

Richard the Brazen

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BY CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY AND EDWARD PEPPE

The lover proceeded earnestly. "As Imogene's future husband it is my duty to surround the child with every possible safeguard, and for that reason I should like her present fancy for you disillusioned."



"I should like her present fancy for you disillusioned."

ly imprudent remarks to Miss Imogene of half an hour ago. Then he flung away his cigar and turned to his companion.

"Look here," he said, "I'm going to help you out in this matter, but I'll have to do it in my own way. I have a brilliant idea as a starter. Just listen and don't interrupt me. They're going to have a play next Friday night called 'The Man and the Hoe'—no, I beg pardon—the 'Bird.' I'm the man, and Miss Imogene is the bird. You see, the rough idea is this: I'm engaged to Miss Renwyck, but am in love with Miss Imogene to the point of frenzy—in the play, of course. So far so good. The man is in the room with the bird and declares his passion in language which is simply beautiful, making other demonstrations that are realistic both to the actors and the audience. Of course I'd rather set my heart on doing this role; but, by Jove, I'm going to chuck the thing and let you do it!"

"Me!" cried Mr. Van der Awe, clutching at his benefactor's hand. "Oh, I say!"

"Wait," said Richard. "I haven't finished yet. A young man of your obvious histrionic talent ought fairly to glitter in a part like that, and, besides, it will give you a chance to do the devoted to your ladylove. Just as you are in the middle of it Miss Harriet sails in and denounces you. Oh, it's a bully little play, especially the denunciation! But you don't mind that on account of your great and glorious love for the bird. Miss Harriet's remarks just roll off you like water from a duck's back. Touching little scene! Hanged if I can see how I can give it up, but—"

CHAPTER XII.

RICHARD, much to his chagrin and disgust, did not see Miss Harriet until the four ladies and the two gentlemen sat down to luncheon. To one thing he had made up his mind definitely—he would follow Mr. Corrigan's advice and brazen it out, putting his faith in luck, but helping luck along with assurance. From the opposite side of the table the fair Imogene cast languishing glances in his direction, while on his left the ancient Miss Schermerly grew positively sprightly and covered him with a Gatling gun of perplexing questions. She wanted authentic information regarding barons, earls and noble dukes, to all of which Richard gave ready but quaint answers—answers that might have caused

the English aristocracy to rise in one vast, furious mass and lynch him without formalities of trial or benefit of clergy.

"How different it is from what we read in novels," said Mrs. Renwyck. "I'm afraid our American authors are ill informed. Really, they ought to travel more."

"They travel enough, but I fancy they do not get into the best society abroad," suggested Miss Schermerly. "I shall prepare a paper upon that very subject for the Woman's Literary League. Would you have any objection, Lord Crolyand, if I quoted you as an authority?"

"Not in the least," said Richard gallantly. "In fact, my dear Miss Schermerly, I should be honored—vastly so."

He smiled on himself at the thought of the real Lord Crolyand should that gentleman ever chance to read the paper in question, but that was Crolyand's affair, not his.

"I will bring my notebook into the library this afternoon," the ancient one stated, and, with a smile to Richard, "Could you help me then, do you think?"

"I should be most pleased," said Richard, with an answering smile, "but I fear I'm engaged to Miss Renwyck this afternoon for quite a long horseback ride. At another time I shall be charmed, I assure you."

Miss Harriet started. She was unaware of any such engagement, but somehow the idea did not displease her. She smiled and offered to release Lord Crolyand, but that gentleman would not hear of it.

"By the way," said Miss Harriet in order to change the subject, "Imogene tells me that you have agreed to take part in our little play. It is awfully good of you to help us out."

"Not at all," answered Richard, with pronounced sadness. "It is a pleasure to serve you in any way."

Mr. Van der Awe in thunderstruck amazement stared blankly across the table, while his half raised fork fell clattering upon his plate.

"Oh, I say," he began, but Richard arrested further speech by a swift glance. There was silence for a moment; then Miss Renwyck spoke:

"You don't seem to be overenthusiastic at the prospect, Lord Crolyand. Don't you think the part would suit you?"

The Texan considered her words thoughtfully, fumbled for his monocle, got it into position after another gymnastic exercise with his left eye and sighed elaborately.

"The part," he stated, with a slow drawl, "is delightful as I understand it—but shall I be perfectly candid, Miss Renwyck?"

