

# Jeremy York.

IV.

The name of the landlady with the apple-red cheeks and array of white chins was Mrs. Mate, and this good woman had received instructions from Mr. Worksop, the boatswain, from the first day on which he had arrived to call him every morning whilst he slept at her house, at seven o'clock, neither sooner nor later, and to have his breakfast of small-beer, rashers of ham, cheese, red herrings, and brown bread ready for him in the little front parlour downstairs punctually by a quarter to eight. Mrs. Mate was always careful to humor such sailors as stayed at her house with money in their pockets. Mr. Worksop had now used the Lonely Star for five days continuously, not to speak of his being a regular customer whenever in those parts; and in those five days he had spent his money handsomely, begrudging himself nothing, tipping with a quarter-deck rather than a forecastle taste, and there was good prospect of his remaining in the house until the following Wednesday.

When next morning came, then, exactly at the hour of seven, Mrs. Mate went up the somewhat darksome staircase that led to the chamber in which Mr. York and Mr. Worksop had slept, and knocked at the door. She received no answer. She was not surprised, for Mr. Worksop was a stout sleeper, apart from his trick of going to bed with his skunk. She knocked again, and yet again, accompanying her blows by a vigorous kicking; and failing to receive any sort of reply, she lifted the latch of the door—understanding, of course, as the landlady of the house, the trick of opening it—and walked in.

It was broad sunny daylight outside, but the little window set close under the ceiling admitted but a pitiful light. However, at one glance Mrs. Mate saw that the bed was empty. She was prepared to find the boatswain alone, knowing, as we have seen, that Mr. York meant to start for his sweetheart at daybreak; but on glancing around she observed that not only was Mr. Worksop gone but his clothes likewise. This was unusual. She stepped to the bed, and more through habit, perhaps, than with design, she pulled down the bedclothes, which lay somewhat in a huddle on the side the boatswain had occupied, and instantly uttered a loud squeal of fear and horror.

There was a great stain of blood upon the sheet, with smaller stains round about it, that seemed to be sifting out even as she watched them like a newly dropped blob of ink upon blotting-paper. Mrs. Mate squealed out a second time even more loudly than before, following the outcry by an hysterical shriek of "Murder! murder!" meanwhile noting, with eyes enlarged to twice their circumference by fright, that there was a pool of blood on the floor on the side where the boatswain had lain, with other marks which vanished at the door.

So shrill-voiced a woman as Mrs. Mate could not squeal twice at the top of her pipes and yell "Murder! murder!" also without exciting alarm. The first to rush upstairs was her husband, an old man in a white nightcap, an aged frill-shirt, and a pair of plum-coloured breeches. He was followed by the drawer, by a couple of wenches who had been busy cleaning rooms down-stairs, and by five or six sailors, who came running out of the adjacent bedrooms on hearing Mrs. Mate's cries. Grasping her husband by the back of his neck, the landlady pointed to the bed, and exclaimed: "Mr. Worksop has been murdered! murdered! I tell you! Blood in our house! Murder done in the Lonely Star!" uttering which, she fell upon the floor in a swoon, but contrived to rally before her husband seemed able to grasp the meaning of what she had said.

One of the two wenches instantly slipped away to give the news. A cold-blooded murder was no common occurrence in Deal. A Customs' man found dead with a slug through his heart, the body of a smuggler washing ashore with a ghastly outlandish wound upon his head, the corpse of a gagged "blockader" at the foot of the Foreland Height, were mere business details, necessary items of a programme that was full of death, hard weather, miraculous escapes, murderous conflicts; but a cool midnight assassination was a genuine novelty in its way, and in a very few minutes, thanks to the serving-maid, the pavements outside the inn, the passage, the staircase, the tragic bedroom itself, were crowded with hustling men and women, eagerly talking, the hinder ones bawling to those ahead for news, and the whole rickety place threatening to topple down with the weight of so many people.

