In this issue: “Los Angeles—the Chemically Pure”

MARCH, 1913

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The SMART SET
A Magazine of Cleverness

In THIS Issue:

“HER MONEY”
By
Juliet Wilbor Tompkins
A Complete Novel

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WILLARD HUNTINGTON WRIGHT

(See Next Page)
A NEW EDITOR COMES TO THE SMART SET

As we announced in our February number, Willard Huntington Wright has joined the SMART SET editorial staff. The infusion of new blood always produces a healthy chemical change. The sort of blood that Mr. Wright brought into THE SMART SET is of the virile and stimulating kind which is needed by a magazine which caters to healthy-minded readers.

Mr. Wright is no amateur in the literary and critical ranks of America. His experience with American literary conditions, both from the inside and from the standpoint of a practical writer, has been wide and varied. He possesses a high academic education, but is free from the pedantry which is supposed to accompany such an education. For many years he has made literary criticism his forte. He possesses a fine sense of values, and is familiar, not only with the works of American authors, but also with the Continental writers. Another thing that enables Mr. Wright to render competent service to the readers of THE SMART SET is the fact that in addition to his literary work, he has kept in close touch with the important affairs of the day, and has familiarized himself with the tastes of the better class magazine reader.

Mr. Wright is not taking the place of any of the editorial staff of this magazine, but is an addition, a fresh point of view, a new element in SMART SET affairs.

All points of view are worth having, and Mr. Wright represents a point of view a little different from any which we have heretofore had. What influence he will have on THE SMART SET will be that of broadening, rather than changing.

We have printed much regarding other members of THE SMART SET editorial staff. The work of Mr. Norman Boyer and Mr. Mark Lee Luther, both eminently capable and experienced editors, is already well known to the readers of this magazine.

This month I have surrendered my department, "Something Personal," on page 159, to Mr. Wright for a statement of his views. You will find them well worth reading.

JOHN ADAMS THAYER.
Distinction in the Dining Room

WHERE proportion, balance and architectural order are united with color harmony and convenience, the decorations and furnishings of the home evoke admiration and respect. The above illustration shows how admirably dignity may be preserved without any sacrifice of permanent comfort and charm. Assistance is offered in devising schemes for a single room or a whole residence which possess character and individuality and if blue prints are sent we shall be pleased to submit suggestions and estimates.
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them how to keep
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Art in the Dining Room

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In answering advertisements, please mention THE SMART SET
HER MONEY
By Juliet Wilbor Tompkins

CANDACE WARE stood on the veranda, enjoying the sense of finished work. It was the first morning in months that had given her leisure to stand in the sun with her arms folded, and all her square, strong figure, relaxed against a pillar, showed her satisfaction in the moment. Candace’s slow, close-lipped smile curled up at the corners, and her little brown eyes took the same curl when she was pleased, giving the hardy, boyish face an impersonal sort of charm, a promise of good fellowship and of a massive, almost an immoral, tolerance. But for this mellow quality, she showed the undated youthfulness of mind and body that the modern woman of forty has so suddenly and so remarkably acquired.

The old farmhouse stood on a great, rounded knob of land that thrust it well up into a sky of noble breadth. Clear, green meadow rolled away from the house indefinitely in front, but on the sides and back it broke against jutting capes and islands of compact woodland. Well down the slopes, four pine shacks, rough but attractive, each with a high window to the north to explain its calling, hid from one another behind shoulders and curves of hill; to the east, where the tangled sumach merged into the woods, another roof might be made out, and from the deeper growth to the west came the faint notes of a piano, implying a sixth cabin. In this hidden retreat a theme was being tried, over and over, with minute variations. Presently the experimenting fingers found what they wanted, and the strain, after many repetitions, rippled into joyous certainty and ended in a triumphant chord. A few moments later a young man came out into the open. Candace’s smile deepened as she watched his approach. Dana Malone, like his cabin, was part of her work.

There were broad streaks of gray in his heavy black hair; his eyes, deep set and darkly earnest, seemed to have looked on many things, and the irregular, cleft chin had the thrust of one who had needed all his determination; and yet he was a boy. Some magic preservative—the West in his blood, or the streak of genius—had kept his spirit at nineteen while his years were at twenty-nine. He carried an air of unsnubbed good will, suggestive of frank, new civilizations, and his speech came tumbling out on a note of excited discovery the moment it could be heard.

“You can always do it if you want to!” he declared. “It’s only a matter of wanting to enough, and sitting. I tell you, Candy, if you sit faithfully, you can do...
anything on earth.” He dropped down on the step with a slight gasp for breath.

“I’ve got a pupil who has been sitting for thirty years, and she can’t paint yet,” said Candace.

“Oh, well, if she hasn’t got it in her, that’s different. But if it’s there, I mean. This going round waiting for it to come to you is all nonsense. You must sit it out. That’s the way you train it to come, by jinks! It’s the way I do, anyway.” He looked off over the rolling land, then stretched his long arms above his head. “I’m so happy—I’m so happy,” he chanted.

“You’re a queer child, Dana.” She was looking down at him with amusement at the contrast between his simple, boyish personality and the delicate subtlety of his music. “I don’t understand your talent—I am not sure you have a right to it.”

“It’s California,” he explained gravely. “She puts a gift into your cradle just as a matter of course—lovely, big, brown thing!” His rugged face turned hungrily toward the west. “Oh, I’m homesick! I want to go back—don’t you?”

“Californians are always homesick.” Her tone was cheerfully practical. “I want to make this school a success now. The first pupil comes this afternoon.”

“Can she paint?” without much interest.

Candace considered. “If she weren’t ten generations or so of straight New England, she might; she has talent of a sort—she sees. But she can’t let go. She’s too careful, some way, ever to get very far.”

“But what will the poor girl do?” he asked worriedly.

“Lucy Cuyler won’t starve,” she said drily. “She isn’t entirely dependent on her painting.”

“That’s so; people here do have incomes,” he admitted. “I’m always forgetting it. No one at home ever seemed to have a cent—except the millionaires, of course.”

“But they all had had it twenty years before,” she reminded him. “It is our fine, free-handed, damn-the-expense attitude that has done for us, my boy. A little New England carefulness—”

“Wh!” he burst in. “Not much. Money meanness is the ugliest sin on earth.”

“Don’t you find penury rather ugly, too?”

Dana ignored that. “I’ve seen fellows who parted with a dollar as they would with a tooth,” he declaimed—“fellows who always let the other person pay, you know—and who lie awake nights when they think they have been overcharged ten cents. I am poor enough, God knows, but I would chuck fifty dollars in the gutter before I’d haggle over it!”

“You are a survival, Dana,” she derided him. “You belong to the days when they threw down a bag of gold dust to pay for a drink and no gentleman would stoop to take change.”

“Well, that is better than counting your nickels. I tell you, Candy, money meanness is a big, black sin. It can make people do more cruel, ugly things than any vice I know.”

“Oh, nonsense. I could show you delightful people who will give anything except money. It’s an idiosyncrasy, not a vice.”

His headshake was violent. “Don’t go back on your Western blood, Candy.”

“One starts out like that,” she admitted; “but—I don’t know. Money’s money.”

“Then why do you spend a large part of yours on other people?”

She laughed. “Bad habit. I can’t seem to believe my own experience.”

Dana frowned.

“What’s the sense of always talking like a pirate when you always act like a guardian angel? It doesn’t fool anyone.”

“Then where’s the harm?” she asked.

“The trouble with you, Candy—” he began, with the assurance of old acquaintance; but she cut in with a good-humored:

“The trouble with you, Dana Malone, is that you haven’t found yourself out.”

She stretched her tired arms, then let them drop and turned to the open door behind them. “Come and see how nice the house looks. Everything is ready.”
Candace had scooped out the first floor of the farmhouse like a Hallowe'en pumpkin. The old entry, parlor and sitting room were now one long, generous apartment, broadside to the south, while kitchen, buttery and best bedchamber had been turned into an equally long room to the north. The latter was bare but for easels, camp chairs and a small platform, but to the other had been added every homely charm compatible with its uses. It gave a sunny impression of buttercup yellow and clear white; there was a sober gleam of pewter, the blond shine of deep willow chairs, and rag rugs lay like blurred rainbows on the brown floor. A narrow dinner table of dark oak ran half its length, and against the west wall stood an aged sideboard laden with china, primitive but richly green; the other end was given up to fireplace and bookshelves. The rooms upstairs, including the space over the new kitchen addition, had been multiplied into many small, fresh, white bedrooms.

Dana was profoundly impressed. He was always a satisfactory audience for achievements, having an endless capacity for astonishment.

"Why, your fortune's made—you can't help it!" he exclaimed as they came downstairs again.

"Pupils will fall over each other to come. You will have to add on more—"

"But only the land is mine, you know," she interrupted. "That and the idea. My angel backer won't take interest, but I mean to pay her the principal before I do any more building, let me tell you."

"And the cabins for us poor devils—that was your idea, too, wasn't it?"

Candace smiled shrewdly. "That's the way I got her interested. That is the philanthropy part, don't you see? My summer school is just an incident—to her."

"Well, God bless the old lady and keep her prosperous!" said Dana solemnly. A laugh escaped Candace, but she did not explain.

Although the lunch gong could not be expected for half an hour yet, the "poor devils" of the cabins were already coming hopefully back from wood and field, some with canvases and camp stools under their arms. Serious but struggling talent and the ability to pay a modest sum for board were the only stated requirements for admission to Sky Farm; and admission meant three months' right to a delicious pine cabin and the freedom of a region still half wild and rich in beauty. If there were other requirements, Candace did not mention them; but a noticeable sobriety marked these first tenants, and one of them, who had brought a prim and somewhat hungry-looking wife, had been given a marked concession in his board rate. Candace realized that, with her summer school open, she was approaching fire to gunpowder, but she felt an amused adequacy to the situation—especially when she reviewed her cottagers. Dana Malone was the only one who suggested combustible properties, and she had no misgivings about her ability to deal with him. The fact that they had both been born in Oakland seemed to give her an elder sisterly authority, and his struggle, as well as his talent, was appealingly genuine.

At the first clang of the iron triangle hung on the porch, they came hurrying up the green slopes, Dabney, with his wife's hand under his arm, well in advance. The struggle was ending for these two, for the poetic quality, the elusive delicacy and mystery, of Dabney's etchings was at last being discovered; but it was ending too late for anything but relief. About their patient mouths lay ineffaceable grooves of weariness, the shadow of lost children. They walked with their heads bent toward each other, but did not talk. Behind them, streaming conversation, came Palmer Jacks, large, blooming, handsome, a big gray mustache sweeping the seasoned ruddiness of his cheeks, carrying his thin old serge suit with an easy air of having bought it in London, wearing a Panama of fifteen years back as though he had chosen it in aristocratic preference over twenty new ones. After half a lifetime of cheerful failure in business, Palmer Jacks had suddenly entered on a middle age of cheerful success as a painter. His landscapes were not of a high order, but they made a naive appeal to the roman-
tic and the young in heart. From the very first, people had stopped to look; now they were actually beginning to buy.

