might be better off to be sure, but business has been rather dull of late."

"Now," continued Hugo, watching his companion attentively as he spoke,

"I have a little service that I want done, for which I should be willing to pay liberally."

"Eh!" said Hickman, his eyes glistening, "what is it?"

"Why, I shouldn't like to say anything about it, unless to one who would take part in it."

"If it's anything I can do, I'm your man. What are you willing to give?"

Hugo, whose desire of revenge does not entirely obliterate his love of money, considers how small a sum he can reasonably offer. "As it will be but a few hours' job, I think twenty-five dollars would be a liberal compensation."

"That depends on the nature of it. Is there danger in it?"

"More to me than to you."

"Tell me what it is, anyhow, and ten to one you won't have to look any farther for assistance."

"To be brief, I want to carry off a young lady."

"Ho! ho!" shouted Hickman, laughing boisterously, his eyes resting on the ill-favored countenance of his visitor. "Is that the way the wind blows? Who'd have thought that you, of all men, would fall in love?"

Hugo, who understood the allusion to his deformity, winced, and would gladly have checked the fellow's merriment in an unceremonious manner, gulped down his wrath, and replied composedly: "You are quite mistaken. I am not in love."

"Not in love! Then what is your object in carrying off this young lady — by the way who did you say she was?"

"I will tell you presently. My object in this case is not love, but something far removed from it — revenge."

"Revenge! Has she jilted you?"

"Nothing of the kind. It is on some one else I wish to be avenged through her."

"Her lover?"

"You are right."

"Come, you might as well tell me the whole. I can't work well in the dark. In the first place, who is the young lady?"

"Ida Harcourt."

"Your employer's daughter?"

"The daughter of one who was my employer, but he is so no longer."

"Have you left him voluntarily, or were you dismissed?"

"I have been discharged through the influence of Henry Harcourt, the cousin of Ida, and her lover. He will probably marry her within a month."

"I see your plan. In revenge for his procuring your discharge, you will carry off his bride."

"You are right, and it is for assistance in carrying out this plan that I have called upon you."

"You couldn't have called at a better place, but it seems as if you ought to pay more than twenty-five dollars for such aid."

"Remember, I have lost my situation, and don't know when I can get another. I may be willing to advance a little, but be as moderate as you can."

Finally Hickman promised his assistance, in consideration of five dollars

additional, which Hugo readily agreed to pay.

For the remainder of the evening the two worthies were engaged in discussing the details of the plan best suited to the successful attainment of their object. They separated in the most friendly manner, Hugo declining the proffered hospitality of Hickman, whose accommodations did not render his invitation a very eligible one.

#### CHAPTER IX.

It was the day preceding Ida Harcourt's bridal. Henry's desire to be united to his cousin on the same day that he entered the firm as junior partner, had caused the preparations to be hastened.

On a couch near Ida, lay the bridal attire which had just been sent home. Actuated by a feeling of excusable vanity, Ida arrayed herself in it that she might note the effect. She then surveyed herself in the mirror opposite. The thought that in these very robes but a few hours hence she would solemnly pledge her faith to one who was very dear to her, deepened the flush upon her cheeks, and heightened the effect of her beauty, to such a degree as to elicit an admiring exclamation from Juno, her faithful black attendant, who entered by chance with a letter for her mistress.

"Lor, Miss Ida! how beautiful you look. Pears like I never saw you so handsome. Wouldn't Massa Henry like to see you now?"

"Hush, Juno! You mustn't flatter me, or you will run the risk of making me vain," said Ida, blushing. "But what have you here — a letter?"

"Yes, Miss Ida. I 'spects it's important. The one that brought it wanted me to give it to you, right straight away."

Lisa took the letter.

"I do not recognize the handwriting," said she. "I thought at first it might be from my father. Who brought it?"

"A boy, Miss Ida."

"Did you bid him stop?"

"Yes, missy, but he said there warn't no use, there wouldn't be any answer."



Ida reads an unexpected letter alone in her room, growing paler with each insidious line.