The story soon gathered a collected form. It was known that about nine o'clock on the previous evening a tall young fellow with his hair curling upon his back had applied at the Lonely Star for a bedroom, and was admitted by Mr. Worksop to a share of the great bed in which that worthy lay. It got to be known, too, in a wonderfully short space of time, that Mr. Worksop carried in his breeches' or other pockets, some thirty or forty guineas and half-guineas, loose, a handful of which he had exhibited with uncommon satisfaction on several occasions when overtaken in liquor. It also got to be known in an also equally incredible short space of time, thanks to one of the watermen who had rowed Mr. York ashore from the brig Jane, that the tall young man with the long hair had owned himself worth only half a guinea, of which he had given four shillings to the boatmen after a tedious dispute, one to the landlady for his bed, and a six-penny bit for liquor, leaving him with five shillings—all the money he had in the world, according to his own admission; "and quite enough," exclaimed

the deep voice amidst the jostle of men on the staircase, "to account for this here murder."

Presently, there was a cry of "Room for Mr. Jawker!" The crowd made a lane, and there entered a round, fat, fussy little justice of the peace, with the only constable that deal possessed—a tall, gaunt, powerfully built, three-cornered hat, in a rusty following close at his heels. Little Mr. Jawker approached the side of the bed, and after taking a long look, full of knowingness, at the blood-stains, he ordered the constable, giving him the name of Budd, to clear the room of all save those who could throw light upon this matter. This being done, Mr. Jawker fell to questioning the assembled folks, and bit by bit gathered as much of the story as they could relate. (The landlady, Mrs. Mate, was ignorant of the name of the tall young man with the long hair; but he told her, she informed his Worship, that he meant to leave her house before daybreak that morning, to be in time to breakfast with his sweetheart, who lived Sandwich way, and who was none other, as she supposed, than pretty little Jenny Bax, for 'twas the widow Bax's name he mentioned when he spoke of walking over to his love at dawn.)

At this point there was a disturbance outside. Budd, the constable, looked out, and presently looked in again to inform Mr. Jawker that fresh prints of bloodstains had been discovered on the pavement, and could be traced some distance.

"They must be followed! They must be followed!" cried little Mr. Jawker, "they may lead us to this discovery of the body of the murdered man.—Follow me, Budd!" with which he went down-stairs, the gaunt immense constable close behind him, and the people shouldering one another in pursuit of both.

There was a great crowd outside. Deal was but a little place in those days; indeed, it is but a little place now, and the news of the murder—if murder it were—had spread with something of the rapidity of the sound of a gun. It was a sparkling morning, a small westerly draught rippling the sea into the flashing of diamonds under the soaring sun. The Downs filled with ships as on the previous day, the white front of the Foreland gleaming like silk upon the soft, liquid azure past it, with, noblest sight of all, the line-of-battle ship, the central feature of the mass of craft, in the act of tripping her anchor and flashing into a broad surface of canvas with her long bowsprit and jib-booms to head to the north and east presently for a cruise as far as Heligoland.

The instant the little justice of peace made his appearance there arose a stormy hubbub of voices of men eager to point out the bloodstains. It was a tragedy that went too deep for merriment, yet one might have laughed at the eager postures of square-sterned boatmen, bending in all directions in search of new links of the crimson chain of crime, as though a vessel full of treasure had gone to pieces close aboard the land on top of a furious inshore gale, and there were ducats and doubloons and pieces-of-eight in plenty to be found at the cost of a hunt amongst the shingle. So many inquiring eyes were sure to discover what was wanted. Stains unmistakably of blood could be followed at varying intervals from the pavement in front of the Lonely Star; then an ugly patch, as though the burden of a hundred paces, no sign; then half a score more of stains, that conducted the explorers to the timber extension, and projected a little distance into the sea, and there of course the trail ended. Nothing could be more damning in what they suggested than these links of blood, starting from the bedside, and terminating, so to speak, at the very wash of the water. It was universally concluded that the tall, young man with the long hair, name unknown, who had slept with Mr. Worksop, had murdered that unfortunate boatswain for the sake of the guineas in his pocket; and under cover of the darkness of the night, had stealthily borne the corpse to the timber extension and cast it into the sea.