Ludlam was with him, a complacent young fellow with a pointed blond beard, who looked out from under his eyelids like a girl when he conversed, and who was becoming known as a painter of skies—great, bold, sweeping skies in every mood, the land beneath being little more than a purple shadow or a watery gleam. Near them, yet apart, Adamovitch, a fragile young Russian Jew, followed with bent head. Adamovitch had been forbidden his violin for the present, but the cabin in the sumach bushes occasionally found its voice and cried out its master’s secrets—the eternal secrets of youth, of the alien, of the mounting spirit held down by the lagging body—to the placid June dusk. A lame decorator named Willing came hobbling in on a crutch after the rest were seated. Willing was also forbidden to work, but his cabin, in its vocal moments, gave out only a cheerful whistle. “Just my luck!” in his vocabulary meant a special brand of good fortune. He was an ageless little man, somewhere between a withered thirty and a juvenile fifty, and Palmer Jacks cherished a theory that his brain was under some pressure and had not grown up.

“It is far too heavy,” she murmured, with a faint gasp for his effort. He smiled down paternally at the disturbed face. Its mature gravity was amusingly tempered by the curves of childhood that still lingered in the rounded cheeks, and people were apt to smile at it when it was most responsible. Very old ladies were fond of telling Lucy that she was like her Great-aunt Betty, whose spirit had left an aroma that still lingered in old corners of her native town. She had the same soft colorings—blue and brown and rose—as the portrait in the museum, but was saved from its picture book prettiness by the look of race, of inherited meaning, that the artist had thought best to soften in Great-aunt Betty’s thoughtful brow and dignified little nose.

“Ho! That’s nothing.” The man gave the trunk an extra twirl, to reassure her. “If you’re one of them art students, she told Jim Lee to have a rig here for you,” he added. “That’s him, with the white horse. I’ll bring this.”

Jim Lee, roused from contemplation of the skyline, looked the questioner well over before answering that the fare would be a dollar and a half. Jim always looked a stranger over before answering, and a dollar and a half was the regular rate; but his deliberation suggested a calculated extortion, based on appearances, and Lucy’s lips straightened, obliterating the youthful softness of the moment before and bringing out a faint suggestion of her Grandfather Cuyler.

It was evident that seeing her trunk put off and finding her vehicle would have worried her painfully if she had not had to do it so often; and, even as it was, her mouth looked a little too responsible over the business, her eyes too earnest. A trunk seemed to her a thing of fearsome weight. She had an air of strained muscles as the station master received hers into brawny arms, disdaining a truck.
had another distressed moment wondering whether she should see the paternal station master, and watched him uneasily, a furtive quarter in her hand, as he swung her trunk into Jim Lee’s languid grasp. He paused for a remark on the weather, his hand resting on the wheel in friendly equality, and, judging from his straight American glance that a tip would be offensive, she responded with the radiance of deep relief. Offering gratuities was always misery to her, a misery compounded of a subtle shame for the other person and a great dread of wounding. And then, a quarter was a quarter! She dropped it into her purse with unconscious satisfaction as they drove off.

The divided influences of Lucy Cuyler’s inheritance were quaintly reflected in her appearance. With a suit that was the perfection of tailoring, a plain serge of plutocratic distinction, she wore a pleasant, flowered hat that any modest shopgirl might have chosen. Her gloves were fresh and extravagantly delicate, her little tan shoes shabby and unpolished, with worn heels, while against her aristocratic pigskin bag leaned a not-quitesilk umbrella with a bunch of artificial cherries on the handle. But, if her belongings were indiscriminate, her love and knowledge of natural things were evidently strong and discerning. As they wound up the great, broad-backed green hills, she sat forward in her eagerness, studying every gracious curve and dip of the land with vivid satisfaction, lifting her face to the sunny odors of the fields and the cool breath of the woods. Two-thirds of the journey had been made in absorbed happiness when her glance happened to fall on the horse, and so brought her joy to an end; for she saw that he was limping. She bent forward for a better look.

“Your horse is lame,” she exclaimed, troubled and reproachful.

“Oh, he’s just kind of footsore.” Jim Lee explained, as though that made it all right. “Too much road work, that’s all.”

“Couldn’t you turn him out for a rest?”

“No, lady; not at this time of year.”

She watched the old fellow trot wincingly down the slope, then attack the next hill with a deep sigh inflating his slatted sides. “I'll walk up this,” she said suddenly, and was on the ground before the carriage could be stopped. “Couldn’t you walk, too?” she added diffidently.

“Well, you see, it’s like this, lady”—Jim Lee, sprawled in his corner, turned a languid head to explain—“you’re likely to meet an automobile any time on these roads. He don’t mind them if you’ve got him in hand; but down on the ground you couldn’t do nothing at all.”

The steep-pitched, rutted road did not suggest frequent motors, but Lucy was too polite to say so, and followed in clouded silence. The unprotesting, painful tugging of the aged beast wrung her. She would gladly have carried her trunk, to ease his load. That being impossible, she pulled off her gloves, put her two small hands on the back of the surrey and began to push.

It was so that Dana Malone, coming out on a high bank over the road, first saw them—the limping horse, the lolling man half dozing on the front seat, the girl, flushed and lovely with compassion, pushing with all her touching little might. And Dana, whose heart broke over dumb suffering and flamed up for a generous act—Dana, who could cry any day over newspaper heroics, and never heard the national anthem without a swelling desire to die for his country, and believed that man was created to serve, protect and cherish woman—Dana Malone was not one to see the absurdity of the group.

“Well, what do you think of that?” he muttered. A moment later he had scrambled down the bank to meet them.

“You mustn’t do that! Let me,” he exclaimed, so authoritatively that Lucy yielded up her place in startled docility.

“The driver couldn’t get out because we might meet a motor,” she explained, kindly anxious that not even Jim Lee should make too poor an appearance. A skeptical “Huh!” and a push that surprised the horse relieved Dana’s overcharged feelings.

“Please get in again. You won’t
make any difference,” he urged; but she would not.

“I like to walk,” she insisted, still a little short of breath. “We must be nearly there.”

Dana, pushing lustily, his face turned toward her, could have wished the distance indefinite; the weight on his arms felt chivalrously good. It did not occur to him to make conversation or to explain himself. Shyness was to him an unknown state, and, with all his generous youth still vibrating from that first glimpse of her, he could not descend to the trivialities of convention and treat her like an unacknowledged young lady. So he simply looked at her out of darkly lit eyes and rejoiced. Not having the key to his mood, Lucy grew shy, then uncomfortable. Her stolen glances could not explain this rough figure with his shabby clothes and perfect ease of bearing, his look of youth and the streaks of gray in his black hair. Her lips moved uneasily, and her face turned more and more to the sun-flecked beech trunks and the deep beds of bracken beside the road. The June green that nearly met above their heads was still frail and young in this high world; the day’s warmth had a vivid freshness, and the ardor of spring stirred in unseen wings and bubbling throats. Under premise of a second look for a hidden songster, Lucy fell a few steps behind, and so roused Dana to speech.

“When I’m rich,” he declared, looking back with his air of intent discovery, “you know what I’m going to do?”

No other beginning could have so interested and reassured her. She came closer.

“I’m going to buy up every poor old beast I come across and either kill or cure him—just to get him off my mind. Wouldn’t that be great?”

It was hard for Lucy to enter into conversation, but she was ruled by a very earnest desire to be “big,” and she had long ago decided that it was little to admit human intercourse only through the front door. So she met the advance with a conscientious effort to match his directness and simplicity.

“But won’t that be rather individual, just to help the ones you see?” she objected, out of her modern training. “Couldn’t you find a way to help them all?”

That was a new idea to Dana. “I suppose so,” he admitted reluctantly. “Well, I’d do that, too. But it’s the one I saw that I’d get my fun out of. Shouldn’t you?”

The question troubled her. “I hadn’t thought of either as fun, exactly,” she admitted. “It is all such a—such a terrible worry.”

“Oh, every good feeling is fun,” he explained largely. “Why, the best fun I ever had in my life was hauling a half-drowned pup out of the East River. I wish you could have seen the love feast! He was so grateful, and so glad to be alive, it just broke your heart. Nice pup,” he added with a reminiscent shake of his head.

Lucy was rapidly coming to a real ease before his almost primeval unconsciousness.

“Yes, that was fun,” she said with the smile that had made Great-aunt Betty famous. Dana’s stare deepened; he thought he had never in his life seen anything so lovely as that generous lighting, the shine of a pitying and loving spirit through the delicate mask of shy reserve. For a moment the traces of Jim Lee’s horse hung slack, though the hill was at its steepest. Then they paused on an artificial resting place, and Lucy saw how heavily her knight errant was breathing.

“You are doing too much,” she said distressfully. “We ought to be there by this time. Do you know Miss Ware’s farm?”

The knowledge of who she was flashed into Dana’s consciousness before his unpractical mind had reached the question, and startled him into joyous exclamation.

“Oh! Why, of course! Why, you are the first pupil—you’re Miss Cuyler! I’m staying there, in one of the cabins.”

“You are?” It was a vivid response, yet even vanity could not have taken it personally, and Dana had none. “Tell me—” She paused, hesitating over the question.

“I came yesterday,” he volunteered.
"You know, there are six cabins, put up by some old lady—a friend of Miss Ware's; and any poor artist can have one free for the summer. I'm a musician, myself, and so there's a piano in mine. Did you ever hear of anything like that?"

She was suddenly constrained. "So you like it here?" she asked, her face averted.

"Like it?" They were emerging from the woods, and he looked out over the rolling land with the deep breath of an expanding spirit. "Like it? Now look here, Miss Cuyler! Suppose you lodged in the Black Hole of Calcutta, and dined in a cellar, and took your outing in a subway; and then suppose an angel out of heaven handed you all this free and threw in a piano—do you think 'like' would be the word?" She flushed, so deeply that he thought his vehemence had been too aggressive; and hastened to soften it. "I've just come, so I'm half cracked," he apologized. "Please don't mind if I rave. See, there is the house now."

They had rounded the hilltop, and only a brief dip lay between them and the last climb up to the spreading old farmhouse set in an immensity of sky. Lucy gave it a quick look, then stopped the carriage.

"I will get in now," she said. "Thank you for helping." Her nod of dismissal was so oblivious of him that Dana turned into a side path with a surprising consciousness of hurt feelings. Lucy, meanwhile, had turned to Jim Lee and nervously opened negotiations. When they pulled up at the door, she bought the old white horse for thirty dollars.

Candace showed the house to the new pupil before she had taken off her hat, pointing out the cabins to her from the upstairs windows.

"Well, what do you think of your job?" she asked, cheerfully confident, as they came to the end in Lucy's room.

"Oh, Candy!" Lucy turned with a gasp to shut the open door. "If someone had heard you!"

"They would have heard only the pure white truth," was the serene answer. Lucy, still holding the door, faced her with a worried question growing in her eyes.

"Do you think I ought to tell?" she finally brought out.

"No, my dear, I don't."

"Still, if it involved you in any lies—"

"It won't. And I shouldn't mind if it did. But I wish you had put up one cabin less and got yourself a decent umbrella."

"I didn't care for that, myself." Lucy appeared surprised at the coincidence of tastes. "But the woman told me it was an unusual bargain; and I do lose them so often, Candy." She was begging for approval, but Candace was relentless.