Ida glanced at the bottom of the sheet. It was signed Paulina Matthews — a name of which she had never heard. With some surprise she commenced reading, but her surprise was soon changed into a feeling of grief and acute pain. That the reader may understand the cause of her emotion, we will transcribe the letter:

"Honored lady," (it commenced) "if I have taken a liberty in thus addressing you, you will, I know, pardon me when I inform you of my reasons for doing so. Nothing but the most imperative duty would lead me to take a step which must, I feel sure, occasion you the greatest grief. You are tomorrow to wed one for whom I doubt not you feel the warmest love and esteem. Doubtless you believe him all that an honorable man should be. Can I wonder at your delusion — I who have loved him with as ardent a love as you can feel? I did not dream while he was laying his vows at my feet, that he was even then betrothed to and mediating marriage with another. When my eyes were opened, judge of the weight of woe which crushed to the earth my trusting spirit. Until then I believed myself married to him. Now, alas, I fear that the ceremony was but an idle one — a counterfeit, by the help of which I might the more easily be led astray.

"You may discredit my statement. I cannot expect that you will believe such

a charge against one whom you love, on the mere assertion of a stranger, of whom you know nothing. I am now stretched upon a sick bed, to which I have been reduced by grief and agitation; otherwise I would visit you, and lay before you proofs that would not fail to convince you. I scarcely dare ask you to visit me, although I feel it to be important that we should have an unreserved conversation upon a subject which has so painful an interest for us both. Do not, I beseech you, take any important step before we meet. Should you be willing to visit me, I will arrange that you may do so with all secrecy. As I live somewhat out of the city you will need a carriage. It might be hardly prudent to use your own. Two hours hence you will find a carriage stationed at the corner of D— and E— streets. It is sent by my direction. Mention my name to the driver, and he will at once convey you to my residence. I beseech you to come, if you can trust me so far, but at all events do not utterly disregard my warning.

PAULINA MATTHEWS

Ida still sat on the fauteuil upon which she had carelessly sank, arrayed as she was in her bridal attire. The flush upon her cheek died out as she read, and, at the conclusion, not a vestige of color remained upon her cheeks. Could she credit this terrible letter? She hardly knew. The apparent sincerity and grief of the writer almost compelled her belief, yet when she thought of Henry, with all his frank nobility of character, as she had hitherto judged him, she felt that he was incapable of such an action as had been laid to his charge. Yet the very possibility that it might be true filled her heart with indescribable anguish. How was she torn by conflicting emotions! — now indignantly rejecting the charge as a base calumny, now reading over again with sinking heart the letter which had occasioned so much pain. Again she paused before the glass. Was this pale, colorless face, the same which but a little while since had rivalled the deep crimson of the rose? And these bridal robes, which but now spoke to her of love and happiness — now excited only painful emotions. She hastily disarrayed herself, and laid them carefully aside.

"Who knows," thought she, pressing her hand to her forehead, "that I shall ever have occasion to wear them?"

In the meantime she had formed a resolution — she would no longer remain in uncertainty, but, face to face with this asperser of Henry's name, would examine the proof of his alleged perfidy; and if, as she felt sure, it was not satisfactory, she would stand up the next day with unshaken confidence in his integrity, and plight to him her vows. If the worst proved true — but of that she could not, would not, for a moment think.

An hour afterwards she rang the bell. Juno entering, found her mistress arrayed to go out. She was startled by her paleness.

"Why, Miss Ida, what's the matter? All your color clean gone, and you's as

white as a sheet. What is the matter?"

"A slight headache, that is all," said Ida evasively.

"Better take your things off, and let me put some camphire on your head. It will make you feel a sight better. Lor, I've known my old Pomp eenamost distracted with headache, tearin' round as if he didn't know what to do, when a little camphire would calm him down immediately in less than half an hour. Shan't I go and get some, Miss Ida?"

"No, Juno. I shall get rid of it before long. I am going out a little while. I shall feel better to be out in the open-air."

"Camphire's better," persisted Juno, but Ida was not to be persuaded to try old Pomp's remedy.