Mr. Jawker started off at a rapid pace, followed by the constable, to make out a warrant for the apprehension of the tall young man, with the long hair, for wilful murder; whilst a number of boatmen went to work with creeps or drags to search for the body in the vicinity of the beach; but though they persevered in their efforts till noon, watched by hundreds of people ashore as well as by the innumerable ships' crews who crowded the shrouds and tops to observe the result of this patient dredging, nothing more than a very old anchor, which was supposed to have belonged to one of Tromp's ships, was brought to light.

V.

The world moved very slowly in those days, and Deal's solitary constable Timothy Budd, had not fairly started for the house of the widow Box on a road that would have brought him in time to the ancient and beautiful minister of Minster, until the clock in Deal church showed the hour to be a quarter before nine. He was mounted on a clumsy village cart, like to what Hogarth has more than once drawn, armed with the warrant, a full description of the tall young man, to the obtaining of whose name from the brig Jane, still lying in the Downs, the magistrate objected on the grounds of delay, and animated with full conviction that he would find the malefactor at his sweetheart's house.

The old village cart was drawn by a lame horse, that was occasionally to be impelled into a brief staggering trot by the one-eyed driver who sat by Constable Budd's side, and who on occasions acted as assistant or "watch" to that worthy. A crowd followed the cart out of Deal, for the excitement was very great indeed; and many would have been glad to have accompanied the constable the whole distance, but this he would not suffer, sternly ordering them to turn about when they had proceeded half a mile, "lest," as he bawled out, "the criminal should catch scent of their coming and fly."

It was a drive of five or six miles. Constable Budd stolidly puffed at his pipe, with now and again a glance at his heavy stick, and an occasional dive into his coat-pocket, where jingled a massive pair of gyves or handcuffs, for such ease of mind, maybe, as the chill of the iron could impart to him. Seaward, where the blue of the ocean showed steeping to the golden line of the Goodwin sands, hung the huge white cloud of the line-of-battle ship, scarce stemming the slack westerly tide, though every cloth was abroad with studding-sails far overhanging her black sides and grinning batteries. Little was said by the two men as they jogged along between the hedgerows and past the sand-downs on that rosy and sparkling September morning, saving that when they were nearing Sandwich Budd's mate turned and said to him: "Timothy, it's the long chap, as he's described, as slept with the bo'sun, that you're to take, ain't it?"

"Oy," said the other with a slap at his breast, where lay the warrant.

"But who's to know," said the driver, "that it wasn't the bo'sun as killed the long chap?"

"If you'd heard what was said, you wouldn't ask such a question," answered Budd. "I knew Mr. Worksop. He wor a proper gentleman. Mr. Worksop wor'n a man to shed the blood of a flea.—Whoy, look here,—the long chap comes ashore wanting money, and he goes to bed with a man with aigh hand forty guineas in gold. It speaks for itself, Willum; it speaks for itself. Now, then, probe this old clothes-horse, will 'ee? We shall be all night at this pace."

They rumbled through the streets of Sandwich, over the quaint old structure that bridged the little river of Stour; then to the left, into the flat plains—dashed here and there with spaces of trees—that stretched nearly level all the way to Canterbury; and as the great globular watch in Constable Budd's breeches' pocket pointed to the hour of ten the cart came to a halt opposite one of a group of cottages—the prettiest of them all, a little paradise of creepers and green bushes and small quickset hedge, shadowed behind with trees, with the dark glass of the windows sparkling in tiny suns through the vegetation, and the air round about sweet with a pleasant farmyard smell and melodious with the voices of birds, and the bleating and low of cattle in the distance.

Budd and his man got out of the cart, threw the reins over a post, and walked to the house-door. It stood open. With a mere apologetic blow upon it with his fist, the constable marched in, and swiftly peeping into a room on the left-hand side, and noting that it was vacant, he turned the handle of a door on the right of the passage and stood in the threshold, filling the frame with his gaunt, knock-kneed figure and huge skirts.

