

Dark Hollow
By Anna Katharine Green
Illustrations by C. D. Rhodes
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SYNOPSIS.

A curious crowd of neighbors invade the mysterious home of Judge Ostrander, county judge and eccentric recluse, following a veiled woman who has gained entrance through the gates of the high double barriers surrounding the place.

CHAPTER VIII—Continued.

Already had she stepped several times to her daughter's room and looked in, only to meet Reuther's unquiet eye turned toward hers in silent inquiry.

Their rooms were over the parlor, and thus as far removed as possible from the judge's den.

Perched, as she was, in a window overlooking the lane, she had but to lift her eyes from the double fence (that symbol of sad seclusion) to light on the trees rising above that unspeakable ravine, black with memories she felt strangely like forgetting tonight.

"There is no window," she observed, looking back at the judge. "No," was his short reply.

Slowly she set down her pall. One thing was settled. It was Bela's cot she saw before her—a cot without any sheets. These had been left behind in the dead negro's room, and the judge had been sleeping just as she had feared, wrapped in a rug and with uncovered pillow.

But as she continued to survey it the clouds came trooping up once more, and the vision was wiped out, and with it all memories save those of a nearer trouble—a more pressing necessity.

Withdrawing from the window, she crept again to Reuther's room and peered carefully in. Innocence was asleep at last.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT

For many years one Sunday school has had a giving Christmas instead of a receiving one. The pupils bring gifts instead of receiving them.

his long-neglected rooms. He had said on rising from the breakfast table—(the words are more or less important):

"I am really sorry to trouble you, Mrs. Scoville; but if you have time this morning, will you clean up my study before I leave? The carriage is ordered for half-past nine."

The task was one she had long desired to perform. Giving Reuther the rest of the work to do, she presently appeared before him with pall and broom and a pile of fresh linen.

The great room before her presented a bare floor, whereas on her first visit it had been very decently, if not carefully, covered by a huge carpet rug.

"I do not expect you to clean up here as thoroughly as you have your own rooms upstairs," he remarked, as she passed him.

"There is no window," she observed, looking back at the judge. "No," was his short reply.

Conscious that the papers he made a feat of reading were but a cover for his watchfulness, she moved about in a matter-of-fact way and did not spare him the clouds of dust which presently rose before her broom.

"Oh!" she protested, with a pleading glance his way, "I'm not half done."

"There's another day to follow," he remarked, rising and taking a key from his pocket.

The act expressed his wishes; and he was proceeding to carry out her things when a quick, sliding noise from the wall she was passing drew her attention and caused her to spring forward in an involuntary effort to catch a picture which had slipped its cord and was falling to the floor.

A shout from the judge of "Stand aside, let me come!" reached her too late. She had grasped and lifted the picture and seen—

But first let me explain. This picture was not like the others hanging about it. It was a veiled one. From some motive of precaution or characteristic desire for concealment on the part of the judge, it had been closely wrapped about in heavy brown paper before being hung, and in the encounter which ensued between the falling picture and the spear of the falling standing on the table underneath, the picture had received a slit through which Deborah had been given a glimpse of the canvas beneath.

The shock of what she saw would have unnerved a less courageous woman.

It was a highly finished portrait of Oliver in his youth, with a broad band

of black painted directly across the eyes.

In recalling this startling moment Deborah wondered as much at her own aplomb as at that of Judge Ostrander. Not only had she succeeded in suppressing all recognition of what had thus been discovered to her, but had carried her powers of self-repression so far as to offer, and with good grace, too, to assist him in rehanging the picture.

But later, when thought came and with it certain recollections, what significance the incident acquired in her mind, and what a long line of terrors it brought in its train!

It was no casual act, this defacing of a son's well-loved features. It had a meaning—a dark and desperate meaning. It had played its heavy part in his long torment—a galling reminder of—what?

It was to answer this question—to face this new view of Oliver and the bearing it had on the relations she had hoped to establish between him and Reuther, that she had waited for the house to be silent and her child asleep.

Unhappy mother, just as she saw something like a prospect of releasing her long-dead husband from the odium of an unjust sentence, to be shaken by this new doubt as to the story and character of the man for whose union with her beloved child she was so anxiously struggling!

There was a room on this upper floor into which neither she nor Reuther had even stepped. She had once looked in, but that was all. Tonight—because she could not sleep; because she must not think—she was resolved to enter it. Oliver's room!



It Was a Highly Finished Portrait of Oliver in His Youth.

left as he had left it years before! What might it not tell of a past concerning which she longed to be reassured?

The father had laid no restrictions upon her, in giving her this floor for her use. Rights which he ignored she could afford to appropriate.

"Mrs. Scoville!" she exclaimed, fluttering and leading the way into the best room; "how very kind you are to give me this chance for making my apologies. You know we have met before."

"Have we?" Mrs. Scoville did not remember, but she smiled her best smile. "I am glad to have you acknowledge an old acquaintance. It makes me feel less lonely in my new life."