The ladies in a breath assured him that that was just what they wished, so he continued, struggling with embarrassment:

"I've never gone in for that sort of thing—er—but once and confess with regret that I caused a fiasco. I'm very stupid at such things—really, you know, abominable. It is rather the duty of a guest to comply with the wishes of his hostess, and I feel it incumbent upon me to make a trial of the role, even if it outcome holds me up to open ridicule. We Englishmen appear a bit eccentric to Americans, but fully aware, but nevertheless it hurts at times when—"

He paused and looked at his plate in deep confusion. Miss Harriet blushed furiously. She had wounded her guest unwittingly and was sincerely sorry. Lord Crolyand, she thought, was acting very nobly in thus sacrificing himself for the sake of her foolish whims, and she ought to have consulted him first of all. She made up her mind at once and turned to him impulsively.

"Lord Crolyand," she said, "I beg you to believe me when I say that I never thought for an instant of holding you up to ridicule. Won't you forgive me? It was splendid of you to agree, and—there—we won't have the play at all!"

"But, my dear Miss Renwyck," Richard protested, "I should feel frightfully cut up if you abandoned it on my account. Do go on with it. Perhaps I shan't be so jolly bad after all. I—"

All four ladies immediately took up the cudgels against him until his polite protests grew weaker and weaker, finally subsiding in a suggestion that relieved the situation from every point of view.

Crolyand, in fact, which would have made a cow puncher snort with disdain, but which Richard in his present state of mind rather longed for. Certainly he had no fault to find either with his prototype's taste or tailor. On entering his dressing room he was greeted by a sight which fairly took his breath away, and he was not easily surprised, either. In a corner opposite the door stood a handsome morris chair. In the chair sprawled Mr. Woolsey Bills holding a tumbler in one hand and Richard's brandy flask in the other. One-third of the original contents was still in the glass; the other two-thirds was obviously in Bills, for that worthy smiled pleasantly at his master and made no attempt to rise or to apologize for his extraordinary conduct.

Richard's first impulse was to take the offender by the scruff of the neck and kick him soundly through his host's baronial halls, repeating the attention until his valet reached a point somewhere beyond the Renwycks' front gate, but on second thought he changed his mind. First and foremost he wanted information. The kicking could be postponed. There would be time enough for that later.

"Well, Bills," he began, with a dash of sarcasm in his voice, "for a recently employed servant you seem to be doing remarkably well."

"Yes, sir," returned the valet, with the utmost complacency; "I'm doin' nicely, thank you." He helped himself to another pebulum of liquid cheer and held the glass between his eye and the light. "This 'ere brandy, sir, is equal good as wot we 'as on the other side. Your judgment's better than the earl's, sir. You 'ealth, sir."

Richard stuffed his clinched hands deep into his pockets, striving with all his might to keep them from the impudent rascal's collar. What did it mean? However, there was nothing to be gained by violence, while much could be learned through the exercise of a little tact. Therefore he curbed his rage and spoke calmly. It Bills had known the Texan better he would have realized that when he was most quiet he was most dangerous.

"Might I inquire as to the reason of your present condition?" asked his master.

"Yes," answered Bills airily, but nevertheless in quite open defiance, "me an' you 'as got to part company, Mr. Williams."

"Ah!" "Yes, sir." The murder was out. The man's manner of address implied many things which Richard was as quick to grasp as to appreciate their consequences. Bills might drop a bombshell in the Renwyck household by a mere mention of the name of "Mr. Williams." A confession on Richard's part would be bad enough, but to be forced to admit the accusation of a servant would be infinitely worse. Bills, too, seemed aware of the situation and was determined to make the most of it, as was shown by his next remark.

"Mr. Williams," he began, with the confidence of holding the whip hand, "I'm not disposed to make trouble, sir, though it do go against me to be deceivin' people. I've got no complaint agin' my present dooties, Mr. Williams, sir, an' special so as they is light." Richard made no answer, and Bills continued, "I might—I say I might—be inducted to stay on, sir, for a small advance of two hundred pun, with a promise of another one to come."

"I dare say you might," assented Richard, with ironic calm quite lost upon the man. "Anything else?"

"Yes, sir. I fancy Mr. Renwyck would do so well as that—maybe more."

"Probably," agreed Richard. "He's richer than I and inclined to be more generous. Try it by all means, Bills. I should hate to stand in the way of your making an honest penny or two."

The Texan began to undress, while the surprised valet stared at him in wonder. He had rather expected a scene, but his master's easy acceptance of the blackmailing scheme took him unawares. He was completely nonplussed by this seemingly indifferent reception of his statement. His bombshell, which he had charged so elaborately, seemed to be hanging fire. He was not so sure that Mr. Renwyck would pay for his information after all, and a bird in the hand is worth many on the wing, especially to an inebriate, whose facilities for bird catching are limited.

"I'd-I'd rather stay with you, sir," he faltered presently, with a suggestion of compromise, not to play surrender, in his tones.