"I am going to make a call," continued Ida, "and perhaps I may not be home to dinner. If not, you may tell papa that I have gone out to see a friend, and have probably been invited to dine there. Will you remember, Juno?"

"Remember, Miss Ida? No fear of that. Old Juno hasn't lost her memory, if she has lost her teeth."

With this assurance the old woman, who had been in the family so many years as to be a privileged member, shuffled downstairs.

Ida slowly followed, and passed through the door into the street.

The air was lively and bracing. The sun was shining brightly, and the streets were all astir with people walking this way and that, meeting passing, jostling each with that appearance of life and death-dependent on-haste which is said to be so characteristic of Americans.

Ida, who had upon her mind a matter more important than most of the busy wayfarers, walked slowly, that she might have time to collect her thoughts. If her mind had not been so intent upon the subject which occasioned so great anxiety to her, she might have reflected that it was very imprudent to trust herself as she was about to do, to the good faith of a stranger. But all considerations of this kind were swept away by her restless desire to learn all, and test finally and forever the question of Henry's inconstancy. The next day it would be too late. The question must be settled now.

She soon reached the place indicated in the letter. There was a carriage standing at the corner. She looked for a moment towards the driver, who seemed watching for some one, and on seeing her stop, came towards her.

"Do you come from Paulina Matthews?" inquired Ida.

"All right," answered Hickman, "she sent me here for a lady. I s'poso you are the one she expected."

"Yes," murmured Ida.

"Then if you will get in, I will drive you there at once."

Hickman let down the steps, and Ida stepped within the carriage.

"Is it far?" she inquired.

"A matter of four or five miles or so."

"Drive fast then. I am in a hurry to reach the place."

"I reckon you'll feel in more of a hurry to get away," thought Hickman as

he mounted the box. "Howsomover, I won't dispute the lady's wishes. If she wants to ride fast, she shall. Perhaps her next request won't be so easily granted."

Accordingly he drove rapidly through the thronged streets, answering with jeers the curses of those against whose vehicles he dashed in his progress.

By and by they passed out from the city. The houses grew less frequent, and they were in the open country. Soon they came to a lane issuing from the main road, and leading half a mile to the borders of a forest which lay in the background. Just within the forest was a small dilapidated dwelling, which, never having been painted, but left exposed for many years to the rain and the atmosphere, had become of a dark brown color.

In front of this house Hickman drew up, and presenting himself at the carriage door, said to Ida—

"We have reached the place. Shall I help you to alight?"

Rejecting his proffered assistance, Ida leaped to the ground, and looked anxiously about her.

#### CHAPTER X.

Ida looked with some surprise, as yet unmingled with apprehension, at the building before her. She had not thought much about it, but supposed from a carriage having been sent for her that the house would be in keeping.

"Surely," said she, turning to Hickman, "this cannot be the place."

"Yes, it is, and no mistake," asserted that worthy.

"There seems to be no one stirring."

"Just go up to the door and knock. I guess you'll raise somebody."

Ida did as directed.

A moment afterwards, and the door was opened by Hugo's mother, who has already been introduced to the reader.

Ida looked at her with astonishment and alarm. The flaring cap which she wore scarcely concealed the straggling gray locks which found their way out from beneath the edges. Her face, which was harsh and angular, was marked by a cringing expression, which only increased the natural repugnance which it inspired. Her tall figure was made to appear even taller by an unusually scant dress, whose circumference appeared to vary little through the whole length.

"How do you do, my dear? I am glad to see you," said Mrs. Ring; for this, it will be remembered, was the old woman's name.

"I am afraid I have made some mistake," said Ida, hurriedly — "I came to see Paulina Matthews. She cannot live here."

"You have made no mistake, my dear. This is the very place. Come up stairs, and you shall see the unfortunate young woman."

Feeling more and more that she had placed herself in a false position, yet seeing no course to pursue except to adapt herself to circumstances, Ida followed her guide up the creaking



staircase. At the head of the stairs, Mrs. Ring opened the door of a chamber into which Ida followed her. She looked about her. At the end of the room was a couch, on which reposed a figure so wrapt up as effectually to be concealed from view.