"See that you lose this as soon as possible, then," she said. "How can you make people think you're an artist with such an atrocity in your possession?"

Lucy, at bay, had courage. "I don't think it is so bad as all that," she said stoutly, putting it out of sight. "It does very well for what I want." She took off her hat, brushing its undistinguished trimmings with a care that made Candace smile. "I have found such a nice little milliner," she confided. "You wouldn't dream how cheap this was."

"Oh, yes, I would," was the firm answer. Lucy looked disconcerted. "Don't you think it is pretty and becoming?"

"Yes, I do."

"Then, why isn't that enough?" She was almost offended.

"Well, if you like a Mary Ann hat with a Queen Anne suit, it is," was the drawling answer, uttered so good-humoredly that Lucy suddenly laughed and flung the hat up on a shelf.

"I am glad you approve of something," she said. "Oh, by the way, I have just bought a horse; he limped, and it worried me. You will have to do something with him."

"Upon my word!" Candace's hand fell with affectionate heaviness on the girl's shoulder. "Lucy, you are a duck!"

Lucy's advance to meet the introduc-
tions of dinner time and her brave plunge into social relations led Dana Malone to one of his inspired discoveries. He beckoned Candace aside.

"You know what she's like?" he burst out. "Queen Victoria! No—wait a moment"—his lifted hand forbade her rising laughter—"I don't mean in looks! But don't you know how, when the Queen was young and had to make a speech from the throne or something, she would be so frightened, yet so perfectly composed? She was too royal to notice her own timidity. Don't you see what I mean?"

"Is she one of the Boston Cuylers?" asked Palmer Jacks from the doorway.

"She lives in Milton," Candace answered, after an almost imperceptible hesitation. "Poor relation, maybe. I sha'n't ask her. It's the bitterness of death to be asked if you're one of the Boston So-and-so's when you aren't. I knew a woman who went there from St. Louis with the name of Adams, and the question spoiled her life. She finally married a man named Jones to end it." Palmer stepped out, and paused on the porch to light a pipe. "Well, since we're not urged to linger any more, good night," he said. "Stroll, Ludlam?"

Ludlam followed with his peculiar gracefulness of motion. He ran to long points—fingers, feet and even nose as well as blond beard, and his coats fitted at the waist, thus cutting him off instantly and forever from Dana Malone's sympathies. Jacks, however, was not troubled by prejudices, and the two wandered away together in companionable silence.

"I am wondering if I shall tell you something," began Ludlam presently, speaking through his favorite smile, a small, clever smile of a cosmopolitan significance. Palmer's love of gossip was as shameless as it was sincere. He removed his pipe and cocked his head for better attention.

"Go ahead," he commanded.

"It begins with a slight adventure of mine, three years ago, down on the North Shore." Ludlam took up the tale with a visible relish for the pleasures of conversation. "There was a most wonderful bit of coast, entirely cut off by stone walls and 'private property' signs. But the temptation was overwhelming, and there was no one in sight, so the scrupulous Ludlam dropped over the wall like any apple thief and began sketching.

"You remember my picture in the Academy two winters ago? It was catalogued as 'Earth and Sky and Sea.' It made a good deal of a sensation; there was always a crowd about it. That was its beginning, and a cross gardener came near being the end of it. He ordered me off. I was meekly going, when a delightful young woman in deep mourning came to the rescue, and I was told—very shyly, yet with an air, you understand—that I might sketch there day and night if it so pleased me."

"Well?" Palmer prompted. "I suppose in the second act you saved her life, and in the third you married her!"

Ludlam's smile became very knowing. "You might say that the second act was just beginning. I found out that she was Miss Lucy Cuyler, granddaughter of old Adrian, and sole owner of the place—her mother had recently died. After that I frankly averaged eight hours a day within sight of her verandas, until I discovered that she had gone away on a visit. I never saw her again until tonight."

Palmer replaced his pipe and smoked thoughtfully over the news. "So we have an heiress in our midst!" he mused. "That is the mystery of it. Why should she come off here for the summer? Of course it's a delightful farm, and all that; but, as a man of the world, Jacks, you know as well as I do that such a life is a pis aller, a makeshift, a tiding over till more fortunate times. And for a girl who could have anything she chose—"

"If she is old Adrian Cuyler's grandchild, she came here to save money—you can bet on that," Palmer began with emphasis, then looked apologetic. "Not but that she seems a very charming young lady," he added.

Dana Malone, meanwhile, had gone back very soberly to his cabin. He was
troubled, restless, full of sudden despair at the hopeless limitations of his chosen career. Ever since he had left Lucy that afternoon a choking sense of loneliness had dragged at his throat. And now, since dinner, seeing her so friendly and so remote, he felt like a beggar in rags outside a palace gate, gazing up at a balcony where a princess sat and did not even know he existed. The thought that perhaps he could play to her came at last like an inspiration. The thick growth about his cabin had already shut out the twilight, but he groped his way to the piano and laid unerring hands on the keys.

Yet he did not play that night. As though the first chord had been a signal, the barrier between himself and the amazing truth fell away, and his hands faltered. Understanding in words had not yet come, but his ready heart leaped to full knowledge. The cabin became a haunted place; the darkness was all a great, warm presence, and he felt the precious weight of arms on his shoulders, the moth touch of lips on his upturned face. When the vision faded, he rose, chilled and stiffened, to find the night half gone. His face, as he struck a light, was white and frightened.

"Love at first sight!" he muttered, as though the phrase had for the first time reached his understanding. "Love at first sight! It's really true!"

II

It would have been a blessing to Lucy Cuyler's girlhood if her mother had been a poor woman and had been forced to turn her great executive abilities to business purposes. Being denied this outlet, Mrs. Cuyler ran her household with a terrible efficiency. Since she could not rule the private school to which all the "nice girls" of the day went, she had Lucy taught at home; and so the shy child grew to a shy girl with almost no young companionship. Occasionally her cousins swept her off, in an indignant attempt to "rescue" her, but these escapes were not wholly successful. Lucy did her courageous best and looked her prettiest, but there was always a lack of fundamental ease, a sense that the conversation was made, not born. When some brave young man ventured to call, Mrs. Cuyler received him and gave him her vigorous, intelligent views on the topics of the day, while Lucy sat at one side, glad to be relieved of the responsibility and very little interested in the affair. Her paints and the garden, books and dreams and the hunger for beauty made up her rich, secret life, and though a vague, roseate cloud that she called love lay gloriously along the horizon, she never dreamed of connecting it with any of these calling young men, nervously correct under her mother's eye.

No one had ever come close to her until the secure bulwark of her mother's presence had been swept away, three years before, leaving her stricken and in terror at the inundation of her kindly, sorry world. She had finally run away to elderly relatives down on Long Island, and there, on the white, rolling sand dunes, with the wind sweeping in, keen and salty from the open sea, she had found Candace Ware. The very tolerance of Candace's smile had been a revelation to her. Lucy had lived with an unrebellious acceptance of shut doors on every side; Candace's tranquil "But why not?" seemed to set them trembling on their hinges, swinging magically open. What she learned about painting in those laborious weeks under Candace's guidance was as nothing beside what she learned about human companionship and individual liberty. She implored Candace to come and live with her, but could not move her.

"I've got my work to do, child," was her good-humored ultimatum. But she had promised and made a yearly visit, and their eight weeks in Europe together had been the happiest time of Lucy's life.

The cottagers were lingering about the breakfast table when Lucy came down the next morning.

"I am going to show Miss Cuyler all the cabins this morning, so you'd better have them in order," Candace warned
them, and the men, being their own
housemaids, left in some haste.

The two women went down the hill
an hour later, and Lucy yearned to live
in each of the pine cabins in turn. Real-
ization of what these aromatic little
homes must mean to cramped refugees
from the city struggle made her glow
with the joy of giving. As Dana Mal-
lone had said, a rescue was “fun.” She
was eager to put up more cabins, to
make more people utterly happy. Most
of the tenants were out, but they found
Mr. Dabney on his knees, planting ferns
against his front wall.

“My wife thinks it looks so bare and
new,” he explained. “Do you suppose
they will grow?” His tone was pa-
tiently hopeless, and Candace paused
to consider their chances, letting Lucy
go in alone to Mrs. Dabney, who always
sat indoors, no matter what lure the day
outside might offer. She was sewing,
and gathered up the white breadth of
her work with nervous apology.

“I hate to have anyone see the place
looking as it does, anyway,” she sighed.
“But there is no place to put anything.
I spend half my time picking up, but it
doesn’t do any good.”

Lucy could see no disorder, and said
so. This was the largest of the cabins,
boasting a room and a half as well as a
fireplace, and the streaming sunlight
suffused the fresh pine walls with a
golden glow.

“It could be very nice,” Mrs. Dabney
admitted. “But can you imagine build-
ing a place with no more closet room
than that?” She had lowered her voice,
with a cautious glance toward the two
outside. “A shelf with a curtain and
nine hooks—that is positively all. It is
so stupidly planned, anyway. If you
have that window open at night, there
is a gale on you; and if you close it, you
don’t get air enough. I spend half the
night opening and shutting things.”

Lucy was troubled. “Couldn’t you
arrange a screen?” she suggested.

“Oh, it’s hardly worth while to do
anything.” Mrs. Dabney pressed her
thin fingers across her big, white fore-
head. “Miss Ware wants us to stay all
summer, but I don’t believe we shall.

I hope you will come again,” she added,
as Lucy rose. “The days are so long
in a place like this.”

Lucy could scarcely contain her pro-
test until they were out of earshot.

“Candy, she does nothing but com-
plain!” She was hurt as well as indig-
ant. “It is a darling place, and she
can’t talk of anything but closets. Do
let her go, and give it to someone who
will get the good of it.”

Candace’s smile had never been more
 lazily tolerant. “She’s getting the good
of it, child. She has gained five pounds
at least since she came, and her voice
has gone down two keys.”

“But she isn’t appreciative—”

“Ho! You’re thinking of gratitude,
are you? Enjoy that when it comes,
little Lucy, but don’t concern yourself
about it when it doesn’t. You do such
tings because you think they’re needed;
thanks don’t alter the results.”

“But—but—no, I think it is a fail-
ure, Candy, when a person takes it like
that. She ought to pay rent, that
woman! I should make her.”

“Well, this tenant is appreciative,
anyway,” said Candace soothingly as
they turned into the path that led to
Dana Malone’s hidden dwelling.

Dana had swept and ordered his cabin
in a glory of zeal. The joy of the pres-
ent had suddenly submerged the cold
dismay to which he had wakened. It
was warm, bright June and she was com-
ing—that was enough for the hour. His
bed became a couch by day, and a green
burlap screen hid the washstand; the
rest was rough pine beams and casement
windows opening widely into the woods,
and a bare stick or two of furniture, too
unobtrusive to take away from the wild-
wood charm of the little place. When
all was in order, Dana brought in lavish
armfuls of ferns and pine boughs, fasten-
ing them up against the walls, and dug
a great, flat white stone to serve as a
doorstep to her feet. He would have
brought in the whole woodland for her,
had she not ended his labors by coming.