When we meet one of these big, blazing motor headlights while riding in the modest electric belonging to our wife's relations, we just go ahead, trusting that Providence that watches over children and drunkards will take care of us, too.

dren followed; then representatives from every class in the school, even the Bible union. Offerings were accompanied by specially prepared recitations, songs or dialogues, and gifts dressed to suit their gift.

the Stymore inn when that inn was simply a tavern.

Then she found herself looking into a drawer half drawn out and filled with all sorts of heterogeneous articles—sealing wax, a roll of pins, a penholder, a knife—a knife! Why should she recall again at that? Nothing could be more ordinary than to find a knife in the desk drawer of a young man!

Was she mad! She thought so for a moment; then she laid down the knife close against the cap and contemplated them both for more minutes than she ever reckoned.

Silence. Yes, silence was the one and only refuge remaining to Deborah. Yet, after a few days, the constant self-restraint which it entailed ate like a canker into her peace and undermined a strength which she had always considered inexhaustible.

CHAPTER IX.

Unwelcome Truths.

Yes, there no medium course? Could she not learn where Oliver had been on the night of that old-time murder? Miss Weeks was a near neighbor and saw everything.

Because Deborah's mind was quick it all flashed upon her, bowing her in spirit to the ground. Reuther had begun singing by the knowledge of her father's ignominy, she would be consumed if inquiry were carried further and this ignominy transferred to the proper culprit.

For Mrs. Scoville: Do not go wandering all over the town for clues. Look closer to home. And below:

You remember the old saying about jumping from the frying pan into the fire. Let your daughter be warned. It is better to be singed than consumed.

In five minutes she was crossing the road, her face composed, her manner genial, her tongue ready for any encounter. The truth must be hers at all hazards.

Miss Weeks was ready with her greeting. A dog from the big house across the way would have been welcomed there. The eager little seamstress had never forgotten her hour in the library with the half-unconscious judge.

"Mrs. Scoville!" she exclaimed, fluttering and leading the way into the best room; "how very kind you are to give me this chance for making my apologies. You know we have met before."

"Have we?" Mrs. Scoville did not remember, but she smiled her best smile. "I am glad to have you acknowledge an old acquaintance. It makes me feel less lonely in my new life."

"Mrs. Scoville, I am only too happy." It was bravely said, for the little woman was in a state of marked embarrassment. Could it be that the visitor had not recognized her as the person who had accosted her on that memorable morning she first entered Judge Ostrander's forbidden gates?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Trust in Providence. When we meet one of these big, blazing motor headlights while riding in the modest electric belonging to our wife's relations, we just go ahead, trusting that Providence that watches over children and drunkards will take care of us, too.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

OF E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of a Sunday School Course of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 26

JEHOVAH'S GRACIOUS PROMISES TO ISRAEL (REVIEW).

LESSON TEXT—Hosea 14. GOLDEN TEXT—Jehovah is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness.—Ps. 103:8 R. V.

The burden of punishment descended upon Israel, not because of the vindictive character of Jehovah, but because of the persistent pursuit of sin on the part of the nation.

The lessons of the past quarter extend from the latter days of Elijah, about 906 B. C., to the fall and captivity of Israel (the northern kingdom) B. C. 722 (Beecher), a period of 180 years.

A good method of review would be to have assigned to different scholars or classes each of the foregoing personages and to give a report of his chief characteristics. Material for such a review is easily accessible.

Lesson I. The weak King Ahaz (strong in his perversity) is easily persuaded to do evil in order to gratify his covetousness. Elijah at God's command goes to meet Ahab who cries out, "Hast thou found me, O my enemy?"

Lesson II. The veteran champion Elijah is about to go home and his more youthful follower, Elisha, has one chief desire (see II Kings 2:9), which persistently followed is abundantly rewarded. The lesson for us is found in the master's prayer, John 14:16.

Lesson III. The stricken soldier, Naaman, at a child's suggestion, appeals to God's prophet, Elisha, for healing. He is directed how he may be cured and after some hesitation returns home cleansed. The lesson for us is that of being faithful amid life's experiences and of doing and living for others (see also Romans 12:20, 21).

Lesson IV. The servant of Elisha is very much excited. King and camp are in despair, yet the prophet is not disturbed. Why? Let us read II Kings 6:17. Remember that Jesus, the master of men, refused to avail himself of like angelic assistance in his great battle concerning sin (See Matt. 26:53). Christianity is a religion of love, not of force.

Lesson V. The faithful priest preserves the rightful king, Joash, and makes a covenant between him and the Lord, viz., that prince, priest and people "should be the Lord's people" (II Kings 11:17). Through the merits of our high priest there has been made a better, even an everlasting covenant (Heb. 13:20, 21).

Lesson VI. Again refers to the good king, Joash. The neglected temple is restored and refurbished through the liberality of the people. This temple is a type of our bodies, which are spiritual temples (Eph. 2:22), and the lesson for us is not only the care of the body, but of liberality towards the work and worship of God's house.

