



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 to keep Hannibal, Captain Murrell, a friend of the Quintards, appears and asks questions about the Barony. Trouble at Scratch Hill, when Hannibal is kidnapped by Dave Blount, Captain Murrell's agent. Yancy overtakes Blount, gives him a thrashing and secures the boy. Yancy appears before Squire Balaam, 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. 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.

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued).

"Boy, don't be afraid. Look on me as a friend," urged the Judge.
"I reckon I'll be glad to stop," answered Hannibal.
"Such confidence is inspiring. Are you hungry?"
"Yes, sir," replied Hannibal.
"What do you say to cold fish?" the judge smacked his lips to impart a relish to the idea. "I dare swear I can find you some corn bread into the bargain." He began to assemble the dainties he had enumerated. "Here you are!" he cleared his throat impressively, while benignity shone from every feature of his face. "A moment since you allowed me to think you were solvent to the extent of fifty cents—" Hannibal looked puzzled. "I wonder if you could be induced to make a temporary loan of that fifty cents? The sum involved is really such a ridiculous trifle I don't need to point out to you the absolute moral certainty of my returning it at an early date."

It was not the loss of his money that Hannibal most feared, and the coin passed from his possession into his host's custody.

"Thank you, my boy! I must step down to the tavern—when I return, please God, we shall know more of each other." While he was still speaking, he had produced a jug from behind the quilt that screened his bed, and now took himself off into the night.

Left alone, Hannibal gravely seated himself at the table. What the judge's larder lacked in variety it more than made up for in quantity, and the boy was grateful for this fact. Presently he heard the judge's heavy, shuffling step as he came up the path from the road, and a moment later his gross bulk of body filled the doorway. Breathing hard and perspiring, the judge entered the shanty, but his eagerness kept him silent until he had established himself in his chair beside the table, with the jug and a cracked glass at his elbow. Then, bland and smiling, he turned toward his guest.

"My tenderest regards, Hannibal!" and he nodded over the rim of the cracked glass his shaking hand had carried to his lips. Twice the glass was filled and emptied, and then again, his roving, watery eyes rested meditatively on the child. "Have you a father?" he asked suddenly. Hannibal shook his head. "A mother?"

"They both of them done died years and years ago," answered the boy. "I can't tell you how long back it was, but I reckon I don't know much about it. I must have been a small child."

"Ho—a small child!" cried the judge, laughing. He cocked his head on one side and surveyed Hannibal Wayne Hazard with a glance of comic seriousness. "In God's name what do you call yourself now?"

"I'm most ten," said Hannibal, with dignity.

"I can well believe it," responded the judge. "Where did you come from?"

"From across the mountains."
"And where are you going?"
"To west Tennessee."

"Have you any friends there?"
"Yes, sir."

"You've money enough to see you through?" and what the judge intended for a smile of fatherly affection became a leer of infinite cunning.

"I got ten dollars."
"Ten dollars—" the judge smacked his lips once. "Ten dollars—" he repeated, and smacked his lips twice.

The purple flush on the judge's face, where the dignity that belonged to age had gone down in wreck, deepened.

He quitted his chair and, lurching somewhat as he did so, began to pace the floor.

Perhaps you'll contend that the old order is overthrown, that family has gone to the devil? You are right, and there's the pity of it! The social fabric is tottering—I can see it totter—and he tottered himself as he said this.

"Well, I'm an old man—the spectacle won't long offend me. I'll die presently." He was so profoundly moved by the thought that he could not go on. His voice broke, and he buried his face in his arms. A sympathetic moisture had gathered in the child's eyes. He slipped from his chair and stole to the judge's side.

"I'm mighty sorry you're going to die."

"Bless you, Hannibal!" cried the judge, looking wonderfully cheerful, despite his recent bitterness of spirit. "I'm not experiencing any of the pangs of mortality now. My dissolution ain't a matter of tonight or tomorrow—there's some life in Slocum Price yet, for all the rough usage, eh? I think you'd better go to bed."

"I reckon I had," agreed Hannibal, slipping from his chair.

"Well, take my bed back of the quilt. You'll find a hoe there. You can dig up the dirt under the shuck tick with it—which helps astonishingly. What would the world say if it could know that Judge Slocum Price makes his bed with a hoe!"

Hannibal retired behind the quilt. "Do you find it comfortable?" the judge asked, when the rustling of the shuck tick informed him that the child had lain down.

"Yes, sir," said the boy.

"Have you said your prayers?" inquired the judge.

"No, sir. I ain't said 'em yet."

"Well, say them now. Religion is as becoming in the young as it is respectable in the aged. I'll not dis-



"His Grandson is Back of That Curtain, Now—Asleep in My Bed."

turb you tonight, for it is God's will that I should stay up and get very drunk."