She paused on the new doorstep with
a surprised “Oh! Oh, lovely!” that
brought Candace up beside her.

“Well, Dana! You look like the ice
cream booth at the county fair!” the latter said admiringly.

“More like Peter Pan’s cottage,” said the kindly Lucy. “Aren’t we interrupting your work?”

His protest was cut short by Candace’s emphatic declaration:

“I’m glad we did interrupt it. You will find those young pine trees on your board bill next Saturday.”

“Oh, come! I took only branches that didn’t show,” he declared joyously.

“Won’t you both sit down? I never before was a real host, in a home of my own. It’s a tremendous feeling. Miss Cuyler, are you, here in the East, born just yearning to entertain, as we are in California?”

“I don’t know.” Lucy’s honesty was reluctant. “I always think of it, myself, as something rather worrying and responsible.”

“Oh, I don’t. It’s the dream of my life to come out into my own front hall in a big white waistcoat and welcome a lot of splendid people who’ve come to dinner!” He laughed, tilting back on the piano stool with a knee in his clasped hands.

“And you’d show them all over the house,” Candace derided him.

“Oh, yes—the new bathrooms and the old mahogany and the— Oh, Candy, how could you help it?” he pleaded. “Think of what it would mean!”

“Well, if you want to begin on the mahogany, there is actually some left about here,” Candace suggested. “The collectors haven’t found it all out, for some reason. I got that old sideboard—did you notice it, Lucy?—from a farm over here a little way; and they had a lovely table—possibly other things.”

“Were they expensive?” Lucy asked with interest.

“Dirt cheap, a month ago. But the people may have learned better by this time—or been cleaned out. Play something for us, Dana—something of your own.”

He turned readily about, and it was then, with his face bent over the keys, that Lucy Cuyler really saw him for the first time. Her eyes kept returning to him with a sense of startled discovery.

It was not a handsome face, yet about the idealistic brows, the irregular, jutting chin and wide, thin-lipped mouth touched with sweetness at the corners, she found a latent nobility that was very close to beauty—that really was beauty, she decided, with a consciousness of caught breath, when, at the end, he looked across to her with a smile. She had scarcely heard what he played, but the response in her face satisfied him. Dana took his music very simply. He knew, without vanity, that it was good, and loved it frankly, but exacted nothing from others.

“You’ll like this, too,” he said, and this time Lucy heard, a haunted Celtic melody full of ghosts and dreams. “I got that from something my grandfather used to play to me on his violin, when I was a kid,” he explained. “He called it ‘Mary Alone.’ He’d have been a great musician if he had ever had a chance.”

He would have risen, but Lucy begged for it again. There was an eerie call running through it that set her heart beating; she waited for its repetitions with thirsty eagerness, and heard it end each time with a sad sense that she could never have enough of it. It called and called her until the cabin was as rich in glamor as the garden of her secret girlhood. Oh, the longing of it, the weird pain of its moonlit cry!

“Dana, if you play that insane thing again, I shall howl like a lost dog,” exclaimed Candace, rising. “Thank you for your hospitality. You will make a perfectly good host when the time comes. Lucy, do you want to come back to the house? You have seen all the cabins.”

Lucy roused herself to the practical present with a faint sigh. “Can’t we go and look at that woman’s old furniture?” she asked. Candace consulted her watch.

“I don’t dare. The girls will be here in less than an hour. But I could tell you how to go.”

“Let me show her.” Dana had started up. “I know; it’s the Barrow farm, where you get your eggs. May I, Miss Cuyler—do you mind?” Lucy, with a smile, did not “mind,” and Candace went serenely back to her duties,
not dreaming that she left behind her anything more interesting or dangerous than the pursuit of old furniture.

Lucy would have turned shy without Candace's protecting presence, but Dana's absolute ease seemed to bestow on her some of his freedom of spirit. For he was never free and easy—there was nothing to repel; he was simply incapable of understanding the involuntary barriers that may hamper willing spirits. The happiness of the present was still overflowing in his voice and gait and his solicitous care for her as they followed a path through the woods.

"I'm glad you liked that Celtic thing," he began. "I have some others that I must play for you. I got them all from my grandfather—hints of them, you know, and the words—so I am going to publish them under his name, Brian Malone."

"That is very generous," said Lucy; and something in her secretly added, "And just what you would do!" with an intensity that brought a glow to her face.

"Oh, it's a better name for the songs, anyway," he demurred. "My name is a half-breed. The Malones were coming up in the world as the Danas were coming down, so they met, you see. I'd change my name to Brian, only—well, my mother did care such a lot about the Danas!" with a laugh of comprehending affection.

"Oh, and doesn't it matter what they cared about—afterward!" It was a momentous burst of confidence, from Lucy. "At the time you don't think much about it; you want to do your own way. But when they are—"

He nodded understandingly. "Yes; then you don't see how you could have gone against them so brutally, every chance you had."

"And so you try to be more what they wanted," she took it up. "My mother cared so about committees and board meetings and charities." The path had brought them up against a rail fence, and Lucy leaned on the bars, looking out across the open fields with misty eyes. "She cared so much, and I never really listened when she wanted to tell me about them. I never asked ques-
tions or went with her of my own accord. Never, once." She had told the aching secret of her life to an absolute stranger; and yet she was conscious only that the moment was, for some reason, big. Dana's arms rested beside hers on the fence rail; his eyes, touched and responsive, followed hers to the shining clouds of the far horizon.

"Don't you think they understand—fathers and mothers?" he urged. "Don't you suppose they remember how they went against their own parents—and then broke their hearts over it? Perhaps that is why they were so everlastingly patient and forgiving: they knew how it was all going to wrench us, some day, and that then we'd at least remember what they wanted. I think they knew!"

"Do you?" The tremulous hope in her voice wrung him. "If I could only be sure of that!"

"Well, just think back." He was burning to help her. "Can't you remember, when you were awfully cussed and trying, how suddenly they would stop being furious, and just give you the sorriest kind of smile, a sort of oh-you-poor-child look? That was it: they were remembering, and realizing how you'd pay in your turn. Oh, of course they knew!"

Lucy stood, leaning on the bars, transfixed before a memory, her last memory of her mother, able-bodied and active, though perhaps the softening of the end had already touched her militant spirit; for, before Lucy's open reluctance to accept a charitable secretaryship, she had laid her large, strong hand on her daughter's shoulder with a tolerant smile. "Never mind, dear; the time will come," she had said. Until this moment that memory had been a piercing pain; now she saw it lightened of its reproach, transfused with a beauty of meaning before which her hurt spirit rose up like the healed Lazarus.

"Oh, I didn't dream—" she murmured; "I didn't dream—" She forgot to go on, and Dana waited patiently beside her, motionless lest he disturb the big thoughts reflected in her rapt face. A thrush sang suddenly over their heads, clearing the air like a silver
shower. They looked up, smiling, to find him. Dana boisterously vaulted the bars before letting them down for her; he had to do something with his brimming vitality. The glistening pillars of cloud on the far horizon had begun to show black on their under sides, and a breeze of mischievous meaning came dipping over the young wheat.

"Shower," he announced joyously, and she laughed as at good news.

"We must hurry," she said.

The track along the edge of the wheat sloped temptingly before them. Neither knew which began to run first; perhaps the spirit in their feet ran away with both at once. They flew at top speed, miraculously without labor; it was like flight in dreams, when one skims the grass tops, high-breasted and arms streaming. A prosaic ending loomed ahead in a stile and a public highway, but before they had slackened, Lucy's ankle faltered, and she stumbled wildly forward.

As though his arms had been waiting for this moment, Dana caught her, caught her up, warm and panting, in a clasp that was like a shout of joy. She was instantly freed; not a finger pressure did she need for her release; there was not even time for a thought of escape. Yet she had been there, in his arms, and they both knew it in every fiber as she laughed over the accident, and assured him she was not hurt, and steadied her loosened hair. She crossed the stile with great decorum, even with formality, as though to atone for that outburst of youth. He did not offer her even the tips of his fingers.

The Barrow farm lay just across the highway, a dreary, unkempt place. The Barrows had gone down in the world. A slatternly figure of discouraged middle age opened the back door to them and heard their request with apathetic eyes.

"There's a kind of demand for them things now," she said wearily. "We had a lot once—I wisht we'd kep' 'em. I'll have to ask you nine dollars."

Dana gasped audibly, but Lucy met the price with a grave little nod.

"Will that include boxing it for shipping?" she asked.

"We couldn't box it very well; but he'll deliver it anywheres about here."

"Bring it when you like—but you give it to me," she said sternly. "Bring it when you like—but you give it to me." The closing of her lips told bitter truths. Then the spark died out and she went doggedly on stabbing the needle through the harsh leather.

They got away with a sense of escape,
breathing deep the clean June air, feeling as if their garments and hands still held the smell of stale poverty. Lucy would have been gay over her bargain, but Dana was unresponsive, and his face was so downcast that she fell silent, wondering. When he turned to help her over the stile, their eyes met.

“You think it is a good table, don’t you?” she asked, timid again before his change of mood.

“That’s just it!” He rested an elbow on the top step, facing her eagerly, yet breathing nervously with the difficulty of explaining. “You don’t know, of course; but down in New York I’m always prowling about the antique shops, and I know that a table like that, put in order, would sell for fifty or sixty dollars easily—more on Fifth Avenue.”

“Yes?” Her clear eyes showed only puzzled question, and his color rose. “Don’t you see? Any dealer would give her twenty dollars or even twenty-five like a shot if she knew enough to ask it. And she’s so horribly poor! You couldn’t be expected to know about prices”—his voice caressed her—“but I do, and I was wondering if you wouldn’t let me—oh, you know, suppose I bought half of it, and we gave her twenty dollars! I could perfectly well. And she’s so horribly poor!”

Her eyes were still lifted, but they looked strained and frightened, and the color was rushing to her very hair. He could not know that Lucy, lover of every aspect of beauty, and so open at that moment to new influence that the voices of the past in her were feeble—that Lucy, ashamed, and yet moved beyond minding her shame, was in spirit swept to her knees before him. He struck the step with a desperate fist.

“I’m a fool—I’m a fool!” he muttered. “Oh, you are right!” He saw rather than heard the choked whisper. “You are beautifully right! I’ll do it—not you—I will pay her well. Oh, I am so glad you said that!” The last words were audible, and brought her hands into his.

“You’re so lovely,” he stammered. “I hadn’t—realized—”

“No, of course not—you couldn’t! But I had to say it—”

“I am so glad you—”

A splash of water in their faces brought them back to earth with a shock that ended in startled laughter. The shower was close upon them. They hurried up the hill and dived, breathless, into the shelter of the woods just in time to escape drenching. The path was still dry, but the rush of rain over their green roof showed that it would not stay dry long. They were both thinking of the broad sweep of open meadow between Lucy and the house. Presently Dana hurried ahead, to plunge into his cabin, coming out with an old raincoat over his shoulders.

“You wait in there,” he commanded, as imperiously as he had ordered her away from the carriage, at first sight. “I’m going up to get your things.”

“But if I took the coat—” she began. The idea of that old rubber garment touching her was impossible to him.