Judging this to be the one of whom she was in search, Ida approached, when what was her amazement and dismay, when the figure rose, shook off its encumbrances, and disclosed the repulsive features of Hugo, the deformed!

"Where am I? Take me away!" exclaimed Ida, now thoroughly alarmed.

"Cannot you favor us with your presence even for a few moments?" inquired Hugo with a malignant smile. "Although I cannot promise you as good accommodations as you enjoy at home, yet I have no doubt you will enjoy yourself in a place so charmingly secluded."

"What does all this mean? I will go at once," and Ida hurried to the door.

It was fast. Hugo's mother, who had disappeared from the room, had locked it behind her.

"You visit us so seldom," said Hugo, mockingly, "that we mean to keep you here a little while, now that you are fairly here."

"Impossible! You cannot be so base!" returned Ida, her heart sinking with apprehension.

"Why not?"

"You are — you must be jesting. This is a free country, and you would not dare" —

"Again I ask, why not?"

"You would be amendable to the laws."

"So I am now. I have money in my possession that belongs to your father. Even now perhaps there are officers are on my track."

"I hope to heaven there are!"

"Thank you, Miss Harcourt, for your kind wishes. I shall endeavor to return good for evil, and repay you with my hospitality."

"You are seeking to frighten me."

"In that case I may congratulate myself on my success."

"You tell me," said Ida, inspired by a new hope, "that you have taken money from my father, and are amendable to the law. Restore me to him, and I will engage that you shall never be troubled by pursuit."

"I do not fear it as it is. No one would think of seeking me here. Look out and judge for yourself."

Hugo threw open the shutter and disclosed the solitary position of the house. It was set just within the forest, while in front stretched broad and sterile fields between it and the highway. This was the only side which afforded an open prospect, and here there was not a house in sight.

"You see," said Hugo, significantly, "there is not much danger of being disturbed by the neighbors."

"I see," said Ida, "that you are a bold, unprincipled man; if, indeed, this is not all a trick to terrify me. But, tell me with what purpose did you lure me hither?"

"I wished to be revenged," said Hugo, his features contracting.

"Revenged!" said Ida, recoiling as she noticed his expression. "Tell me, what wrong have I ever done you, that you would be revenged on me?"

"I know of none."

"Then why?"

"I will tell you. Is there no one who loves you with such intensity that your loss will strike a heavier blow upon his heart than any personal injury which he might suffer?"

"You mean my cousin Henry," said Ida, her cheek flushing.

"I do!"

"And why should you seek revenge upon him?"

"Why!" almost shrieked Hugo. "Do you ask me why? Because he is straight, and handsome, and fair to look upon; while I — I am what you see."

Hugo's features, convulsed by passion, assumed an aspect even more repulsive than they ordinarily wore.

Ida would fain have turned away her eyes from his baleful look; but her gaze seemed drawn towards it as by a species of fascination. She shuddered slightly.

"You shudder when you look upon me. I do not wonder. Though my spirit may have writhed at first, I have become used to be pointed out in the streets as something monstrous — a hateful and unsightly thing."

"Surely Henry has never done this. Why, then, should you cherish this hatred towards him?"

"Why should I? Because he has that

which I have not. Ask the houseless, starving wretch why he hates with a deadly hatred the rich man, a tithe of whose possessions would bring to him happiness and plenty. Why should one have everything, and another nothing?"

"Hold! you are arraigning God's providence, unhappy man!" said Ida, alarmed at the passion into which he had wrought himself.

"Then I will shock your prejudices no longer. But you asked a question, and I answered it."

"No, no; I do not accept your answer. Why should you make me the innocent victim of your wicked and unjust hatred to my cousin?"

"Because there is no other way in which I can so effectually aim a blow at his happiness."

"But he will seek me at once. You cannot long retain me."

"What probability is there of his seeking you here?"

With a sinking heart Ida could not but confess to herself that there was but little likelihood of it. To Henry, as well as herself, Hugo's nature had hitherto been as a sealed book. Neither had believed it possible that in his heart there existed such a depth of wickedness.