"Suit yourself," smiled Richard generally, more indifferent than ever. "The matter is of too little importance to trouble over—really. Get me out that pair of dove colored riding breeches, so long as you are here, will you?"

The valet brought the desired article and, looking his master squarely in the face, summoned the last vestige of his artificially supplied courage and made a final bold attempt at blackmailing him:

"Will you give me two hundred pun, sir, or won't you, now?" "Couldn't think of it," laughed the Texan lightly. "I made a bargain with you, and you break it at your own risk. Now, bring me Lord Crolyand's second best pair of riding boots. The new ones are a trifle small and pinch my toes damnable. That's right. Thank you." He looked up with a happy smile. "It's your deal, Woolsey. What do you contemplate doing next?"

The valet had been thinking hard. He had one more shaft in his quiver and believed it would reach its mark.

"I've decided, sir," he stated as he swaggered across the room, "not to say nothing to Mr. Renwyck at all. The information might be worth a good deal more to Mr. Renwyck's daughter."

Richard wanted to strangle him on

the spot; yet, strange to say, he acted very differently.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with a look of open admiration. "I had thought of that, but forgot to mention it. Pardon my negligence. Really, Cardinal, you have a brilliant mind, so ecclesiastical



"Your judgment's better than the earl's." in its workings too. It dazzles me." He paused and sighed. "And a man like you would sell himself for £200! What a pity! Have you really decided to break with me?"

"I've," said the valet resolutely. A coward at heart, he had fortified his spirits with a liberal stimulant, and now, at the sting of ridicule, which galled him in a tender spot, he became rather a dangerous rascal. Whom the gods destroy they first make drunk, and the besotted Bills went sullenly to his doom.

"Look 'ere!" he cried. "You told me once you wouldn't stand no nonsense. No more will I. You got my offer—two hundred pun. Take it or leave it! You daren't 'ave me peach to Miss Renwyck, an' you know it! I know more than you think I know, an' Mr. Williams can't cover it up with none of 'is mawkish smiles. No, siree! I 'ave you 'ere I want you, an' you've got to pay. You got to make it three—"

"No, Woolsey," said Richard, calmly drawing on his boot, "I won't."

Bills scowled at him angrily and turned toward the door. He was drunk enough to put his threat into execution, and well Richard knew that such an exposure would be a deathknell to his hopes of winning Harriet.

"Wait!" At the sharp command the valet turned suddenly; then his master changed his tone and continued in an even voice: "Miss Renwyck is dressing for a ride with me, and at present you can't see her. She will probably be down in twenty minutes, after which you may do as you like and be hanged to you! In the meantime I would be obliged if you would get me that small bottle of machine oil on the closet shelf; then find me a piece of soft white rag."

The valet wanted to refuse, but with a certain compelling something in Richard's eye, he enforced obedience. He brought one of Lord Crolyand's handkerchiefs from the bureau drawer and laid it with the bottle in the center of the room. Richard thanked him, seated himself again and began tearing the handkerchief into narrow strips, while Bills stood watching him, his human curiosity beginning to get the better even of his anger.

"Sit down, Cardinal," said Richard pleasantly. "You have twenty minutes to wait, so why hurry? I have found that morris chair to be very comfortable indeed. You were enjoying it when I came in. Don't let me spoil your afternoon. Try it again."

The valet, still wondering and uncertain, took the indicated seat, narrowly watching his master while the Texan crossed the room, returning to the table with a small screwdriver and a formidable revolver. He seated himself and began taking the weapon to pieces, oiling each part carefully and then running a greasy rag through the barrel. Bills became more and more interested in this singular and to him unfamiliar proceeding, but Richard offered no explanation of his unusual occupation. After five minutes of utter silence the valet could stand the strain no longer.

"Er—beg pardon, sir," he asked, and the tremor in his voice indicated his uneasiness, "but wot are you a-doin' of, sir?"

"Cleaning my gun," returned Richard innocently. "What did you think I was doing—shaving?"

"O-oh!" said Bills and lapsed into silence. Richard began to whistle. It was a merry, happy little tune, but somehow it got on the valet's nerves. His mind commenced to work and draw inferences. The gun had a very unsympathetic look, which was lessened in no degree by the six enormous cartridges that the worker placed before him on the table. He wished that the Texan had not placed himself so as to command the only exit from the room. Presently the nervous Bills spoke again. The effect of the brandy was wearing off rapidly on account of his growing fear.

"You—you don't expect to 'ave no immedit use for that 'ere thing, do you, Mr. Williams?"

"Don't know," said Richard unconcernedly. "I might, and then, again, I To be continued."

DOCTORS say consumption can be cured. Nature alone won't do it, it needs help. SCOTT'S EMULSION is the best help, but its use must be continued in summer as well as winter.