“Oh, no,” with a quick frown. “Besides, you must have rubbers and an umbrella. I won’t be long.”

He wasted no time waiting for her consent, and Lucy, warned by a cold splash on her thin sleeve, stepped into the cabin. She was glad to be by herself for a moment, to catch her breath spiritually as well as bodily. Yet she did not succeed very well. The little green-bowered place was still echoing to her of “Mary Alone.” All the warm, stirring experiences of the morning came back to her set to that longing call. She sat with her head in her hands, her ears so filled by inner voices that she did not hear a light step running along the path, and started violently as someone came through the open door with a jump.

Ludlam also started, but quickly recovered himself.

“Ah, Miss Cuyler! So you are a refugee, too!” he exclaimed, setting a large canvas carefully against the wall. “Where is our host?”

“He has very kindly gone up to the house for my things,” Lucy spoke with a gentle formality that, for some unrecognized reason, kept Ludlam from taking a seat. He leaned gracefully against the doorpost.

“What a lot of real sacrifices the con-
ventions demand of us!” he observed through his smallest smile. “In a simpler world he could have had the great pleasure of sheltering you until the shower had passed.”

Lucy decided, quite suddenly, that she did not like this blond man, with his glances and his little pointed beard and his long, pointed elbows.

“In a simpler world one might not mind getting wet,” she said, with a quiet dignity that was wholly Victorian. Ludlam felt her unreasonable. He knew that he had charm, and was irritated when others were too perverse to recognize it. He would waste no more of what he called “Ludlam at his best” on this stiff little person from Massachusetts, but would descend at once to commonplace methods. So he told her what he had meant to reserve for a surprise, a delicate climax to a series of charming effects in conversation.

“Ever since you came, Miss Cuyler, I have been cherishing a wild hope that you might recognize me,” he began. He had at least roused her interest; her eyes questioned.

“Have we met?” she asked, as he did not explain.

“Not met, exactly. I was an unknown trespasser stealing a sketch; you were the lady of the manor, who delivered me out of the hands of an angry gardener. It was three summers ago.” He paused hopefully for her recognition, but she looked only politely regretful.

“So many artists have sketched on our point,” she apologized. That gave him pause, very much as if she had said that photographers often gathered there. A visible moment for recovery was needed before he went on.

“I simply wanted you to know that I owe to you and your point what many people have considered my best work. The picture was in the Academy two winters ago and made rather a sensation. Echoes of it may have reached you.”

Lucy’s vague murmur might have been taken for assent had it not stood so much more plainly for inattention. Ludlam’s vanity was not of the dull kind. He withdrew into a bored silence, which lasted until the touch of a fern on his ear drew his glance to the walls. Their carefully massed greenery brought a startled frown. He had tactfully absented himself when his own cabin was visited that morning, but he had first strewed it with interesting sketches, and had brought up from the bottom of his trunk various volumes of distinction—Verlaine, St. Francis, Walter Pater—which he threw on table and couch. Obviously, this wild Westerner had also been moved to decorate for his guest; and had done it with a crude openness that should have offended a girl of sensitive perceptions. Obviously, too, Lucy Cuyler’s position in the world was not the secret up here that he had imagined it. The rawness of the performance made him shiver disgustedly.

“Malone seems to have passed a busy morning,” he observed. “I feel very remiss—I should at least have put ‘Welcome’ over my door.” He could not tell whether she ignored or quite missed the covert derision of his tone.

“If you like this sort of thing.” He shrugged expressively. “The sylvan does not appeal to me. You know, I am, above all things, urban. You may think that strange, considering the character of my work; but it is true.” In the joy of self-expression he articulated more and more beautifully; his teeth were slightly bared, as though to bite the words off more neatly. “It comes from what I sometimes call my duality. As a painter, I get everything from nature; but the moment my work is done, the man Ludlam asserts himself and demands civilization. Frankly, Miss Cuyler, don’t you find this life here a hideous bore?”

“You find it so?”

“Oh, depressing beyond words! One makes use of the place. It is here; it saves money—I quite frankly find that desirable, just at this moment. It does well enough. But the people aren’t exactly our sort—you must admit that. One feels kindly, of course—but a girl like you can’t find it satisfying.”

“I should scarcely stay if I did not.” Lucy spoke indifferently, but, for a sec-
ond time that morning, she was hot with protest. Her gift was being exploited, used with contempt; for a second time, she saw it as a failure.

Through the open window she saw Dana coming, and started up with a relief that was unconsciously frank.

"Here are my things," she exclaimed. "Oh, Mr. Malone, you are drenched! I am so sorry."

Dana shook the water from his hair with a laugh. "It doesn't matter. Oh, hello, Ludlam!" His voice changed as he saw the other man, but he was too innately hospitable to remember prejudices under his own rooftree. "Make yourself comfortable. Now, Miss Cuyler!" He knelt and put on her overshoes, then, after holding her raincoat for her, opened the near-silk umbrella with the cherries on the handle. Lucy sensitively glanced up to see if he were scorning it; then dropped her eyes with a quickened color—the look she met was so little akin to scorn. He kept the umbrella in his own hand. "I'll take you home," he said.

She protested, would not hear of it, but Dana simply waited for her to come, smiling instead of arguing, and she went off outwardly annoyed at his obstinacy, inwardly rejoicing in his strength. They had both forgotten Ludlam, who looked after them from the window with a smile that was very small indeed.

Dinner had been a pleasant occasion to Lucy the night before, but tonight she felt herself swamped in numbers, and ate in shy silence. At her first glance toward the other end of the table, she met Dana Malone's dark gaze, and did not dare look that way again. As soon as the meal was done, she escaped to her room; yet some veiled instinct told her that the day was not over for her.

She had come upstairs trembling before a dim consciousness that something was happening. She tried to explain the sudden rush of happiness by its obvious causes: it was blessed to be with Candace and to catch a little of her amazing ease in human relations by sheer wonder at it; it was interesting to meet a new world and make new friends; it was beyond everything good to be free of ordeals, with beauty for her daily companion and the effort to reproduce it her only task. Yet there was more. Some new wine was distilled in this high air, some stirring, opening quality that lay like a glint of gold dust over all her surroundings and gave her a magic sense of impending joy.

A sound brought her back to earth, but so gently, so graciously, she was scarcely conscious of the return. The woodland below took on a voice, and a faint echo of "Mary Alone" rose from its shadow. No building was to be seen from Lucy's window, but the mouth of the path leading to Dana's cabin could be made out at the wood's edge. It was a composer's touch on the piano, not technically masterful, but warm, intimate, creative. Again and again the longing strain drew itself out just beyond reach; soft pedal or distance kept it tantalizingly blurred. The need to hear it wholly and satisfactorily drew Lucy like thirst, first down to the deserted side porch, then down the hill to the edge of the woodland, then, a step at a time, along the dark tunnel of the path that led to the cabin. She did not smile over the adventure; there was no mischief in her silent approach. Something stronger than music was drawing her. In all her cool, quiet girlhood she had never before heard that summons, and now, hearing it suddenly at full strength, though without a glimmer of understanding, she obeyed it as simply as wise men follow a star.

Dana, in his unlighted cabin, was playing to her, consciously calling and calling her through the recurring strain, letting its lonely plaint grow to hunger and appeal, and finally rise to a bolder cry, before which Lucy woke with a frightened start and fled noiselessly away. After that Dana sat for a long time with his arms crossed on the music rest and his forehead pressed against them. For, through the open window, he had seen the gleam of her white gown.

III

No earthly power could stop it. Lucy might withdraw behind her shyness, spend her days working with the busy
class, keep her eyes on her plate at dinner; Dana might prostrate himself nightly before the grim facts of his hopeless poverty and his general unworthiness; yet the stolen tide swept steadily on until "all the world was in the sea," and not fright nor honor nor any mortal barrier could keep their eyes from leaping together when they met. After that, Lucy took to wandering away from the class; and, as she was a privileged pupil, the absorbed Candace never thought of questioning her. There was no understanding, spoken or tacit, with Dana Malone, and yet, the first time she deserted the earnest colony of campstools, within five minutes she had come upon him, leaning over the rail of a little bridge. The radiance of his unspoken welcome drove her to a hasty refuge in words.

"I ran away from work," she explained.

"So did I. How can one work?"
The exclamation acknowledged so much that again Lucy scrambled to shelter.

"What are you working at?" she asked, dropping pebbles upon her reflection in the pool below.

"I'll tell you some time. Please don't—you make me feel as if someone were hitting you in the face."

She laughed, and tossed a pebble that shattered his image.

"Now someone is hitting you in the face," she said. "How does an Irishman take that?"

"Ah, if it's a lady, he begs her to keep right on!"

Lucy, of course, desisted. Presently the two images were looking gravely up at them again from the stilled pool.

"I think we ought to introduce them," she observed. "To be in such a little pool together and not know each other must be awkward, don't you think?"

"But we weren't introduced until hours after we met. Suppose someone had dropped into that road and said, 'Mr. Malone, Miss Cuyler'—oh, it wouldn't have been half so wonderful. Let them find each other out." Their eyes met, laughing acknowledgment of the deliciousness of "fooling."

"We will come here tomorrow and see how they are getting on," she said. "Then, if they seem stiff or embarrassed, we can help them out."

"They won't be stiff after twenty-four hours of June," he assured her, stretching out his arms as though to take in all the day's loveliness. "I think, if you don't mind, Miss Cuyler—we'd better knock on the bridge tomorrow before we look over."

It was hard to keep a straight face, but Lucy achieved it. "I don't see why," she said.

"No, I don't, either," he amended, so hastily that the lady in the pool would have shown a tiny crescent moon risen in either cheek, had the light been strong enough. "Did you hear about our young Russian friend?" he added, penitently eager for a safe topic.

"No—what?"

"He lit out this morning without a word to anyone—packed his dishes and went home. Miss Ware has found out that he took the early train for town, so she isn't worried about him. But it was a cool performance, wasn't it?"

He was surprised at the feeling Lucy showed. Her eyes quite flashed.

"I think it was abominable!" she exclaimed. "How can people be so—so unappreciative? He might at least have said good-bye." She turned away from the pool as though its charm were broken for her. "I wonder if you really can help people?"

"I tried to make friends with him," Dana explained as they left the road, taking a path that wound steeply up through the woods. "But he was a queer, dismal chap, and he knew so little English. I couldn't get anywhere."

"No; but I am thinking of these cabins." Lucy was mounting with an energy that was still indignant. "They were meant—evidently—to make people so very happy; and they seem such a failure. No one really—"

"They have made one man very happy," Dana interrupted, holding out his hand to help her up a steep pitch. Lucy caught the stem of a sapling and drew herself up unaided.

"Yes—Mr. Willing," she admitted.
Her grievance had suddenly evaporated, and her eyes were full of laughter. 

"Oh, Willing would be happy anyway." 

"You would, too, wouldn't you? Aren't you a happy person?"

"At this minute, yes."

"No, but usually?"

"I have been—or thought I was. I didn't know what they really were—happiness and unhappiness—till I came here.