Her situation made her desperate. Hopeless as it might prove, she would make one appeal more.

"Hugo," she said with an unsteady voice, "I cannot believe all this great wickedness which you charge upon yourself. You are not the villain you would have me believe. Oh, if nature has not made you as fair in outward seeming as others, redeem her niggardliness by the wealth of a good heart. Then shall the inward beauty compensate for the outward deformity, and, as a gem which is set in a rough casket, derive additional lustre from the contrast."

She might as well have addressed this appeal to a stone. Hugo was steeled against all entreaties. Long brooding over his peculiar misfortune had hardened his heart.

"You should have been an actress, madam," he said sneeringly. "Your abilities would there be of more service to you than they will be here."

"Others may not be as obdurate," said Ida, flying to the window in the vain hope of appealing to Hickman.

Hugo, who fathomed her designs, quietly laughed at her discomfiture.

"It is of no avail," said he. "He returned to the city immediately. That, however, makes little difference. Would you know the character of this man to whom you were about to appeal for assistance from me? He is a gambler and a thief, who has more than once been an inmate of the penitentiary. For a sum of money he agreed to aid me in my design."

"Everything conspires against me," said Ida, sinking back into a chair. "What shall I do?"

"Let me advise you to take things quietly. That is your best course. Above all, give up the thought of escaping. That is quite out of the question. You will find some books on the table. You see I have

taken care to make your captivity as comfortable as possible. Can I do anything more for you?"

"Yes. Relieve me of your hated presence."

"Your compliments are not of the most savory kind. Time perhaps will assist you in that respect. Perhaps you would like some refreshment. If so, I will send my mother up. Our fare is humble, but"—

"Food — it would choke me — here!"

"Then, perhaps, you would like to have my mother sit with you for a time. She seldom has a visitor like yourself, and is desirous of paying you every attention."

"Leave me alone. And yet — yes, send your mother up to me. She, at least, is a woman, and cannot be so inhuman."

Hugo smiled. He knew his mother too well to fear that she would be moved by pity or womanly sympathy for his captive. Yet, as even the shrewdest are liable to be mistaken, he did not consider that on another point his mother was more vulnerable.

He left the room.

In the midst of Ida's dismay, there was yet one ray of comfort. Henry was still true to her! The letter had been written only as a snare. She felt now the extent of her imprudence, and how distrustful she had shown herself of Henry's honor. While these thoughts were passing through her mind, Mrs. Ring entered the room.

#### CHAPTER XI.

Thus far, Ida had been so overwhelmed by the nature of her situation as to be incapable of judging what would be her best course. Now, however, that she could see more clearly, her mind regained its activity, and she resolved to seek out some means of escape.

Without assistance, it was evident that this would be impracticable. The room in which she was confined, being in the second story, the windows were too far from the ground to make the descent otherwise than dangerous. Besides, she had ascertained that they were so securely nailed, as to render it impossible to lift them. The door was locked, and would doubtless be kept so. Even were it otherwise, she could scarcely leave the house unobserved.

It was necessary, therefore, that she should obtain the co-operation of some one in the house. Hugo, of course, was out of the question; and, as his mother, so far as she knew, was the only other person in it, her hopes depended upon her.

Should she appeal to her compassion?

Ida glanced at the old woman's hard, severe features as she entered the room, bearing some slight refreshment, and at once decided that any appeal of this kind would be worse than useless.

There were two other modes of influencing her. She might appeal either to her fears or her cupidity, or to both. This she decided to do at once, but in such a way as not to lead her purpose to be at once suspected.

When Mrs. Ring entered the room, she found her calmly reading a book.



Ida seeks a comrade in the evil Mrs. Ring. She is decided by a look that there will be no compassion, but coolly seeks another way out of her predicament.

"I'm glad to see you are enjoying yourself, my dear," said the old woman. I hope you won't be discontented."

"I shall do as well as I can for the short time I have to remain," returned Ida, composedly.

"Has Hugo promised to carry you back, then?" said his mother, surprised.

