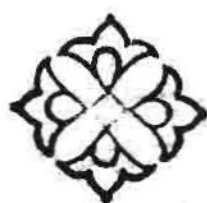


FRATERNITY

By

JOHN GALSWORTHY



" Brother, brother, on some far shore
Hast thou a city, is there a door
That knows thy footfall, Wandering One? "

MURRAY'S *Electra* of Euripides

LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN LTD.

FIRST PUBLISHED

1909

REPRINTED

1909

UNIFORM EDITION 1922

REPRINTED 1926

CHEAP 2s. EDITION

1917, 1918, 1919, 1922, 1925

FIRST PRINTED IN

THE GROVE

EDITION

1927

REPRINTED

1929, 1932, 1934,

1936, 1948

**PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE WINDMILL PRESS
KINGSWOOD, SURREY**

THE WORKS OF JOHN GALSWORTHY
GROVE EDITION

Volume 3
FRATERNITY

TO
J. M. BARRIE

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE SHADOW	3
II. A FAMILY DISCUSSION	19
III. HILARY'S BROWN STUDY	30
IV. THE LITTLE MODEL	39
V. THE COMEDY BEGINS	46
VI. FIRST PILGRIMAGE TO HOUND STREET	55
VII. CECILIA'S SCATTERED THOUGHTS	65
VIII. THE SINGLE MIND OF MR. STONE	76
IX. HILARY GIVES CHASE	92
X. THE TROUSSEAU	98
XI. PEAR BLOSSOM	107
XII. SHIPS IN SAIL	110
XIII. SOUND IN THE NIGHT	116
XIV. A WALK ABROAD	122
XV. SECOND PILGRIMAGE TO HOUND STREET	133
XVI. BENEATH THE ELMS	137
XVII. TWO BROTHERS	144
XVIII. THE PERFECT DOG	157
XIX. BIANCA	161
XX. THE HUSBAND AND THE WIFE	170
XXI. A DAY OF REST	177
XXII. HILARY PUTS AN END TO IT	192
XXIII. THE "BOOK OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD"	200

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXIV. SHADOWLAND	206
XXV. MR. STONE IN WAITING	219
XXVI. THIRD PILGRIMAGE TO HOUND STREET	223
XXVII. STEPHEN'S PRIVATE LIFE	231
XXVIII. HILARY HEARS THE CUCKOO SING	247
XXIX. RETURN OF THE LITTLE MODEL	257
XXX. FUNERAL OF A BABY	268
XXXI. SWAN SONG	270
XXXII. BEHIND BIANCA'S VEIL	289
XXXIII. HILARY DEALS WITH THE SITUATION	297
XXXIV. THYME'S ADVENTURE	305
XXXV. A YOUNG GIRL'S MIND	314
XXXVI. STEPHEN SIGNS CHEQUES	321
XXXVII. THE FLOWERING OF THE ALOE	333
XXXVIII. THE HOME-COMING OF HUGHS	342
XXXIX. THE DUEL	350
XL. FINISH OF THE COMEDY	356
XLI. THE HOUSE OF HARMONY	362

FRATERNITY

CHAPTER I

THE SHADOW

ON the afternoon of the last day of April, 190—, a billowy sea of little broken clouds crowned the thin air above High Street, Kensington. This soft tumult of vapours, covering nearly all the firmament, was in onslaught round a patch of blue sky, shaped somewhat like a star, which still gleamed—a single gentian flower amongst innumerable grass. Each of these small clouds seemed fitted with a pair of unseen wings, and, as insects flight on their too constant journeys, they were setting forth all ways round this starry blossom which burned so clear with the colour of its far fixity. On one side they were massed in fleecy congeries, so crowding each other that no edge or outline was preserved; on the other, higher, stronger, emergent from their fellow-clouds, they seemed leading the attack on that surviving gleam of the ineffable. Infinite was the variety of those million separate vapours, infinite the unchanging unity of that fixed blue star.

Down in the street beneath this eternal warring of the various soft-winged clouds on the unmisted ether, men, women, children, and their familiars—horses, dogs, and cats—were pursuing their occupations with the sweet zest of the Spring. They streamed along, and the noise of their frequenting rose in an unbroken roar: “I, I—I, I!”

The crowd was perhaps thickest outside the premises of Messrs. Rose and Thorn. Every kind of being,

from the highest to the lowest, passed in front of the hundred doors of this establishment; and before the costume window a rather tall, slight, graceful woman stood thinking: 'It really is gentian blue! But I don't know whether I ought to buy it, with all this distress about!'

Her eyes, which were greenish-grey, and often ironical lest they should reveal her soul, seemed probing a blue gown displayed in that window, to the very heart of its desirability.