CHAPTER VIII.

Boon Companions.

Some time later the judge was aware of a step on the path beyond his door, and glancing up, saw the tall figure of a man pause on his threshold. A whispered curse slipped from between his lips. Aloud he said:

"Is that you, Mr. Mahaffy? He got no reply, but the tall figure, propelled by very long legs, stalked into the shanty and a pair of keen, restless eyes deeply set under a high, bald head were bent curiously upon him.

"I take it I'm intruding," the newcomer said sourly.

"Why should you think that, Solomon Mahaffy? When has my door been closed on you?" the judge asked, but there was a guilty deepening of the flush on his face. Mr. Mahaffy glanced at the jug, at the half-emptied glass, lastly at the judge himself.

"You seem to be raising first-rate hell all by yourself."

"Oh, be reasonable, Solomon. You'd gone down to the steamboat landing," said the judge plaintively. By way of answer, Mahaffy shot him a contemptuous glance. "Take a chair—do, Solomon!" entreated the judge.

"When did I ever sneak a jug into my shanty?" asked Mahaffy sternly, evidently conscious of entire rectitude in this matter.

"I deplore your choice of words, Solomon," said the judge. "You know damn well that if you'd been here I couldn't have got past your place with that jug! But let's deal with conditions. Here's the jug, with some liquor left in it—here's a glass. Now what more do you want?"

Mr. Mahaffy drew near the table. "Sit down," urged the judge.

"I hope you feel meant," said Mahaffy.

"If it's any satisfaction to you, I do," admitted the judge.

"You ought to," Mahaffy drew forward a chair. The judge filled his glass.

"What's the news from the landing?" Mahaffy brought his flat down on the table.

"I heard the boat churning away round back of the bend, then I saw the lights, and she tied up and they tossed off the freight. Then she churned away again and her lights got back of the trees on the bank. There was the lap of waves on the shore, and I was left with the half-dozen miserable loafers who'd crawled out to see the boat come in. That's the news six days a week!"

By the river had come the judge, tentatively hopeful, but at heart expecting nothing, therefore immune to disappointment and equipped for fail-

ing a most extraordinary coincidence. When I went to the war of '12, a Hazard accompanied me as my orderly. His grandson is back of that curtain now—asleep—in my bed!" Mahaffy put down his glass.

"You were like this once before," he said darkly. But at that instant the shuck tick rattled noisily at some movement of the sleeping boy. Mahaffy quitted his chair, and crossing the room, drew the quilt aside. A glance sufficed to assure him that in part, at least, the judge spoke the truth.

There was a hoof-beat on the road. It came nearer and nearer, and presently sounded just beyond the door. Then it ceased, and a voice said:

"Hullo, there!" The judge scrambled to his feet, and taking up the candle, staggered into the yard. Mahaffy followed him.

"What's wanted?" asked the judge holding his candle aloft. The light showed a tall fellow mounted on a handsome bay horse. It was Murrell.

"Have either of you gentlemen seen a boy go through here today?" Murrell glanced from one to the other. Mr. Mahaffy's thin lips twisted themselves into a sarcastic smile. He turned to the judge, who spoke up quickly.

"Did he carry a bundle and rifle?" he asked. Murrell gave eager assent.

"Well," said the judge, "he stopped here along about four o'clock, and asked his way to the nearest river landing."

"Hannibal!" the judge's voice and manner were rather stern. "Hannibal, a man rode by here last night on a big bay horse. He said he was looking for a boy about ten years old—a boy with a bundle and rifle. There was an awful pause. 'Who was that man, Hannibal?'"

"It were Captain Murrell." The judge raised his fist and brought it down with a great crash on the table. "We don't know any boy ten years old with a rifle and bundle!" he said.

"Please—you won't let him take me away, judge—I want to stop with you!" cried Hannibal. He slipped from his chair, and passing about the table, seized the judge by the hand. The judge was visibly affected.

"No!" he roared. "He shan't have you. Is he kin to you?"

"No," said Hannibal. "He tried to get me away from my Uncle Bob."

"Where is your Uncle Bob?"

"He's dead." And the child began to weep bitterly. The judge bent and lifted him into his lap.

"There, my son—" he said soothingly. "Now you tell me when he died, and all about it."

"He were killed. It were only yesterday, and I can't forget him. I don't want to—but it hurts—it hurts terrible!" Hannibal buried his head in the judge's shoulder and sobbed aloud. Presently his small hands stole about the judge's neck, and that gentleman experienced a strange thrill of pleasure.