Omeme Rector Gets Appointment

Rev. J. H. Teeney Coes to St. Philip's Anglican Church, Toronto

Boats were released from the ice on the Portage lakes near Houghton by dynamite blasting.

London and Victoria are bidding for the 1910 meeting of the Methodist General Conference.

Mr. Wm. Lawrence, who has been a resident of Lindsay for some time, leaves next week for Oshawa, where he will take charge of Sutcliffe & Sons branch store.

Destructive Fire in Ops Township

Lawrence Fallon's Barn Burned—Seed Grain and Threshing Machine Destroyed

Thursday evening shortly before eight o'clock and while the electric storm was at its height, lightning struck the large barn on the Lawrence Fallon farm, lot 16, con. 4, Ops, and in a remarkably short space of time the building was a mass of flames.

The farm and buildings are the property of Mr. Owen Traynor, who resides on lot 19, con. 4, and the burned structure contained a large quantity of seed grain, a threshing machine and some hay. There was some insurance on the barn, but the contents are a total loss.

The fire attracted a large number to the scene, but of course it was impossible to save anything. The burning shingles were carried in all directions by the brisk breeze blowing at the time.

The sympathy of Mr. Traynor's many friends will go out to him in his loss.

Rooks' Hatred of Crows

A curious incident in the recent history of the Gray's Inn settlement of rooks is mentioned by a London correspondent.

It appears that a couple of carrion crows settled in the gardens and one day it was discovered that the rookery was deserted. The benches who are particularly proud of their rooks gave orders for the carrion to be destroyed and the gardener prepared pigeon's eggs with good doses of arsenic. The crows swallowed them and seemed to grow fatter and healthier. At last strychnine was used and the pair were seen picking at the egg. One of them fell as it flew up to the nest, the other reached the branch, reeled and dropped.

Then a curious thing happened. Not a rook had been seen for weeks at Gray's Inn, but the next day they were all back as though advised by telegram.

His Fingers Crushed

Master Charlie McGinnis, parcel boy for Mr. R. L. Morgan, druggist, met with a very painful accident on Wednesday afternoon. The young lad had lifted up the large iron grate in front of the store, and was looking for some money which had fallen through. He had not taken proper precautions to hold the grate up, and while he was engaged in getting down to the bottom of the hole under the grate, it fell down, pinning his two fingers on the pavement. The lad shouted for help, and in a very few seconds his fingers were released. He was at once taken to Dr. White's office, where his wounds were dressed, and they are now doing nicely.

Stop Deer Hunting

A change has been made in the Ontario Game Act which the residents of the back country will do well to note, and that is after the 19th day of June settlers' permits to hunt deer will be revoked, and those indulging in hunting after that date will be prosecuted.

Side combs with silver tips are most effective with grey hair.

ELDON COUNCIL

A special meeting of the Council of Eldon was held in Plank's Hall, in Lorneville, on Saturday, April 24th for the purpose of reading the by-law providing for the borrowing of money to repair, extend and make a new outlet for Municipal Drain No. 1 of the Township of Eldon and Thorah and for issuing debentures re same.

The minutes of former meeting of April 17th were read and on motion of Councillor McDonald, seconded by Councillor Robinson, the minutes as read were adopted.

Spence Robinson—That by-law No. 335 of the Municipality of the Township of Eldon, a by-law to provide for the repairs and extension of Municipal Drain No. 1, in the Township of Eldon in the County of Victoria, and for making a new outlet thereto, and for borrowing on the credit of the Municipality the sum of nine thousand, six hundred and ten dollars (\$9,610.00), the proportion to be contributed by the said municipality for completing the same, be now introduced and read a first time.—Carried.

By-law No. 335 was here introduced and read.

McDonald, McEachern—That by-law No. 335 of the Township of Eldon, a by-law relating to Municipal Drain No. 1, be now read a second time.—Carried.

By-law No. 335 was here read a second time.

McDonald, Robinson—That the clerk be instructed to go to Lindsay to have the Lindsay Post print sufficient copies of by-law No. 335 of the Municipality of Eldon, a by-law re municipal drain No. 1 of 1909 including notice of sitting of Court of Revision and notice as to proceedings to quash; and when they are printed to serve a copy of same upon each of the owners of lands assessed for drain as per sec. 22 of the Municipal Drainage Act.—Carried.

Spence, Robinson—That we now adjourn.—Carried.

B. STACEY, Clerk.

—East Victoria Liberal Conservatives refused to support a candidate not a resident of the constituency.

—The city railway properties of Richmond, Va., have been purchased by the Gould interests for \$8,100,000.

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