

SIDE - EDWARD

AUDIO DRAMA - 10 PLAYS FOR RADIO AND PODCAST

EDWARD: Et... Maybe the stranger knows more than the town does.

MARY: What do you mean?

EDWARD: Listen, Mary, Nicholas Burgess isn't a bad man.

MARY: Nonsense!

EDWARD: He's not a bad man, I tell you. All the feeling that was whipped up against him - it was all on account of one thing...

MARY: ...as if that wasn't enough...

EDWARD: ...one thing, Mary, that he wasn't guilty of.

MARY: Excuse me, but everyone in this town knows that he was guilty of it.

EDWARD: Mary, I give you my word. He was innocent.

~~MARY: How do you know?~~

EDWARD: There's something I've been wanting to tell you for a long time. I was the only person in Hadleyburg who knew he was innocent. I could have saved him. But, you know how wrought up the town was. I didn't have the courage to do it. It would have turned everyone against me. I felt mean - oh, so mean - but I just didn't dare.

THE MAN THAT CORRUPTED HADLEYBURG

~~MARY:~~

~~You could have cleared his name? Poor Ed! I don't blame you not one little bit. Public opinion - one has to be so careful. It would have lost us the good will of so many people. But does he know you could have saved him all that anguish?~~

~~EDWARD:~~

~~He doesn't. I don't know anything.~~

~~MARY:~~

~~What a relief! But do you know, I should have guessed. He's always trying to be so friendly. I don't give him any encouragement, but people notice, you know. The Wilsons, the Wilcoxs, even the Harknesses - you'd be surprised how many times they say: "Your friend the Reverend Burgess in that spiteful way. I wish he wouldn't persist in liking us. I can't think why he keeps it up."~~

EDWARD:

~~I told you.~~ When the affair was hot and everyone was condemning him, a group of fellows planned to grab him and ride him out of town. But I was still feeling so guilty - my conscience hurt so much - that I went to him in secret and warned him. He packed up and left at once, and he stayed away until things had calmed down and tempers had cooled. He's protested his innocence all along, and at last some people are beginning to believe him. So I'm pleased I did it.

~~MARY:~~

~~So am I - now. But only think of what the town would have done to you if they found out at the time.~~

END

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