Lesson VII. This is the lesson which is chronologically out of order, but is used for its temperance application. Daniel, the clean youth, staked his life and position upon obeying the word of God (Dan. 1:8). The lesson for us is the exhortation of the apostle Paul (Eph. 5:13-17, see also I Pet. 5:8).

Lesson VIII is the foreign missionary lesson. Jonah's life story is not a flattering one, yet when he faithfully proclaimed God's word it wrought a marvelous transformation in great and wicked Nineveh. (Read carefully Matt. 16:10 and Isa. 65:10, 11). We are to herald, witness to the truth and leave the results with God.

Lesson IX presents Amos, the sturdy prophet of civic and moral righteousness, the great messenger of the "rightness" of things (Amos 5:14). The gist of this lesson for us will be found in the words of Jesus (Matt. 6:33).

Lesson X. Uzziah is that king who could not withstand prosperity and who, in the development of his pride (II Chron. 26:5, 16), assumed to disobey the word of God.

Lesson XI. Enter Hosea. Let the entire school state the message of the prophet to the people of Israel, "I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely" (Hosea 14:4). Then let all recite the "little gospel" (John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

EVIDENTLY A THRIFTY SOUL

Would-Be Talker Over Telephone Balked When Called Upon to Drop a Nickel in the Slot.

A correspondent of the Cleveland Plain Dealer tells this story:

"I was called to the telephone, and a pay station operator asked, 'Is this Garfield 0064?' and since that is indeed my number, I said yes. So she called to the party on the other end of the line, 'Drop a nickel, please.'"

"Vot?" came a male voice. "Drop a nickel, please."

"Vot?" "Drop five cents, please," said the operator, translating. And still the caller can't get it though his head here he must part with a jitney before he can talk. Then I took a hand—or a voice—in the conversation.

"What's the matter with you?" I shrieked. "Drop five cents in the slot, and then you will be allowed to talk to this number."

"There was a long pause, and then this reply:

"O-oh! Vell, neffer mind. I gets me another number!"

"Probably," concludes our informant, "he kept calling till he got a cheaper one."

AT THE FIRST SIGNS

Of Falling Hair Get Cuticura. Its Works Wonders. Trial Free.

Touch spots of dandruff and itching with Cuticura Ointment, and follow next morning with a hot shampoo of Cuticura Soap. This at once arrests falling hair and promotes hair growth.

You may rely on these supercreamy emollients for all skin troubles. Sample each free by mail with Book. Address postcard, Cuticura, Dept. XY, Boston. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

The Better Way.

Charles M. Schwab, congratulated in Pittsburgh on a large war contract which he had just received from one of the warring nations, said:

"Some people call it luck, but they are mistaken. Whatever success I have is due to hard work and no luck."

"I remember a New York man who crossed the ocean one winter when the whole world was suffering from hard times. 'And you, Mr. Schwab,' Yorker said, 'are like the I suppose, hoping for better.' 'No, my friend, I am not hoping for better; got my sleeves rolled up, working for them?'"

Important! Examined and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Bears the Signature of Dr. J. C. Fletchere. In Use For Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Eclipsed. "Do you believe in the Darwinian theory?"

"Oh, yes," replied Miss Cayenne; "but there are so many more interesting and eccentric theories being advanced just now I had almost forgotten about it."

To Drive Out Malaria And Build Up The System

Take the Old Standard GROVE'S TASTELESS CHILL TONIC. You know what you are taking, as the formula is printed on every label, showing it is Quinine and Iron in a tasteless form. The Quinine drives out malaria, the Iron builds up the system. 50 cents.

No Cause for Mirth. Friend—So this is one of your jokes, is it? Ha! ha! Humorist (testily)—Well, what are you laughing at, anyhow? Isn't it a good one?—Passing Show.

The Best Liniment. For falls on icy walks, sprains and bruises, rub on and rub in Hanford's Balsam of Myrrh. Apply this liniment thoroughly and relief should quickly follow. Adv.

Very Unkind. "Sometimes I think," he began. "But not often, I suppose," interrupted the rude girl.

Not Gray Hairs but Tired Eyes make you look older than you are. Keep your Eyes young and we will look young. After the Movies Murine Eye Drops. Don't tell your age. Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago, Sends Eye Book on request.

A matron is usually more enthusiastic over being married than she is over the man she has wed.

Start the year by getting Hanford's Balsam. You will find frequent use for it. Adv.

When the average man gets justice in the courts he is usually too old to enjoy it.

Piles Cured in 6 to 14 Days. Druggists refund money if PAZO OINTMENT fails to cure Itching, Blind, Bleeding or Protruding Piles. First application gives relief. 50c.

It takes a wise man to pick a fool whose money he can spend.

To keep clean and healthy take Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. They regulate liver, bowels and stomach.—Adv.

Bachelors are women's rights; widowers are women's lefts.

For any cut use Hanford's Balsam. Adv.

A fertile imagination may produce rank thoughts.