His hand went out again, and though the path was easy enough at the moment, hers sprang to meet it. With that soft treasure in his possession, Dana forgot everything; he stood holding it in both hands against his coat as he might have held a frightened, throbbing bird. The instant it struggled, he opened his hands and let it dart away. They went on in silence, Lucy springing ahead. Presently the woods ended, bringing them out on a stony hilltop, crowned with an aged, weatherbeaten oak. They sat down in its shade, their eyes, grave enough now, following the contours of the big, rolling land before them.

"I'll tell you now what I am doing," Dana began, leaning back on one elbow. "I can write music, you know. I mean, I'm trained; I'm not an amateur. There was a mislaid genius who lived next to us at home when I was little—heavens, but that man had gift! His music was light, too, and popular; his waltzes waltzed and his polkas polked and his songs sang—warm, good melody, easily understood, but never cheap or thin. Poor old Sam Byner! He ought to be a millionaire with three shows going on Broadway, and instead he's an obscure music teacher with a sick wife and no money and no chance. He took me in hand when I was a small boy and taught me for love; I worked with him, off and on, for over seventeen years. He taught me things that I should have been half my life fumbling out without him. And he knew. I am telling you this so that you will know I'm well grounded—that it isn't presumptuous of me to try a big thing."

"Yes," said Lucy. "Go on."

"Well, do you remember the Children's Crusade, back in the early part of the thirteenth century? That is my theme. "A boy had a vision: Christ appeared to him and told him to gather all the children and make a crusade to the Holy Land. The boy obeyed, and thirty thousand children set out—and there, with all their joy and marching courage, you hear the motive of the mothers who let them go." He hummed a strain. "I can't give you any idea of it, of course. It's a wail, but submissive. Can't you see them streaming over a hilltop, the thirty thousand, with banners?"

"I have kept the child quality in it all through, a note of bright innocence—though I suppose they were little devils, all right, those thirteenth century boys! Well, you remember what happened. The vision had said that the sea would dry and let them cross, but when they came to the Mediterranean, naturally, it didn't. They were footsore and worn out and broken by this time—you get a frightened-children quality, and the mother theme comes in. Then the treacherous merchants offer to take them over free, for the sake of the cause, and they embark; and then all who aren't lost in the storm are sold into slavery. But the boy who had the vision—this isn't quite history, but never mind—he escapes from slavery, and at last gets to the Holy Sepulcher, all alone—crawls there, dying. You hear the mother theme again, horribly sad, this time. Then the vision music comes in against it, overcomes it; Christ appears in glory and accepts the crusade from this one boy as from them all, and the children's voices are heard, ghostly at first, but presently in streaming triumph—ah, I wish you could hear the violins on that as I hear them! Telling it makes it sound like an imitation of 'Tannhäuser,' but it is so totally different, musically—the whole conception and treatment is of another era. And the spring youngness of it—oh, I wish I could play it to you! Only it needs a whole orchestra, of course. Do you like it?"

He scarcely needed her answer, her face was so lighted.

"Oh, I love it!"

"I am so glad! It isn't literal, of course. I hate these tone poems that make the waves dash and the horses gal-
lop; you won’t have to follow any fine print on the program. It will simply appear as ‘The Children’s Crusade Suite.’ Those two words, ‘children’ and ‘crusade,’ give you the whole thing.”

“And when will it be played?” she asked eagerly.

“Who knows? After I’m dead, probably. You usually have to die to get recognized in my profession.”

“But Miss Ware says—”

“Oh, yes, I have been unusually fortunate. I have had songs published, and even sung in concerts. I’ve been patted on the head—noticed and encouraged.” A bitter note sounded in his voice, and it was that she answered.

“Well, then—”

He sat up to face her. “Miss Cuyler! Publishing a song means laying it on a counter; if anyone wants to go and buy it, he can. If anyone does buy it, my royalty is six cents. Do you realize what that means, to a man without a penny—how many copies he must sell to pay even his carfares? I have been working over this suite for two years, on and off. The mere printing of it will cost hundreds of dollars—what publisher is going to take that risk? But suppose some firm does, and suppose I get it played by good orchestras—what then? If it earns for me eighteen dollars a year it will be doing exceedingly well. I can’t write ragtime or comic opera, and there is absolutely nothing else that pays, for an American. I shall do a lyric opera some day, but nobody will produce it—there is no room, no desire for it. A musician of my class is a beggar for life.” He thrust that at her, with all it meant; and his heart nearly broke at seeing her so undisturbed.

“But how do you live now?” she asked.

“I do musical reporting for a daily and a weekly, and I have some pupils—as few as possible. I earn about twenty-seven dollars a week. And I am one of the fortunate ones!” He dropped his head on his arms with a despairing sigh. “I never cared before. The joy of the work was reward enough—I thought I was willing to pay the price. But now—”

—his voice became almost inaudible—“I think perhaps it’s too horrible.”

Lucy’s eyes were on his rough head, smiling wonderfully; but she said nothing. Her serene cheerfulness on the way home left Dana in utter desolation. She did not care whether he could marry a wife or not. He was a fool—a fool—a fool. He shut himself into his cabin all the afternoon, and worked as though that were the one thing on earth left to him.

They always met at the bridge and went up the same steep path through the woods, and that was why, for so long, no one saw them; the stony hilltop offered nothing to painters. Candace made fun of Lucy’s laziness, but on the whole approved of it. She was always pleased when Lucy showed signs of not living entirely according to the dictates of conscience. Idleness was agreeing with the girl. She blossomed visibly before them, showing them a daily loveliness of color and spirit that made them all turn to her.

It was inevitable that the morning meetings at the bridge should be discovered, and the discoverer, unfortunately, was Ludlam. For several days he watched; then, one shining morning, when Lucy came running out, half an hour after the class had gone forth, she found him sketching on the broad slope just below the veranda.

“Will you see if you like this, Miss Cuyler?” he asked with his flattering deference.

The sketch, rough though it was, had wonderfully caught the relation here between the mighty arch of the sky and the land it encompassed; heaven was truly the throne and the earth its footstool. Lucy’s thrilled enthusiasm might have softened him if he had had any doubts about the value of his work.

“So good of you,” he said, touching the canvas with swift, sure strokes. “I think I shall make something out of it. This is only a preliminary study, of course. Would you mind sitting down for a moment? I want you to look at it when it is further along.”

Lucy, already late, was in a fever to be off. But there was no ostensible
errand to call her; she had come out without even a paint brush that might serve as an excuse. So she reluctantly sat down, and called silent messages of reassurance to Dana, waiting far below at the bridge.

"I should think it would try you to have people about when you are working," her impatience goaded her into saying. "I can't bear it when I am trying to sketch."

"We have to get used to that," he assured her. "We painters have to get used to a great many difficult things, Miss Cuyler. But we at least can hope for fortune as well as fame. As Malone says, a serious musician in this country can scarcely support himself unless he gives the best part of his day to teaching, or has the technique for public performance. And your born composer very seldom has this technique."

"It is very hard," said Lucy vaguely, wondering if a moving figure, far below, could be Dana.

"Now, in a few years, I shall be a fairly rich man—for an artist," Ludlam went on; "while Malone is a beggar for life unless he marries for money. As he himself says, that is the only future open to him." He paused, bending close to the canvas for a fine touch, then leaning far back on his stool to judge the effect. "We were discussing this the night before you came," he added.

It was not literally a lie. Candace, listening to their discussion, had humorously offered a rich wife as a solution, and Dana had laughed a careless assent. Lucy, seated in the grass with her arms about her knees, made no answer at all. Whether she were struck or merely bored, he had no means of knowing. The one sign vouchsafed was that, when he presently let her go, she did not take the direction of the bridge; and this might be merely caution. Yet he knew, instinctively, without signs, that his blow had not wholly missed. He watched her go with a small, vindictive smile behind his eyelids; then, as the morning light was flattening out the landscape, he gathered up his belongings and went down the hill with the stroll of one well satisfied with the work he had done. Across the back of the sketch he wrote: "The Heavens Declare the Glory of God."

Lucy was first merely repelled, then frightened, then sorely hurt. That she might be "married for her money" was the bugbear that a well-meaning aunt had conscientiously held up to her for the past three years. It always followed a gentle preliminary to the effect that she could not be expected to understand men. The fine gradations of such marriages, the possible mixture of motives and inducements, were all unknown to her; either a man loved, or he coldly, basely, married for money. Against her passionate faith in Dana rose the chilling facts that she had known him only a few weeks, and that she could not be expected to understand men. That Ludlam might have spoken with a motive did not occur to her, and, coming on top of Dana's recognized speeches, the quoted words carried truth. She forgot all about Ludlam before the leaden knowledge of what Dana had publicly admitted, the night before she came. She had innocently supposed that he did not know about her money; but she was only an ignorant girl, with no one to warn or guide her. Perhaps she had been a fool.

She did not go near the bridge, and Dana, whose impatience had taken him to the foot of the hill, had seen her up there, a blue dot, in the grass beside Ludlam, and so he would make no advances when the miserable day ended and the dinner hour brought them together. He was at the bridge again the next morning, and the next, but only one forlorn image stared up at him from the pool. Lucy had returned to the class, and was working all day long. For three days they did not exchange one word.

On the fourth day, late in the afternoon, Candace firmly took Lucy's brushes away from her. "Go for a walk," she commanded. "You are working yourself to death."

Lucy slipped away alone. A brook on the edge of the woodland ran and tumbled before her like some little shin-
ing creature trying to win a smile; but she saw only her misery. If Dana had really loved her, he would not have let her go like this; he would have insisted on seeing her, gloriously righted himself. Lucy believed that only a fundamental indifference could explain his passivity, and with all her crushed heart she wished herself lying face down in the careless water.

The brook frolicked as though it were leading her on to some good fortune, but, turning a sharp corner, it brought her upon a huddled image of dejection that startled her own trouble out of sight. Willing sat at the foot of a bank, down which he obviously had tumbled, studying the two pieces of his broken crutch. His happy relief at sight of her nearly made her cry.

"Oh, Miss Cuyler! Now isn't this too wonderful?" he burst out. "No, I'm not hurt in the least, but just look at my crutch! And there isn't a good stick in sight. I was going to set out on my hands and knees that very moment, and then you came! Isn't that just my luck? Do you think you could find me a stick?"

She was already looking. "But will a stick be enough?" she asked.

"Oh, I can manage," he assured her cheerily. "Perhaps two sticks would be better, though. I can mend this crutch all right, once I get back to my house. I declare, I never was so glad to see anyone in my life. It was just like a miracle to look up and find you there."

"Oh, I know!" Lucy had caught his animation. "I will bring you the horse, and you can ride home. Would you mind?"

"I think that would be fine! Of course I didn't mind hobbling if I had to—but that would be perfect. Can't you tell someone else to bring him? Malone is awfully obliging—he'd do it."

"But the horse is right up here a little way," said Lucy quickly. "I should love to do it." And she hurried off. The errand had brought a momentary respite from pain.

A rope hung about the old beast's neck, left there by the girls, who indiscriminately rode and sketched him, and he followed his guide willingly. Lucy brought him up to a stone and made Willing use her shoulder until he was safely mounted. Then she took the rope and they went slowly up by way of the open meadow. Willing's relief bubbled over in conversation, as cheerfully unmodulated as a child's.