"No. He intends to keep me here."

"Yet you expect to remain but a short time."

"My father will communicate the fact of my disappearance to the police, and they will at once be set on my track."

"But they would not think of coming here; so we shall have your company some time yet," said the old woman, with a faint reflection of Hugo's sinister smile.

"It will be fortunate for you if that is the case," said Ida, with a composure in part assumed.

"How so?" inquired Mrs. Ring, who, in spite of her feeling of security, was disagreeably impressed with Ida's coolness and apparent confidence.

"I mean that your confinement will commence on the day that mine ends."

"Mine!"

"Certainly. Do you not know that this forcible abduction exposes you to imprisonment?"

"But it is Hugo, not I, that has done it."

"He is the principal, but you are the accessory. Both are liable to punishment."

This was a new view of the subject, which impressed Mrs. Ring very uncomfortably. She had been led to assist Hugo in his design by the hope of a reward which he offered, and which her cupidity led her to desire. The thought that she incurred danger by this assistance had not once occurred to her.

She looked somewhat troubled, but reflected that, after all, discovery was very improbable in such a secluded place; and considered, moreover, that upon her faithful co-operation depended the sum of money promised her by Hugo.

Feeling re-assured by this reflection, she said: "There is so little chance of discovery that I do not fear it."

"And this man who brought me here," said Ida, carelessly.

"Hickman! what of him?"

"I suppose you feel sure of his fidelity."

"Why not?" asked the old woman again, startled.

"My father will probably offer a large reward for my recovery. Of course, he will see it, and unless you have secured him to you, he will be very likely to betray you."

Mrs. Ring was now alarmed in earnest. She knew that Hickman was unprincipled, and what Ida said seemed very probably; and judging by herself, the temptation would be too strong to be resisted.

Ida saw her advantage and followed it up.

"Of course, then, there would be no escape for you and your son."

A new thought struck Mrs. Ring.

"How large a reward will your father probably offer?"

"I do not know, but I know his love for me, and that he would not value money where my safety was concerned."

"Suppose," said Mrs. Ring after a short pause, "that any one else should restore you to liberty, would he be entitled to the money?"

"My father would ask no questions, I will promise that, but pay that person, whoever he might be. And I should not be ungrateful. See, here are one hundred dollars," said Ida, displaying her purse; "I would give that cheerfully to any one who would contribute to my release."

The old woman looked with avidity at the gold which gleamed through the silken meshes of the purse. It was twice the amount which Hugo had promised her. One hundred dollars, with perhaps more in prospect! It would be long before she would have another chance to secure so large a sum. Should she let the golden opportunity pass by? True, she must betray Hugo; but then Hickman would do the same if she did not, and why should not she obtain the reward as well as he? Besides, she satisfied her qualms of conscience (she was not much troubled in that way) by the thought that she could warn Hugo in time for him to secure his escape.

These thoughts passed through her mind in less time than I have recorded them. Ida watched the changes of her countenance without appearing to do so.

"I will do what I can for you," returned the old woman, at length. "But you will be secret. You will not breathe a word to Hugo?"

"Rest assured that I know my interest too well," said Ida.

"We must be cautious," continued Mrs. Ring, lowering her voice, "that he may suspect nothing. To-morrow he is to be absent, and will leave you in my charge. I will take that opportunity to seek your father."

"Thank you! You shall not suffer for your assistance. Here, take this in advance," and Ida poured half the contents of the purse into the shrivelled hand of the woman, who clutched the coins with avidity.

She left the room, and Ida now, with a strong hope of speedy deliverance, en-

deavored to forget herself in the pages of a book which had been considerably provided by Hugo.

## CHAPTER XII.

We must now return to the house of Mr. Harcourt. After the disappearance of Ida was clearly ascertained, all were filled with the greatest consternation, from Mr. Harcourt and Henry down to old Juno, who went about the house wringing her hands and uttering incoherent exclamations. At length it was ascertained, with some difficulty, that Ida had received a letter, and immediately afterwards went out leaving word that she might not return to dinner.

