



# THE PRODIGAL JUDGE

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## SYNOPSIS.

The scene at the opening of the story is laid in the library of an old worn-out southern plantation, known as the Barony. The place is to be sold, and its history and that of the owners, the Quintards, is the subject of discussion by Jonathan Crenshaw, a business man, a stranger known as Bladen, and Bob Yancy, a farmer, when Hannibal Wayne Hazard, a mysterious child of the old southern family, makes his appearance. Yancy tells how he adopted the boy, Nathaniel Ferris buys the Barony, but the Quintards deny any knowledge of the boy. Yancy tries to keep Hannibal, Captain Murrell, a friend of the Quintards, appears and asks questions about the Barony. Trouble at Scratch Hill, when Bladen is kidnaped by Dave Blount, Captain Murrell's agent, Yancy overtakes Blount, gives him a thrashing and secures the boy. Yancy has an encounter with Captain Blount, and is discharged with costs for the plaintiff. Betty Malroy, a friend of the Ferrises, has an encounter with Captain Murrell, who forces his attentions on her, and is rescued by Bruce Carrington. Betty sets out for her Tennessee home. Carrington takes the same stage. Yancy and Hannibal disappear, with Murrell on their trail. Hannibal arrives at the home of Judge Slocum Price. The judge recognizes in the boy the grandson of an old-time friend. Murrell arrives at Judge's home. Cavendish family on raft rescues Yancy, who is apparently dead. Price breaks jail. Betty and Carrington arrive at Belle Plain. Hannibal's rifle discloses some startling things to the judge. Hannibal and Betty meet again. Murrell arrives in Belle Plain. Is playing for big stakes. Yancy awakes from long dreamless sleep on board the raft. Yancy makes startling discoveries in looking up land titles. Charley Norton, a young planter, who assists the judge, is mysteriously assaulted. Norton informs Carrington that Betty has promised to marry him. Norton is mysteriously shot. More light on Murrell's plot. He plans uprising of negroes. Judge Price, with Hannibal, visits Betty, and she keeps the boy as a companion. In a stroll Betty takes with Hannibal they meet Bess Hicks, daughter of the overseer, who warns Betty of danger and counsels her to flee Belle Plain at once. Betty, terrified, carries it off by Slocum. Blount, acts on Bess' advice, and on their way to the tavern keeper, and a confederate, and Betty and Hannibal are made prisoners. The pair are taken to Hicks' cabin, in an almost inaccessible spot, and there Murrell visits Betty and reveals his part in the plot and his object. Betty spurns his proffered love and the interview is ended by the arrival of Ware, terrified at possible outcome of the crime. Judge Price, hearing of the abduction, plans action.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### The Judge Takes Charge.

All work on the plantation had stopped, and the hundreds of slaves—men, women and children—were gathered about the house. Among these moved the members of the dominant race. The judge would have attached himself to the first group, but he heard a whispered question, and the answer:

"Miss Malroy's lawyer."

Clearly it was not for him to mix with these outsiders, these curiosity seekers. He crossed the lawn to the house, and mounted the steps. In the doorway was big Steve, while groups of men stood about in the hall, the hum of busy purposeless talk pervading the place. The judge frowned. This was all wrong.

"Has Mr. Ware returned from Memphis?" he asked of Steve.

"No, sah; not yet."

"Then show me into the library," said the judge with bland authority, surrendering his hat to the butler. "Come along, Mahaffy!" he added. They entered the library, and the judge motioned Steve to close the door. "Now, boy, you'll kindly ask those people to withdraw—you may say it is Judge Price's orders. Allow no one to enter the house unless they have business with me, or as I send for them—you understand? After you have cleared the house, you may bring me a decanter of corn whiskey—stop a bit—you may ask the sheriff to step here."

"Yes, sah." And Steve withdrew.

The judge drew an easy-chair up to the flat-topped desk that stood in the center of the room, and seated himself.

"Are you going to make this the excuse for another drunk, Price? If so, I feel the greatest contempt for you," said Mahaffy sternly.

The judge winced at this.

"You have made a regrettable choice of words, Solomon," he urged gently.

"Where's your feeling for the boy?" "Here!" said the judge, with an eloquent gesture, resting his hand on his heart.