"I feel just like Joan of Arc," he declared. "I suppose it's the white horse. Or like—who was it that had an angel in front of him to show the way? Oh, I guess I'm thinking of the Sherman monument—you know, at the entrance to Central Park. Oh, you don't live in New York, do you? But you must come there sometimes—everyone does. I wish you'd visit my studio next time you're there. You know I'm a decorator, but I do pottery on the side. I'd love to know what you thought of my pottery. Miss Ware has been perfectly lovely about it; she has got me no end of orders. People do seem to like it. Dear me, this is comfortable. I hope you aren't getting tired? This is another lesson for me against worrying. I used to worry about my old age; but I never shall any more. Someone will give me a cottage and bring me a horse."

Palmer Jacks stared from his window, then came to his door for a better look. "I suppose he thinks you're just giving me a ride for fun," Willing laughed. "I hope I'll have a chance to do you a good turn some day, Miss Cuyler. I'd do anything for you. I guess most of us would. Hasn't it been a happy time up here? We'll miss Malone, won't we?"

The horse stopped, surprised at the jerk on his rope halter.

"Miss him!" Lucy stammered. "Is he—going?"

"Why, didn't you know? Oh, dear, maybe it's a secret. I heard him talking to Miss Ware about it after lunch. They must have seen I was right there. I'm sorry if I oughtn't to have told, but—"

"When is he going?" Lucy's voice was hoarse and tremulous, but Willing noticed nothing.

"On the early train in the morning.
He said something about work—a newspaper wanting him, or something. I suppose he'll say good-bye at dinner. Maybe he hates saying good-bye, though. Malone is a nice fellow, isn't he—he's so kind.

"Well, here we are. I just don't know how to thank you. There's a long stick behind the door; if you'll get me that, I shall be all right. That's it. I declare, I wish I could do something for you."

She gave him a wan little smile. "You have," was her puzzling answer as she turned away.

Lucy went slowly along the edge of the woodland, still leading the old horse. She wanted to think it all out, very clearly and reasonably, but the confusion of great disaster seemed to be deafening her ears and blinding her eyes. It was like trying to sit still and think in the panic of shipwreck. She could only act, blindly, instinctively, as men clutch at spars before the engulfing sea.

The placid summer afternoon was fading, and, though the fields were still golden, the woods looked dusky. A second time Lucy stole noiselessly along the path that led to Dana's cabin. Through the window she saw him sitting idly before the piano, but she came to the very door without his hearing her. He had been studying a sheet of manuscript music, set up before him, but evidently his somber thoughts had wandered far from work. The droop of his head and shoulders made her gasp with love and pity.

Perhaps he heard. He turned a startled face, and stared as though he could not believe.

"Lucy!" he stammered. "Lucy!"

She did not know what to say or do under his staring, so she smiled, a frightened, pleading, breathless smile that struck away the wilderness that held him and brought him across to her in two strides. He caught her up bodily into his arms, pressing her to him again and again, kissing the curve of her cheek, her forehead, her closed eyes and passive lips. Then he dropped down on his knees before her, burying his face in her hands.

"Oh, forgive me!" he muttered. "My dear, dear love, forgive me!"

She crouched down on the floor beside him, pressing her face into his coat, twining her arms tightly about his neck.

"You do love me?" she sobbed gladly.

"Oh, you do love me, Dana?"

"Love you, Lucy? I'm half dead with loving you! But what right has a beggar like me—I thought you saw it, too, and I tried to be glad that you threw me over. Oh, Lucy, it has been so horrible!" The catch in his voice echoed her sob. They clung to each other as though disaster were again upon them.

"But you do love me!" she repeated, as though to reassure him.

"Love you, my sweetheart! If that were all! How can I make you understand how poor I am, how hopelessly poor? Lucy, I couldn't hire the cheapest kind of a flat for you; I couldn't pay one rough servant to wait on you; and it's going to be so for years to come. Even if I gave up all idea of writing music, I couldn't earn these for you within—Oh, it's too humiliating!" "But I have some money," she whispered.

He laughed a little.

"I couldn't come and live on your poor little money, dear girl! And, even if I were willing to—marriage takes so much. You have been living with other people, you see. Suppose you had to pay rent for a flat—"

"But I have a house," the smothered voice persisted. "I have two houses, Dana. And the one in town has a music room looking over the Back Bay—such a lovely big room! And the other house has a great, wonderful sea coast, all its own, and a garden—oh, Dana, you would love my garden! The little house in Milton is mine, too—Cousin Susie was living with me. So, you see, we needn't worry about flats, need we?"

He had drawn away from her, risen slowly to his feet. The gravity of his face frightened her.

"You mean that you are rich?"

"Not dreadfully rich," she pleaded. "Not—millions and millions. But we
needn't think about money, that's all, Dana. And even if I am rich—" Her voice failed her for sheer terror of the barrier that every word might be raising between them.

But the soul of Dana Malone knew neither conventionality nor pretense. He threw up his arms with a shout of joy. "To think of that!" he cried. Then his arms dropped, and he stared down at her with awe-d intensity.

"What wonderful luck!" he uttered solemnly. "What astounding, wonderful luck!"

After dinner that night—a strange, oblivious pretense of dinner—they drew Candace into the empty workroom. The world’s attitude had by this time thrust itself upon Dana's recognition, and he told the news gravely, braced for her dismay. She sank down on the platform, facing them in bewildered reproach.

"Oh, my children," she exclaimed, "how did this happen?"

"How could it help happening?" Dana returned. Lucy curled down against her friend, a hand on her knee.

"It had to be," she whispered.

"But your people!" Candace exploded. "Dana, a girl in Lucy's position can't be just married offhand like some little art student. It is an alliance you're proposing to make, you—"

"Wild Westerner without a cent to his name," he finished for her. "Candy, if I hadn't something I considered real to offer Lucy—besides what I feel—I should consider myself a hound if I looked at her. But don't you think that in the long run, after years of work, my music will balance her money and—position, or whatever you call it?"

"So much more than balance it?" Lucy breathed at her shoulder.

"And they haven’t learned to laugh yet!" she murmured. "Oh, poor little children, they can’t even laugh!"

"Lucy, Lucy! I can’t wait!" Dana spoke with a laugh and a tightening of the arm that held his wife. "At first you will see a big brown land, very dusty and withery if the fall rains haven’t begun, and you’ll think it hasn’t trees enough, and you’ll miss the natural grass, and you’ll want more rivers, and more finish to things—it’s rough on the edges. And then presently you will begin to get it, the charm, the feeling, the smell of it—the great, brown backs of the foothills, old Tamalpais cutting into blue, blue sky—the bay, and the gardens all heaped up and running over—oh, my dear!"
Their train lay like a tiny dark snake in a vast waste of mottled desert, gray-green and tawny. Sage, sand and alkali spread unbroken to the far horizon, drenched with gold and glow in the transforming light of late afternoon. The strange land, forbidding and desolate under the glaring noon, had come into its daily hour of magic loveliness. Other passengers had gone forward to inspect the burned culvert that held them, so for the moment they had the observation vestibule—back platform of less luxurious days—to themselves. The great stillness, the quivering tide of light, set Dana’s Western blood racing.

“I’ve got to do something about it,” he exclaimed from his full heart. Lucy, beauty-drugged and drifting, curled closer against him.

“Write lovely music,” she said.

“That isn’t half enough. I want to go about the earth helping other people to marry—people who love each other like this.”

“Oh, Dana, do you suppose they really do?”

“Yes, little Lucy, I think it is very likely. And sometimes they can’t have it. Some people can’t have much of anything—and I get all this! Doesn’t that make you sit up and wonder?”

Nothing, at that moment, could make Lucy sit up or wonder, or draw from her anything but a caressing murmur, and Dana fell silent, staring with astonished intentness at his lot.

“If I were rich, you know what?” he began suddenly, in the familiar phrase of years.

“You are rich.”

The calm statement drew from him a startled laugh. “I?” It proved overwhelming; he could not go on. All that chaotic summer he had rejoiced in Lucy’s money as the amazing piece of good luck that would allow him to marry her and to make lovely music; and during the five days since he had carried her off, the abundant money in his pockets had been a pleasant, though somewhat remote, consciousness. He enjoyed it as he enjoyed his excellent clothes, with little direct attention to spare for it. That Lucy’s husband might be considered a rich man, with a rich man’s powers and responsibilities, was a suggestion almost terrifying.

Fellow passengers were heard returning. Dana rose and leaned casually against the rail. “Suppose we go forward and see what the prospects are.”

“They say we’re going to stay here all night,” a passenger volunteered as they moved away. Dana swung his wife down to the ground, then struck his chest a resounding blow.

“I want to strut,” he confided.

“You do, dear,” said Lucy, and they laughed until it was necessary to sit down on the sandy bank for breath. The gaiety of love, the godlike merriment of its lighter moments, was still threatening their decorum as they passed the group gathered about the engine. They paid scant attention to the burned culvert, except to wonder that a little dry gulley, so easily crossed by them, should be impassable to a great, clever train.

“You know, Lucy, there is something in that fellowships idea we once spoke of,” Dana presently began, as they strolled on toward the flaming west.

“Music fellowships?”

“Yes; for men of genuine talent—to give them a decent chance to do original work. And fine public hearings arranged for them. We really could do that, you and I together. It would mean loads of work and money, but we could get big people interested, or work through one of the composers’ associations. It would be rather fine. Do you know that the man who wrote ‘Carmen’ committed suicide through discouragement and hunger? Why, Schubert never had a chance to hear some of his own greatest orchestral pieces; and it was over forty years before the ‘Unfinished’ symphony was even printed. It is so brutal, the way the world leaves them to starve to death, and then goes mad over their works. Or else it never discovers them at all—like poor old Sam Bynner out in California. I’ve told you about him—how he taught me for love all those years. He had born gift, in his line; but he couldn’t get heard. Lucy, there is a bully chance for us—to
stand by and help genius, to make people listen!"

"Dana! What a wonderful idea!"

To their excited spirits the plan seemed as simple as it was great. They fell upon it with pencil and paper, developing its possibilities, noting down the men whose judgment and influence must help, the societies that might cooperate, and handing over to it their thousands with a lavishness that should have brought Grandfather Cuyler scurrying back to earth. But only the loving and giving spirit of Great-aunt Betty manifested itself. Lucy's face was aglow. They felt as though they had unlocked the grim gate between genius and the blundering world, when at last they came back to the land about them.

In their absorption they had not observed that the ground under their feet rose and then gradually fell again, putting a scarcely noticeable mound between them and the helpless train; and so a big moment was prepared for them. For suddenly they found themselves standing alone in the desert. North, south, east and west it rolled up to the horizon rim, apparently unbroken, rigidly still and silent. Not a sage leaf fluttered nor an insect called; there was not even the shadow of a bird to move over the waste. The last sunbeams, streaming level from the west, spread gold and amethyst enchantment; the earth was turned to a great jewel dipped in yellow wine, and the breath of the desert, dry, sunned and aromatic, was the wine's heady fragrance. They stood with clinging hands and lifted faces, like Adam and Eve newly created, wondering and exultant.

The sun vanished and the colors began to fade. Dana turned solemn eyes on his wife.