It was possible that she might have decided to pass the evening with some of her friends. As, however, she did not return by the next morning, Mr. Harcourt was induced by his apprehensions to insert an advertisement in the afternoon papers, offering a liberal reward for any information respecting her.

Mr. Hickman was sitting in the luxuriously furnished apartment in which he had received Hugo, when he opened one of the evening papers which he had chanced to purchase. His attention was at length drawn to Mr. Harcourt's advertisement.

"Liberal reward, humph!" muttered he. "I wonder how much it will be. Can't be less than five hundred dollars, I should say. That would be quite a windfall for me."

The more Mr. Hickman thought of it, the more favorably it struck him. It so happened that he was nearly penniless, having lost at the gaming-table the evening previous, the whole amount which he had received from Hugo. Necessity, therefore, went hand in hand with inclination.

The idea of betraying Hugo did not rest heavily upon his conscience — that being a luxury which Mr. Hickman's habits and circumstances did not allow him to possess.

"After all," he soliloquized, "Hugo might have paid me more if he wanted me to keep his secret. What's thirty dollars to five hundred!" he continued, kindling into virtuous indignation. "Why, it would be flying directly in the face of luck, if I should not go ahead and claim this reward — not to mention the satisfaction it'll give me (here Mr. Hickman's face glowed with conscious merit) to restore a daughter to the arms of her deeply afflicted parents."

Impelled by this cogent self-reasoning, Mr. Hickman determined that it should be done.

With this intent he plunged his head and face, which bore evidence of last night's potations, into a basin of cold water; and having run his fingers by way of a comb through his somewhat dishevelled locks, contemplated his figure in a cracked looking-glass with careful scrutiny.

Duly congratulating himself on his genteel appearance, he threw on his beaver sideways and emerged with a very comfortable feeling into the street.

About the time that Mr. Hickman took up the evening paper, as above described, an old woman might have been seen standing at the side door of Mr. Harcourt's residence.

Her knock was answered by a servant, who, judging from her attire that she was a beggar, hastily said that she had nothing for her.

"I wish to see your master," persisted Mrs. Ring.

"More than he cares to see you, I guess," replied the servant.

"Don't be too sure of that," said the visitor. "I wish to see him on business of importance, and it will be more to his loss than mine if I fail to do so."

Old Juno, who was passing through the entry, caught this answer.

"O, for the lub of heaven, tell me it's news of Miss Ida that you've got," she exclaimed, lifting up her hands.

"What I have to say must be said to your master."

"Then, come right in," said Juno, bustling about; "only tell me if the dear child's well, and if she ain't hurt."

"You will know by and by all that I have to tell."

Not being able to elicit anything, Juno went in search of Mr. Harcourt, who, in some agitation, entered the room.

"Have you news of my daughter?" he asked, abruptly.

"I have."

"Where is she?"

"I suppose," said the old woman, in a whining tone, "you will be willing to pay me for my news."

"Yes, yes, I have advertised to do so. But keep me no longer in suspense."

"Your daughter is at my house."

"Yours! Who then are you?"

"The mother of Hugo Ring, your late clerk."

Mr. Harcourt started in surprise and agitation. "Did my daughter come to you voluntarily?"

"It was through Hugo's means. She was deceived into coming."

"Woman!" said Mr. Harcourt, sternly, "if my daughter has received the least injury at your hands, or those of your son, you shall suffer for it at the hands of the law."

"No harm has been done her," was Mrs. Ring's hasty assurance.

"What, then, was his object in inveigling Ida from home?"

"I think it was because there was a young man upon whom he wished to be revenged."

"And what has made him change his mind, that he should send you here?"

"He has not changed his mind. He does not know I am here."

"And you?"

Mrs. Ring protested that she had always been opposed to the scheme, and tried to dissuade Hugo from it, and that now she had incurred a great risk in making it known to Mr. Harcourt.

At this moment it was announced that some one wished to see Mr. Harcourt on urgent business.

"Send him up."

The servant re-appeared, ushering in Mr. Hickman.