'And suppose Stephen doesn't like me in it!' This doubt set her gloved fingers pleating the bosom of her frock. Into that little pleat she folded the essence of herself, the wish to have and the fear of having, the wish to be and the fear of being, and her veil, falling from the edge of her hat, three inches from her face, shrouded with its tissue her half-decided little features, her rather too high cheek-bones, her cheeks which were slightly hollowed, as though Time had kissed them just too much.

The old man, with a long face, eyes rimmed like a parrot's, and discoloured nose, who, so long as he did not sit down, was permitted to frequent the pavement just there and sell the *Westminster Gazette*, marked her, and took his empty pipe out of his mouth.

It was his business to know all the passers-by, and his pleasure too; his mind was thus distracted from the condition of his feet. He knew this particular lady with the delicate face, and found her puzzling; she sometimes bought the paper which Fate condemned him, against his politics, to sell. The Tory journals were undoubtedly those which her class of person ought to purchase. He knew a lady when he saw one. In fact, before Life threw him into the streets, by giving

him a disease in curing which his savings had disappeared, he had been a butler, and for the gentry had a respect as incurable as was his distrust of "all that class of people" who bought their things at "these 'er large establishments," and attended "these 'ere subscription dances at the Town 'All over there." He watched her with special interest, not, indeed, attempting to attract attention, though conscious in every fibre that he had only sold five copies of his early issues. And he was sorry and surprised when she passed from his sight through one of the hundred doors.

The thought which spurred her into Messrs. Rose and Thorn's was this: 'I am thirty-eight; I have a daughter of seventeen. I cannot afford to lose my husband's admiration. The time is on me when I really must make myself look nice!'

Before a long mirror, in whose bright pool there yearly bathed hundreds of women's bodies, divested of skirts and bodices, whose unruffled surface reflected daily a dozen women's souls divested of everything, her eyes became as bright as steel; but having ascertained the need of taking two inches off the chest of the gentian frock, one off its waist, three off its hips, and of adding one to its skirt, they clouded again with doubt as though prepared to fly from the decision she had come to.

Resuming her bodice, she asked:

"When could you let me have it?"

"At the end of the week, madam."

"Not till then?"

"We are very pressed, madam."

"Oh, but you *must* let me have it by Thursday at the latest, please."

The fitter sighed: "I will do my best."

"I shall rely on you. Mrs. Stephen Dallison, 76, The Old Square."

Going downstairs she thought: 'That poor girl looked very tired; it's a shame they give them such long hours!' and she passed into the street.

A voice said timidly behind her: "*Westminister*, marm?"

'That's the poor old creature,' thought Cecilia Dallison, 'whose nose is so unpleasant. I don't really think I——' and she felt for a penny in her little bag. Standing beside the 'poor old creature' was a woman clothed in worn but neat black clothes, and an ancient toque which had once known a better head. The wan remains of a little bit of fur lay round her throat. She had a thin face, not without refinement, mild, very clear brown eyes, and a twist of smooth black hair. Beside her was a skimpy little boy, and in her arms a baby. Mrs. Dallison held out two pence for the paper, but it was at the woman that she looked.

"Oh, Mrs. Hughs," she said, "we've been expecting you to hem the curtains!"

The woman slightly pressed the baby.

"I am very sorry, ma'am. I knew I was expected, but I've had such trouble."

Cecilia winced. "Oh, really?"

"Yes, m'm; it's my husband."

"Oh, dear!" Cecilia murmured. "But why didn't you come to us?"

"I didn't feel up to it, ma'am; I didn't really——"

A tear ran down her cheek, and was caught in a furrow near the mouth.

Mrs. Dallison said hurriedly: "Yes, yes; I'm very sorry."

"This old gentleman, Mr. Creed, lives in the same house with us, and he is going to speak to my husband."

The old man wagged his head on its lean stalk of neck.

"He ought to know better than be'ave 'imself so disrespectful," he said.

Cecilia looked at him, and murmured: "I hope he won't turn on *you*!"

The old man shuffled his feet.

"I likes to live at peace with everybody. I shall have the police to 'im if he misdemeans hisself with me! . . . *Westminister*, sir?" And, screening his mouth from Mrs. Dallison, he added in a loud whisper: "Execution of the Shoreditch murderer!"

Cecilia felt suddenly as though the world were listening to her conversation with these two rather seedy persons.

"I don't really know what I can do for you, Mrs. Hughs. I'll speak to Mr. Dallison, and to Mr. Hilary too."

"Yes, ma'am; thank you, ma'am."