"Tell me how he died, Hannibal," he urged gently. In a voice broken by sobs, the child began the story of their flight, a confused narrative. The judge shuddered. "Can such things be," he murmured at last. Then he remembered what Mahaffy had told him of the man on the raft.

"Hannibal," he said, "Solomon Mahaffy, who was here last night, told me he saw down at the river landing, a man who had been fished up out of the Elk—a man who had been roughly handled."

"Were it my Uncle Bob?" cried Hannibal, lifting a swollen face to his.

"Dear lad, I don't know," said the judge sympathetically.

"It were Uncle Bob! I know it were my Uncle Bob! I must go find him!" and Hannibal slipped from the judge's lap and ran for his rifle and bundle.

"Stop a bit!" cried the judge. "Now, if it was your Uncle Bob, he'll come back the moment he is able to travel. Meantime, you must remain under my protection while we investigate this man Slosson."

It was Saturday, and in Pleasantville a jail-raising was in progress. During all the years of its corporate dignity the village had never boasted any building where the evil-doer could be placed under restraint; hence had arisen its peculiar habit of dealing with crime; but a leading citizen had donated half an acre of ground lying midway between the town and the river landing as a site for the proposed structure, and the scattered population of the region had assembled for the raising.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Turned Her Gold Into Nugget.

Mme. Couly of Romorin, France, who had concealed \$400 in gold in her kitchen grate during a brief absence, forgot all about it on her return, and lit a fire which converted her whole fortune into a gold nugget.

LAND OF THE LONG LEAF PINE

The Latest News of General Interest Collected From Many Towns and Counties of the State.

Durham.—The matter of electing a new health officer for the city of Durham was postponed until the June meeting of the board of health. The proposition to employ a policeman to patrol the watershed of Enoe river, the source of Durham's water supply was discussed and two men made application for the job.

Raleigh.—Judge Connor in the Federal court here gave warning to the United States commissioners of his district that he will not countenance the practice of trumping up cases for making or selling whiskey where it appears the state courts have had the defendants before them for the same offenses.

Charlotte.—The congressional convention of the Ninth district will assemble at Lincolnton at noon June 12th, for the purpose of formally nominating Hon. E. Y. Webb to succeed himself in the house of representatives in Washington. Little other business of importance is scheduled for consideration.

Wilson.—A. B. Deans, former clerk of the superior court of Wilson county, was seriously injured when his automobile and that of Amie Parker collided about three miles from here, Mr. Deans was the only occupant of his car which turned over and rolled down a 15-foot embankment falling on him.

Kinston.—Dr. C. S. Strosnider, of the North Carolina Hookworm Commission, is in Kinston making preparations for beginning a four or five weeks' campaign against the disease in Lenoir county. The work will be begun in the near future. Dr. Strosnider has been conducting a dispensary in Greene county.

Raleigh.—C. B. Stinson, of Bear Creek, on the railroad between Wilmington and Greensboro, was on trial in the federal court here for selling brandy and it developed that the evidence was of the silmest sort and that there had, furthermore, been an acquittal in the state courts on the same. Judge Connor ordered the case dismissed.

Raleigh.—Commissioner of Insurance Young reports that there have been 128 convictions in various parts of the state for burnings since the department of insurance was organized up to January 1, 1912, and that since January 1, there have been 6 convictions with 23 persons now under indictment of burnings. These are in New Hanover, Buncombe, Columbus, Union, Craven, Haywood and Montgomery counties.

Raleigh.—The trustees of A. & M. College in their annual session here expressed unanimous opposition to the proposed merger of the state department of agriculture and the college as was proposed in a bill urged upon the last legislature. There was a commission appointed to investigate and recommend for or against the proposition by the last legislature. This report will come to the 1913 session.

Thomasville.—Prospects are bright for Thomasville since the recent railroad deal which took place here when W. N. Coler & Co., of New York, bought the Piedmont Railroad, a line from Thomasville to Denton. The road will certainly not remain as it is and in all probability there will be a change and extension. It has not been given out yet what steps will be taken, but it is rumored that the road will be continued and connect with the Southbound.

Newton.—Mrs. Fannie Ransom Williams, at the head of the organization of the Daughters of the Confederacy in North Carolina, has issued the following to the members in the state. "Monday, June 10, the fifty-first anniversary of his death, the North Carolina division of the U. S. C. will unveil in the Capital square in Raleigh their monument to Henry Wyatt, our 'First at Bethel.'" This monument has been erected through your efforts. Your committee secured the gift from the state to aid in the work, and the completion of the monument brings joy to every North Carolina Daughter's heart. It is therefore nothing but right that members of you should be present.