"If you let whisky alone, I'll believe you; otherwise what I have said must stand."

The door opened, and the sheriff slouched into the room. He was chewing a long wheat straw, and his whole appearance was one of troubled weakness.

"Morning," he said briefly.

"Sit down, sheriff," and the judge indicated a meek seat for the official in a distant corner. "Have you learned anything?" he asked.

The sheriff shook his head.

"What you turning all these neighbors out of doors for?" he questioned.

"We don't want people tracking in and out the house, sheriff. Important evidence may be destroyed. I propose examining the slaves first—does that meet with your approval?"

"Oh, I've talked with them; they don't know nothing," said the sheriff. "No one don't know nothing."

"Please God, we may yet put our fingers on some villain who does," said the judge.

Outside it was noised about that Judge Price had taken matters in hand—he was the old fellow who had been warned to keep his mouth shut, and who had never stopped talking since. A crowd collected beyond the library windows and feasted its eyes on the back of this hero's bald head.

One by one the house servants were ushered into the judge's presence. First he interrogated little Steve, who had gone to Miss Betty's door that morning to rouse her, as was his custom. Next he examined Betty's maid; then the cook, and various house servants, who had nothing especial to tell, but told it at considerable length; and lastly big Steve.

"Stop a bit," the judge suddenly interrupted the butler in the midst of his narrative. "Does the overseer always come up to the house the first thing in the morning?"

"Why, not exactly, sah, but he come up this morn'ing, sah. He was talking to me at the back of the house, when the women run out with the word that Missy was done gone away."

"He joined in the search?"

"Yes, sah."

"When was Miss Malroy seen last?" asked the judge.

"She and the young gemman you fotched heah were seen in the garden along about sundown. I seen them myself."

"They had had supper?"

"Yes, sah."

"Who sleeps here?"

"Just little Steve and three of the women; they sleeps at the back of the house, sah."

"No sounds were heard during the night?"

"No, sah."

from the room and the judge dismissed the servants.

"Well, what do you think, Price?" asked Mahaffy anxiously when they were alone.

"Rubbish! Take my word for it, Solomon, this blow is leveled at me. I have been too forward in my attempts to suppress the carnival of crime that is raging through west Tennessee. You'll observe that Miss Malroy disappeared at a moment when the public is disposed to think she has retained me as her legal adviser; probably she will be set at liberty when she agrees to drop the matter of Norton's murder. As for the boy, they'll use him to compel my silence and inaction." The judge took a long breath. "Yet there remains one point where the boy is concerned that completely baffles me. It we knew just a little more of his antecedents it might cause me to make a startling and radical move."

Mahaffy was clearly not impressed by the vague generalities in which the judge was dealing.

"There you go, Price, as usual, trying to convince yourself that you are the center of everything!" he said, in a tone of much exasperation. "Let's get down to business! What does this man Hicks mean by hinting at suicide? You saw Miss Malroy yesterday?"

"You have put your finger on a point of some significance," said the judge. "She bore evidence of the shock and loss she had sustained; aside from that she was quite as she has always been."

"Well, what do you want to see Hicks for? What do you expect to learn from him?"

"I don't like his insistence on the idea that Miss Malroy is mentally unbalanced. It's a question of some

where he had said good-by to Betty scarcely a week before.

The two men had paused by the door. They now advanced. One was gaunt and haggard, his face disfigured by a great red scar; the other was a shock-headed individual who moved with a shambling gait. Both carried rifles and both were dressed in coarse homespun.

"Morning, sir," said the man with the scar. "Yancy's my name, and this gentleman 'lows he'd rather be known now as Mr. Cavendish."

The judge started to his feet.

"Bob Yancy?" he cried.

"Yes, sir, that's me." The judge passed nimbly around the desk and shook the Scratch Hiller warmly by the hand. "Where's my nevy, sir?—what's all this about him and Miss Betty?" Yancy's soft drawl was suddenly eager.

"Please God we'll recover him soon!" said the judge.

By the window Carrington moved impatiently. No harm could come to the boy, but Betty—a shudder went through him.

"They've stolen him." Yancy spoke with conviction. "I reckon they've started back to Noth Carolina with him—only that don't explain what's come of Miss Betty, does it?" and he dropped rather helplessly into a chair.