A little table was laid for breakfast; the room was savoury with the smell of eggs and bacon and coffee. Half risen from his chair was the figure of York, a table-knife in his hand, a frown of amazement and indignation upon his brow; confronting him was a comely old lady in mourning, half risen too, and staring with terrified eyes and pale cheeks at the constable and the one-eyed face that showed over his shoulder. Close to York was his sweetheart, Jenny Bax, an auburn-haired little woman of eighteen, with soft dark eyes and girlish figure and breast of snow scarcely concealed by the kerchief that covered her shoulders.

"It's the Deal constable!" cried the comely old lady.

"What do you want?" exclaimed York, slowly rearing himself to his full stature.

"You!" thundered Budd. "Put that knife down."

York did so with an expression of amazement. The constable produced his warrant.

"I'm here," he cried, "to arrest you for the wilful murder, either last night or in the small hours this morning, of Gabriel Worksop, mariner, who shared his bed with 'ee and who's missing."

He thrust his hands into his pocket with a look behind him, and in a breath almost, so quickly was it done, he and his assistant had thrown themselves upon York and handcuffed him. Ten minutes later, York, pinioned in the cart, between Budd and the driver, was being leisurely conveyed to Sandwich jail, whilst the widow Bax hung weeping bitterly over the form of her daughter Jenny, who lay motionless and marble-white, as though dead, upon the floor.

(To be Continued.)

## THE ARTFUL RAVEN.

Two or Three Anecdotes of Its Well-Known Sagacity.

Many stories are told of the cleverness of the raven, a bird that really seems to have reasoning powers. One of these stories tells how a raven, by a skillful stratagem, got a young hare for its dinner. It had pounced upon the little animal, but the mother hare drove it away.

Then the raven slowly retreated, encouraging the mother to follow him, and even pretending that he was afraid of her. In this fashion he led her to a considerable distance from the young one, and then, suddenly, before the hare had time to realize the meaning of the trick, he rose in the air, flew swiftly back, caught the young hare in his beak and bore it away.

A similar plan was adopted by some ravens that wished to steal food from a dog. They teased him till he grew so angry that he chased them from the spot, but the artful birds turned sharply round, easily reached the dish before him, and carried off the choicer bits in triumph.

As to the raven's power of speech, the following story—which is given on the authority of Capt. Brown, who vouches for its truth—will show how aptly it can talk. A gentleman, while traveling through a wood in the south of England, was startled by hearing a shout of "Fair play, gentlemen; fair play!" uttered in loud tones. The cry being repeatedly repeated, the traveler thought it must proceed from some one in distress, and at once began to search for him. He soon discovered two ravens fiercely attacking a third. He was so struck with the appeal of the oppressed bird, that he promptly rescued him.

It turned out that the victim was a tame raven belonging to a house in the neighborhood, and the cry that it had used so opportunely, was one of many that it had been taught to utter.

## STRANGE LIFE IN ARGENTINA.

Prof. Lawrence Bruner, who spent the year 1898 investigating the grasshopper plague in Argentina, says that only Australia could match Argentina in the singularity of its life forms. It is a country where everything protects itself. The trees have thorns, the grasses and weeds are provided with thorns and sharp blades, and herbaceous plants are shielded with barbs. Forests exist where rains are scarce and natives say that sometimes when heavy rains fall the trees die from too much moisture. Some birds, belonging to the same order as our water-fowl, avoid water. Many Argentine birds possess spurs on their wings.

## ELECTRIC LIGHT BATHS.

Electric light baths seem to have become an established therapeutic agent in Germany. Their principle is that of ordinary sun baths, but advantages are claimed in that the electric light is always available; that it can be regulated according to the patient and the disease; that the action upon the heart is slight, and harmful bacteria in the body are destroyed. Baths are administered in a mirror-lined box in which the disrobed patient is seated with his head projecting outside through a hole in the lid.

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Jack—Not always. Suppose you want a loan for a few days. Do you think a close friend would be the one to approach?

SAFE

Pour ye down, ye gentle rain drops, Without ceasing, without stay, I have got my friend's umbrella And he's two full miles away.

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