Morganton.—The annual meeting of the board of directors of the North Carolina School for the Deaf took place at Morganton. The board passed upon the work of the year and ordered the necessary repairs made during vacation.

Wilmington.—J. Edgar Gibbs Suggs the 8-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Suggs, was drowned in the old rock quarry just east of the city, when he stepped in a hole over his head. Only two small boys were with him at the time and were unable to go to his help when they saw him going down.

Scotland Neck.—At a meeting of the county Democratic executive meeting Hon. E. L. Travis, corporation commissioner, was unanimously re-elected chairman. Mr. Travis has served in this capacity continuously since 1896.

Winston-Salem.—Fire, believed to have been of incendiary origin, damaged the five-story brick building and job printing plant of Stewart Bros. in the heart of the city. The conflagration is being investigated by Assistant State Insurance Commissioner Scott. The building and plant were valued at \$45,000 and insured for \$42,000.

HELD FOR MURDER

SENSATION UNEARTHED IN CALDWELL COUNTY SEVERAL DAYS AGO.

MRS. HOLCLAW BEING HELD

Accused of Being Mother and Murderer of Baby—Coroner's Jury Recommends Holding Her.—To Be Tried at Next Term of Court.

Lenoir.—A sensation occurred when the body of an unknown infant male child was found buried in the woods near Valmead, a little more than a mile north of Lenoir. The body was found in an old hollow stump and from all appearances it had been there several days or a week. Sheriff Icard was immediately notified of the gruesome discovery and went to the scene. Upon a hasty examination the officer decided that murder had been committed and summoned Dr. McNairy to examine the body of the child and the doctor told the officer the child had lived and breathed and in his opinion had been killed.

A woman by the name of Mrs. Anna Holsclaw was arrested on suspicion. When the officer appeared to take the woman into custody she denied any knowledge of the affair, but she was taken to jail to await the action of the coroner's jury. Coroner Austin was called, a jury impaneled and an inquest held in the court house. Twelve witnesses, including two doctors, were called and testified before the jury. The actions of the woman as seen by the witnesses and the testimony given by the doctors justified the jury in bringing in the following verdict after a short deliberation: "That the infant child, unnamed and unknown to the jury, came to its death by the act of, and was murdered by one Anna Holsclaw, the said woman being the mother of the child."

Upon the foregoing verdict of the jury the woman was bound over to the next term of Caldwell's criminal court on the charge of willfully murdering her offspring. The witnesses all swore practically the same story and the case seems to be an ugly one against the woman charged with the crime. There is some belief that some one else will be brought into the case before time for court to convene in August.

Wind Storm Does Damage in Union.

Monroe.—News has just reached here that much damage was done by wind storms in the county. A barn belonging to James Leonard in Lane's Creek township was destroyed, as well as a great quantity of timber in the same vicinity. At the home of L. B. Snipes in the same township a flower house and a smoke house were blown down and a good deal of timber also. In Buford and Monroe, township the damage was nearly as severe. At M. R. Pigg's residence a tree was blown down, striking one of his children and severely injuring him.

Accused of Charge of murder.

Fayetteville.—G. W. (Buck) Fann was acquitted of the charge of first degree murder for killing Joe Salmon, a fellow hack driver, on January 5, by superior court jury here recently, after the jury had deliberated twenty minutes, while later in the day Will Bryant, a negro was found guilty of murder in the second degree, for killing Will Evans, another negro, at the latter's home in Seventy-first township, this county, in February. Fann submitted to a second degree murder and was sentenced by Judge Peebles to 30 years in prison.

A Costly Fire at Belhaven.

Washington.—A very costly and destructive fire occurred in the town of Belhaven, this county, about 15 miles from this city when a large portion of the immense manufacturing plant of the Interstate Coeage Company was destroyed. The fire was first discovered in the box factory of the company and rapidly spread to the lumber shed and dry kilns, all of which were consumed.

Defendants Protest Innocence.

Hendersonville.—Protesting their innocence of the murder of Myrtle Hawkins, George Bradley, Abner McCall and wife, Beatrice McCall, testified in their own behalf and underwent a long and grueling cross-examination. Bradley denied having any knowledge of the dead girl's condition but admitted that they were good friends and that he called on her regularly almost until his marriage, which was about a month before her disappearance. He denied that he had ever made love to her.

Man Killed By Falling Timber.

Wilmington.—E. J. Taylor, a carpenter, 57 years old, was almost instantly killed when a building on which he was at work at Sans-Souci farm near the city collapsed. He was caught by falling timbers and his neck was broken and other bones fractured. He lived only a few moments after the arrival of an ambulance and a physician. His 15-year-old son was nearby and heard the falling timbers. He rushed to the spot but found his father unconscious.