"Bob are just getting off a sick bed. He's been powerful porely in consequence of having his head laid open and then being thrown into the Elk river, where I fished him out," explained Cavendish, who still continued to regard the judge with unmixed astonishment, first cocking his shaggy head on one side and then on the other, his bleached eyes narrowed to a slit. Now and then he favored the austere Mahaffy with a fleeting glance. He seemed intuitively to understand the comradeship of their degradation.

"Mr. Cavendish fetched me here on his raft. We tied up to the sho' this morning. It was there we met Mr. Carrington—I'd knowed him slightly back yonder in Noth Carolina," continued Yancy. "He said I'd find Hannibal with you. I was counting a heap on seeing my nevy."

Carrington, no longer able to control himself, swung about on his heel.

"What's been done?" he asked, with fierce repression. "What's going to be done? Don't you know that every second is precious?"

"I am about to conclude my investigations, sir," said the judge with dignity.

Carrington stepped to the door. After all, what was there to expect of these men? Whatever their interest, it was plainly centered in the boy. He passed out into the hall.

As the door closed on him the judge turned again to the Scratch Hiller.

"Mr. Yancy, Mr. Mahaffy and I hold your nephew in the tenderest regard; he has been our constant companion ever since you were lost to him. In this crisis you may rely upon us; we are committed to his recovery, no matter what it involves." The judge's tone was one of unalterable resolution.

"I reckon you-all have been mighty good and kind to him," said Yancy huskily.

"We have endeavored to be, Mr. Yancy—indeed I had formed the resolution legally to adopt him should you not come to claim him. I should have given him my name, and made him my heir. His education has already begun under my supervision," and the judge, remembering the high use to which he had dedicated one of Pegloe's trade labels, fairly glowed with philanthropic fervor.

"Think of that!" murmured Yancy softly. He was deeply moved. So was Mr. Cavendish, who was gifted with a wealth of ready sympathy. He thrust out a hardened hand to the judge.

"Shake!" he said. "You're a heap better than you look." A thin ripple of laughter escaped Mahaffy, but the judge accepted Chills and Fever's proffered hand. He understood that here was a simple genuine soul.

"Price, isn't it important for us to know why Mr. Yancy thinks the boy has been taken back to North Carolina?" said Mahaffy.

"Just what kin is Hannibal to you, Mr. Yancy?" asked the judge resuming his seat.

"Strictly speaking, he ain't none. That he come to live with me is all owing to Mr. Crenshaw, who's a good man when left to himself, but he's got a wife, so a body may say he never is left to himself," began Yancy; and then briefly he told the story of the woman and the child much as he had told it to Bladen at the Barony the day of General Quintard's funeral.

The judge, his back to the light and his face in shadow, rested his left elbow on the desk and with his chin sunk in his palm, followed the Scratch Hiller's narrative with the closest attention.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



"Hicks Says Miss Malroy's Been Acting Queer Since Charley Norton Was Shot."

"I'll see the overseer—what's his name?—Hicks? Suppose you go for him!" said the judge, addressing the sheriff.

The sheriff was gone from the room only a few moments, and returned with the information that Hicks was down at the bayou, which was to be dragged.

"Why?" inquired the judge.

"Hicks says Miss Malroy's been acting mighty queer ever since Charley Norton was shot—distracted like! He says he noticed it, and that Tom Ware noticed it."

"How does he explain the boy's disappearance?"

"He reckons she threw herself in, and the boy tried to drag her out, like he naturally would, and got drawn in."

"Humph! I'll trouble Mr. Hicks to step here," said the judge quietly.

"There's Mr. Carrington and a couple of strangers outside who've been asking about Miss Malroy and the boy; seems like the strangers knowed her and him back yonder in Noth Carolina," said the sheriff as he turned away.

"I'll see them." The sheriff went

delicacy—the law, sir, fully recognizes that. It seems to me he is over-anxious to account for her disappearance in a manner that can compromise no one."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### The Judge Finds Allies.

They were interrupted by the opening of the door, and big Steve admitted Carrington and the two men of whom the sheriff had spoken.

"A shocking condition of affairs, Mr. Carrington!" said the judge by way of greeting.