That worthy started back in great confusion when he recognized in Mr. Harcourt's visitor the gaunt form of the widow Ring. His penetration instantly divined that he had been forestalled, and that it would be prudent for him to withdraw.

"I beg pardon, sir," said he, "but I won't intrude. I didn't know you had company. I can come another time just as well."

Mrs. Ring has been equally discomposed at first; but on seeing Hickman's confusion, she was reassured.

"Never mind me, Mr. Hickman," said she with composure.

"Do you know this man?" inquired Mr. Harcourt with surprise.

"It was he who carried off your daughter, in consideration of thirty dollars which my son Hugo paid him."

"Is this true?" asked Mr. Harcourt sternly.

Hickman, abashed, muttered that he had meant all the time to tell Mr. Harcourt of it.

"Then you contemplated treachery at the time that you were engaged in this act. That does not lighten your guilt."

Hickman replied in an injured tone that if his motives were to be misconstrued he had better go.

"Stay!" said Mr. Harcourt, commandingly. "The moment you reach the street you are liable to arrest."

Mr. Hickman turned somewhat paler than his wont.

"What do you want me to do then?" he asked.

"You carried my daughter away. It is my intention that you shall bring her back. My horses shall immediately be put into the carriage; and myself and nephew, together with an officer and Mrs. Ring, will ride out to where my daughter is confined."

Mr. Hickman, glad to get off so well, concurred in this arrangement.

"It is my object, if possible," continued Mr. Harcourt, "to arrest this Hugo, who has proved himself such a villain."

"Arrest Hugo!" said his mother in dismay, more with the apprehension that she should share his fate, than from any prompting of maternal affection.

"It must be so," returned the merchant. "One who has shown himself guilty of such cold-blooded and persistent villany, is safe no where else than in prison."

A little more than an hour afterwards the carriage drew up before the old house in the woods. The party alighted, and the carriage was driven off to some distance, that it might not excite the suspicions of the returning Hugo, whose arrest was desired.

I need not dwell upon the joy with which Ida welcomed her father and cousin. They had been together but a short time, when Hugo was seen approaching the house. It was agreed that the party should conceal themselves in a large closet opening out of Ida's room, and await a favorable moment for surprising Hugo.



"Mother, is the captive safe?" inquired the latter of his mother, who was attending to some trifling duty below.

"Never fear," said she, studiously avoiding his gaze.

"I will go up and see her."

He ascended the stairs, turned the key in the lock, and confronted Ida:

"You have missed me, haven't you?" he said with a sneer.

"I beseech you to restore me to my father," implored Ida.

"And your cousin, too, I suppose?" said Hugo, malignantly. "So this was to be your wedding day, was it? Well, you shan't be disappointed even there. I have been considering that the best way to separate you from your cousin, is to marry you myself. Here is the certificate; I obtained it to-day. This evening shall see us united."

"Merciful heaven!" exclaimed Ida, amazed at the extent of his wickedness.

"Will no one save me?"

"And now," said Hugo, advancing, "one kiss for your bridegroom."

Ida shrieked.

"Hold villain!" said Mr. Harcourt

sternly, bursting open the door of the closet, behind which he had been concealed. "Your crimes at length have found fitting retribution. Officer, arrest this man."

Hugo, on the first alarm, sprang to the door, but here his own precaution betrayed him. He had locked it on entering.

Foiled here, he drew a knife, and, before he could be prevented, plunged it to his heart.

"Baffled after all!" he muttered, as, with a fearful look of hatred, he sank lifeless on the floor.

Willingly we draw the curtain over this painful scene. Hugo, the Deformed, has sought a higher than any earthly tribunal. Let us forbear our judgment! His mother still lives on a small annuity granted by Mr. Harcourt.

As for Henry and Ida, after verifying to the full the old adage, that "the course of true love never did run smooth," they have at length attained that peaceful and tranquil happiness which mutual love can alone bestow.

**THE END.**



## Final Episode

Ida and Henry reunited at the end of Ida's ordeal, abduction and near-ruin at the hands of "Hugo, The Deformed."

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