With a smile which seemed to deprecate its own appearance, Cecilia grasped her skirts and crossed the road. 'I hope I wasn't unsympathetic,' she thought, looking back at the three figures on the edge of the pavement—the old man with his papers, and his discoloured nose thrust upwards under iron-rimmed spectacles; the seamstress in her black dress; the skimpy little boy. Neither speaking nor moving, they were looking out before them at the traffic; and something in Cecilia revolted at this sight. It was lifeless, hopeless, unæsthetic.

'What can one do,' she thought, 'for women like Mrs. Hughs, who always look like that? And that

poor old man ! I suppose I oughtn't to have bought that dress, but Stephen *is* tired of this.'

She turned out of the main street into a road preserved from commoner forms of traffic, and stopped at a long low house half hidden behind the trees of its front garden.

It was the residence of Hilary Dallison, her husband's brother, and himself the husband of Bianca, her own sister.

The queer conceit came to Cecilia that it resembled Hilary. Its look was kindly and uncertain ; its colour a palish tan ; the eyebrows of its windows rather straight than arched, and those deep-set eyes, the windows, twinkled hospitably ; it had, as it were, a sparse moustache and beard of creepers, and dark marks here and there, like the lines and shadows on the faces of those who think too much. Beside it, and apart, though connected by a passage, a studio stood, and about that studio—of white rough-cast, with a black oak door, and peacock-blue paint—was something a little hard and fugitive, well suited to Bianca, who used it, indeed, to paint in. It seemed to stand, with its eyes on the house, shrinking defiantly from too close company, as though it could not entirely give itself to anything. Cecilia, who often worried over the relations between her sister and her brother-in-law, suddenly felt how fitting and symbolical this was.

But, mistrusting inspirations, which, experience told her, committed one too much, she walked quickly up the stone-flagged pathway to the door. Lying in the porch was a little moonlight-coloured lady bulldog, of toy breed, who gazed up with eyes like agates, delicately waving her bell-rope tail, as it was her habit to do towards everyone, for she had been handed down

clearer and paler with each generation, till she had at last lost all the peculiar virtues of dogs that bait the bull.

Speaking the word "Miranda!" Mrs. Stephen Dallison tried to pat this daughter of the house. The little bulldog withdrew from her caress, being also unaccustomed to commit herself. . . .

Mondays were Bianca's "days," and Cecilia made her way towards the studio. It was a large high room, full of people.

Motionless, by himself, close to the door, stood an old man, very thin and rather bent, with silvery hair, and a thin silvery beard grasped in his transparent fingers. He was dressed in a suit of smoke-grey cottage tweed, which smelt of peat, and an Oxford shirt, whose collar, ceasing prematurely, exposed a lean brown neck; his trousers, too, ended very soon, and showed light socks. In his attitude there was something suggestive of the patience and determination of a mule. At Cecilia's approach he raised his eyes. It was at once apparent why, in so full a room, he was standing alone. Those blue eyes looked as if he were about to utter a prophetic statement.

"They have been speaking to me of an execution," he said.

Cecilia made a nervous movement.

"Yes, Father?"

"To take life," went on the old man in a voice which, though charged with strong emotion, seemed to be speaking to itself, "was the chief mark of the insensate barbarism still prevailing in those days. It sprang from that most irreligious fetish, the belief in the permanence of the individual ego after death. From the worship of that fetish has come all the sorrows of the human race."

Cecilia, with an involuntary quiver of her little bag, said :

“ Father, how can you ? ”

“ They did not stop to love each other in this life ; they were so sure they had all eternity to do it in. The doctrine was an invention to enable men to act like dogs with clear consciences. Love could never come to full fruition till it was destroyed.”

Cecilia looked hastily round ; no one had heard. She moved a little sideways, and became merged in another group. Her father's lips continued moving. He had resumed the patient attitude which so slightly suggested mules. A voice behind her said : “ I do think your father is such an interesting man, Mrs. Dallison.”

Cecilia turned and saw a woman of middle height, with her hair done in the early Italian fashion, and very small, dark, lively eyes, which looked as though her love of living would keep her busy each minute of her day and all the minutes that she could occupy of everybody else's days.

“ Mrs. Tallents Smallpeace ? Oh ! how do you do ? I've been meaning to come and see you for quite a long time, but I know you're always so busy.”

With doubting eyes, half friendly and half defensive, as though chaffing to prevent herself from being chaffed, Cecilia looked at Mrs. Tallents Smallpeace, whom she had met several times at Bianca's house. The widow of a somewhat famous connoisseur, she was now secretary of the League for Educating Orphans who have Lost both Parents, vice-president of the Forlorn Hope for Maids in Peril, and treasurer to Thursday Hops for Working Girls. She seemed to know every man and woman who was worth knowing,