"Yes," said Carrington shortly.

"You left these parts some time ago, I believe?" continued the judge.

"The day before Norton was shot. I had started home for Kentucky. I heard of his death when I reached Randolph on the second bluff," explained Carrington, from whose cheeks the weather-beaten bloom had faded. He rested his hand on the edge of the desk and turned to the men who had followed him into the room. "This is the gentleman you wish to see," he said, and stepped to one of the windows; it overlooked the terraces

# ROBESON DRAINAGE NOW TAKING FORM

DREDGE WHICH WILL MAKE FARMING LANDS OF NOW USELESS SWAMPS.

## THIS WORK MEANS MUCH

This is the Largest Work of the Kind Ever Undertaken in the State and is Being Watched With Great Interest By Many.

Raleigh.—A special from Maxton states that the contract for the drainage of Jacob and Black swamps in that county which was let some time ago to Brett Engineering & Construction Co., of Wilson, is taking some form now. The machinery was unloaded some days ago and now the dredge is about complete, as is the houseboat where the workmen will live for the next few years while this work goes on.

The dredge is a mammoth construction, being 18 feet in width and about 80 feet long, carrying huge machinery for digging the canal, a 60-horsepower boiler being used for the power. The launching of the houseboat will take place in about a week or ten days at which time the residents have arranged for a big demonstration, picnic, etc., marking as it does the most important step in this line the state has ever undertaken.

The canal will be about 20 feet wide at bottom, 26 feet at top, and will have an average depth of seven feet. The operations start about three miles east of Maxton on the land of Mr. J. B. Sellers, the promoter of the scheme, and also one of the largest land owners in this section.

The end will be about five miles below Lumberton emptying into Lumberton river, a distance of about 25 miles from the source. The laterals tributary to the main canal will equal in all about 50 miles of this great ditch which is to drain about 35,000 acres of the best lands to be found in the state, which land is owned by several hundred farmers who will be benefited by the undertaking.

## Lenoard is Found Not Guilty.

The jury in the case of the state against Robert Lenoard at Lexington brought in a verdict of "not guilty," after having been out on the case thirty hours. Judge Cook dismissed the jurors with a word of comment. Lenoard was charged with having murdered his cousin, Charles Lee Everhardt and robbed him of his money, and feeling here and in Thomasville where both he and the dead man lived and also throughout the country in general is contrary to the verdict. Of the special venire of 115 men summoned for the case, 45 expressed the opinion that he was guilty.

## Another Big Fire in Winston-Salem.

Enveloping the business district of the city in smoke and carrying destruction in its track, although not the most destructive fire, in the history of the city occurred at Winston-Salem in a congested section of the city entailing a loss of about \$100,000, said to be practically covered by insurance. The fire originated in the basement of the factory recently purchased by R. W., and P. A. Gorrell. Just how it originated is not known.

## Politics in Washington County.

The Democratic county convention for Washington county, held at Mackeys Ferry recently, made the following nominations: Representative legislature, George S. Swain; recorder, Samuel B. Sprull; sheriff, Joseph E. Reid; register of deeds, Frank R. Johnston; treasurer, Dr. W. H. Hardison; commissioners, Levi Blount, W. S. Davenport, H. A. Litchfield, Sr. After the convention adjourned the Hon. F. D. Winston made a strong and earnest appeal to all Democrats to stand by the ticket nominated.

## Campaign in Caldwell County.

At a meeting of the Democratic executive committee it was decided to call the Caldwell county convention to meet in Lenoir September 16th. The precinct meeting will be held on Saturday before to name delegates to the county convention. The Democratic forces in Caldwell were never in better condition. For the past two years all the county officers have been held by democrats and there is entire satisfaction in regard to the manner in which the officers have discharged their duty.

## Randolph Sunday School Convention.

The twenty-third annual convention of the Randolph County Sunday School Association closed at Randleman with an address by Rev. J. A. McMillan, pastor of the First Baptist church, who took the place of Dr. W. A. Harper of Elon College, who was unable to be present. During the two-days' session the convention was addressed by several prominent Sunday school workers. Among these were Rev. R. M. Andrews, Dr. W. A. Harper, Rev. A. G. Dixon of High Point.

## NAMES N. C. POSTMASTERS

According to Previous Decisions None of Appointees Will Be Confirmed at This Session of Congress.

Washington.—President Taft sent the following appointments of North Carolina post-masters to the Senate: Thomas E. Wallace, Wilmington; Samuel M. Hamrick, Hickory; William H. Cox, Laurinburg; Frank Roberts, Marshall; George W. Robbins, Rocky Mount; Samuel M. Jones, Sanford; Charles S. Smathers, Canton; William A. Mace, Beaufort; John C. Beaman, Farmville.

As previously stated none of these appointments will be confirmed at the present session of Congress and will go over with those of J. R. Joyce nominated for postmaster at Reidsville, and Doras Newberry for collector of the Albemarle district.

Of the appointments made for North Carolina since the Chicago convention, three have been confirmed as follows: Mrs. Cameron, postmaster at Rockingham, Mr. Flannagan, at Greenville, and S. A. White at Mebane, the latter being confirmed recently. There was some opposition to White's confirmation but it was withdrawn.

The number of internal revenue districts was cut down by Congress recently to 53, four being lopped off. It is believed that this action will result in the combination of the collectors office for South Carolina with that of the western North Carolina district, the office of which is now located at Statesville, George H. Brown being collector.

## "Tomato Girls" in Catawba County.

Filled with the spirit of agricultural progress and doing many things that are making the county richer and more prosperous, Catawba has nothing more inspiring to exhibit to the state than the work of her "Tomato Girls." The farm girls to the number of 40 are engaged in the tomato club work of canning tomatoes. Each has one-tenth of an acre in tomatoes and she must do all the work except the heavier preliminary labor of breaking the ground. Thousands of cans will be put up by these industrious young ladies this season. It serves a two-fold purpose, that of saving a product that would otherwise go to waste because of poor market facilities for the raw fruit and getting cash for it and that of furnishing many a winter table with a quality of tomatoes impossible to be obtained by buying the usual commercial article.

## Charged With Poisoning Husband.

That an analysis of the stomach of John Hamlin, who died suddenly about a month ago, showed the presence of arsenic, indicating that he came to his death by arsenical poisoning, is learned from a reliable source at Asheville. The analysis was made by Prof. W. A. Withers, professor of chemistry at the A. and M. College, of Raleigh. The widow of Hamlin, who was arrested recently in West Asheville, is to have a hearing on the charge of poisoning her husband early next month. The arrest of Mrs. Hamlin caused a profound sensation in this section, as she was a young and comely widow, and had been living quietly in West Asheville since the death of her husband. Hamlin died under peculiar conditions. He was ill only a short time, and the attending physician were unable to diagnose the cause of his death.

## Country Bankers Meeting Closed.

The sixth annual convention of the Country Bankers' Association in session at Oceanic hotel, Wrightsville Beach, adjourned after listening to a number of fine addresses and election of officers. While no choice was made, the meeting will likely be held at the beach again next year. Addresses were made by John O. Ellington of the Archer Trust Company, Raleigh; Joseph A. Brown of the Bank of Chadbourn, and J. Bayard Clark, Bank of Elizabethtown.

## Patents Granted North Carolinians.

North Carolinians were granted patents as reported by Davis & Davis, patent attorneys, as follows: C. H. Davenport, Elk Park saw set; R. B. Fry, Hickory, plow; P. J. Henry Charlotte, talking machine attachment.

## Campaign in Sampson County.

The senatorial convention held at Dunn was attended by prominent business men and merchants, and lawyers. Sampson brought a strong delegation to back Colonel Paterson. It seems that Sampson has undergone her term of servitude and the dawn is breaking for Democracy after many years of almost complete annihilation at the hands of the repop forces. Among those present were: Attorneys Faison, Graham, Whitfield and H. A. Grady, who says that all the foreign countries are for Wilson.

## Much Progress in Moore County.

Nothing marks the progress Moore county is making more than the two big traction engines just received by the Page farms near Aberdeen. A half dozen years ago the motive power in the few cotton fields of the county was a little mule hitched to a Dixie plow. Then came the two-horse plow and now the big traction machines that can pull as many plows as a dozen mules. In four years hundreds of acres of sand hills have given place to splendid corn and cotton fields.