"We ought to have died, right then," he said.

"Yes," she assented; but her hand in his confided that she was glad they had not.

They turned back faintly saddened at the change. The glamor had died with the sunlight, and already the blank face of the desert showed harsh and repellent. A sudden desire for the train and their own safe little shut-in drawing room, for lights and books and the sound of human voices, made them hasten up the slope that hid the scene of their delay. Perhaps a subconscious memory of the whistles which their outer ears had ignored was coming to them, for presently they ran, smiling at themselves, but with worried eyes.

"There is really—nothing—to hurry about," Lucy panted.

"Of course not," said Dana, quickening his pace.

Their pause at the top had the shocked suddenness of a cry or a fall. For a dreadful moment they stood blankly still, trying not to believe their eyes. Below them they saw the burned culvert, the trodden sand where the passengers had gathered, but, far away to the east, a receding line of black stood for their train. This time they were truly alone in the desert; and the discovery was not exalting.

Dana instinctively flung out a shout and waved his hat. Then they sat down on the railway ties, conscious of weak knees.

"Well, what do you think of that?" he muttered.

"And they said they would stay here all night!" Lucy protested, with rising indignation.

"Perhaps they've gone to send for the wrecking crew, and are coming back," Dana suggested, but his tone was not hopeful. The desert looked very big and grim, and they drew close together, like lost children.

"Isn't it more likely that they are going round another way?" Lucy asked, quietly putting herself out of the category of those who must be cheered at any cost.

"I—don't know, dear. Oh, I ought to be killed!" He was tragic with remorse. "Why don't you jump all over me for not taking better care of you?"

"It was as much my fault as yours, Dana, how far is it to—place?"

"That is what I am wondering. Wasn't there a station—let me see—since lunch, certainly!"

"But if we were going thirty or forty miles an hour—"
"Lucy, stop it!" Dana had lost color. "Arithmetic is bad for the soul—don't do any more of it. They'll send back when they find us missing, and a few hours in the desert won't hurt us. It's an adventure, my dear girl. People enjoy adventures."

"Yes, so they do." Lucy valiantly straightened up. "Well, then, we will enjoy it."

"You little brick!" he exclaimed, his hand falling on her shoulder. "Well, shall we walk to—meet it?"

Walking to meet a train that was going rapidly in the other direction was not a hopeful prospect, but there was nothing else to do. They felt curiously tall and exposed as they set out across this flat land, where nothing else stood up except the telegraph poles, stalking in solemn file beside the track. Thoughts of crawling dangers kept Dana's eyes alert, but Lucy mused in trustful security.

"You know, Dana," she said finally, "if we had died then, when you said, it would have been the perfect moment—in one sense; because our life together was absolutely unmarred, and because—oh, everything that you meant! It was the climax of perfect things. But it takes imperfect things, too—struggles and hard things overcome, to—to—"

"Make a salad?"

"Exactly. We want seasoned happiness, tested love, for our real climax. I can't actually believe that we shall ever hurt each other, but we shall, you know. Everyone knows that." She looked as grieved as though it had already happened. "Then we shall learn better, and after that will come the time to die—if we must."

"There is only one way on earth that you can hurt me, little Lucy." The superb confidence of youth in love straightened his shoulders and lifted his head. "So long as you care for me—"

"That will be always and forever, Dana."

"Then there is nothing else that could matter. Besides," he presently went on, "if we are going to die now, there will be a bigger moment for it on Tuesday."

"When we arrive?"

"When we stand on the front deck of the ferryboat, with the city cut out like a silhouette against the sunset, and the ships—"

A distant whistle interrupted. Rescue was signaling from the east, where their train was rapidly growing larger. They ran toward it, waving gloriously. In a very short time they were being hurried on board by an indignant conductor and a chuckling, exulting black porter.

"Ah thought you was left, suh," he bubbled over in the intervals of the conductor's severe comments on wandering away from the train and not heeding whistles. "Ah looked and looked, and Ah couldn't find you nowhere, so Ah made 'em come back for you, suh. Pretty lonesome place to be left—yas, suh! Ah'm mighty glad Ah looked you up!"

"I'm mighty glad he did," Dana exclaimed when at last the stateroom door was shut on the excited welcome. Lucy sank down drooping with weariness and relief.

"I should say so! I hope you gave him a good reward—five dollars at least."


"Fifty dollars?"

"Of course. Think what he did for us, dear girl—what he saved us from." Dana was still half laughing, but about Lucy's mouth had come a look that any member of old Adrian Cuyler's large family would have recognized at once.

"But that was absurd," she protested gravely. "Twenty would have been lavish, but perhaps justified. But fifty! We can't fling money about like that, Dana."

He was as grave as she now, and a little pale.

"It was very lavish," he said quietly. "I thought we ought to be very lavish. He is a good fellow, Lucy. He is saving money to buy a home, he told me, and fifty dollars is a long jump toward it, for him. He almost cried, he was so pleased. I thought it was right to do
him a good turn—when you realize the good turn he has done us."

Lucy was nervously overwrought and the appeal did not reach her. A vulgar spirit would have shown irritation; but she was only distressed.

"I'm sorry," he said from the door of the dressing room. "I made a mistake. We must brush up now, if we want any dinner."

With the door closed between them, he stood for several moments staring blindly into the mirror. The dark eyes that stared back at him were hurt and dismayed. Then he plunged his face into the cold water.

"She's tired, poor little soul," he muttered.

Ten minutes of separation brought them together in such a fervor of loving forgiveness that neither noticed the other's serene lack of self-blame. Dana chivalrously put the incident aside, as something to be forgotten as quickly as possible, and though Lucy was not hungry, and hated to pay out a dollar for six courses which she could not possibly eat, she repressed her longing to suggest a dinner of chocolate and biscuits, lest it seem a reproach to his extravagance.

All was right with their world that night, and Dana sent a long letter to Candace, telling her about their musical mission. If Lucy was a little less enthusiastic now that the sunset was gone, his own mounting excitement kept him from realizing this.

"I feel a little the way I did when I pulled the pup out of the East River," he confided, when he had read her the letter. "Isn't it fun to be rich, Lucy?"

The train slipped on without further hindrance. Presently the Truckee River tumbled and foamed for them, and a dizzying glimmer of Sierra pines and lakes was flashed on them, biograph fashion, through the cracks of the snow sheds. Then the broad western slopes of vineyard and orchard led them down into the land that was to Dana mother and father, home and religion, his beloved, generous, sun-browned California.

He glanced out of the window, then started forward to look more closely.

"Why, it's raining!" he cried.

"We won't get wet," she reassured him.

"Get wet! It isn't that. It's your first sight of San Francisco—old Telegraph Hill and Russian Hill and Nob Hill and the sun going down behind them in a blaze of glory! Why, Lucy, that was to be the perfect climax, when we might as well die as not—don't you remember?"

They were sweeping along the margin of the bay, beaten flat just now by the clean, strong downpour. Big drops were still running down the windows when the train ended its long run at the ferry and the passengers streamed to the boat. Dana was gloomy with disappointment.

"But I like rain, Dana," Lucy urged.

Passengers from local trains were coming on board, and apparently they, too, liked rain. Few had umbrellas, and there were many wet coats and damaged hats, yet all carried an air of holiday gaiety. There were broad smiles everywhere; acquaintances greeted one another with laughter and sounds of congratulation. Lucy stared at them.

"I never saw such merry people," she finally protested. "Are they always like this?"

Sudden understanding brought Dana to his feet with a jump.

"It's the first rain!" he cried. "Oh, jinks—and to think that I complained! Me!"

He left her without ceremony, turning eagerly to the nearest group of men. The breaking of the long summer drought had been a yearly romance to his childhood, and to the least imaginative of them it meant more than local prosperity and vanquished dust. They held out their hands to the dwindling drops, and told Dana to a day how long it had been since the last rain, late in May, and even invited him below to celebrate the event when he explained that he was a native. He came back to his wife radiant with the sense of home and welcome.

"You don't know what that rain means—you can't," he told her. "You're only a tourist. Come up forward; we are going to get our sunset, after all. I can manage everything,
dear—you take the umbrellas. I hope they still have hacks at the station,” he added with a reminiscent laugh. “It was the dream of my childhood to ride in one, and I never did. Wouldn’t you rather have a hack than a taxi?”

She smiled constrainedly. “The hotel is near, isn’t it?” she asked.

“Oh, yes. Ten minutes or so. It’s clearing, dear. Look—look!”

The clouds were breaking. Dana, leaning on the forward rail, was Jason coming home with the Golden Fleece, Parsifal approaching the Grail. He turned to his wife in silent recognition of their great moment. But Lucy’s face was troubled, and about her mouth lay a faint compression that had come down to her from old Adrian Cuyler. Meeting his glance, she spoke impulsively.

“Dana!”

“Yes, dear.”

She had to clear her throat. “Don’t the cars run past the hotel?”

“Why, yes.”

It was evident that her heart was very loud indeed, but she bravely went on. “Then why not just jump on a car? We haven’t much luggage, and I could take a bag perfectly well.”

In the pause that followed, her color rose, but her lips were worriedly firm. “As you please.” Dana spoke in his usual voice, but his eyes avoided hers.

“It is silly to take carriages all the time when the cars are so quick and nice,” she urged, breathlessly relieved that that was off her mind. “Don’t you think so, dear? And cab drivers are such pirates. Oh, Dana, this is very beautiful!”

“Yes,” he assented.

“I don’t wonder that you love it. And I know a little what showing it to me means, because I know what it will be to take you up to the North Shore place. Sometimes I can hardly wait for that.”

“Yes,” he said again.

“If we could only have had this alone!” she went on. “That was what made the desert so wonderful. Now please let me take a bag. If you knew how my arms ache when you carry them all!”

Their perfect moment had passed, and the boat was gliding into its slip. Dana gathered up the luggage and led the way in silence. The car was crowded, and passengers climbed or fell over their bags with good-humored endurance. Getting them off at the hotel proved an operation little short of surgery, though everyone helped.

“How friendly and obliging they are!” Lucy exclaimed, but Dana still said nothing. Once in their comfortable rooms—the Cuylers always took the best of rooms—she looked intently into his face.

“You are tired,” she said.

“A little,” he admitted, trying to smile. “I will go down and have a smoke, if you don’t mind.”

He was gone before she could remind him that it was dinner time. It was an orderly retreat without, but within a panic flight; for Dana assumed generosity as simply and inexorably as he assumed virtue in the woman he loved. Before the door had closed, his loyalty was crying shame on his fear, assuring him hotly that he had misunderstood, that it could not be that; but he fled that he might hide his countenance from her until its foolish darkening had passed.

He was allowed no time for brooding. As he stepped out of the elevator on the ground floor an alert little elderly man, who had been sitting in upright patience on a bench nearby, rose and stood smiling before him.

“I thought I might get a glimpse of you, Dana”—there was a charming serenity in his welcome.

Dana had been so submerged in frowning thought that he could not come instantly to the surface. He glanced remotely at the fragile face, the clean-shaven, aged smile set between two neat patches of grizzled whiskers, at the slight, wasted form held gallantly upright, the well brushed and buttoned shabbiness; then he put out both hands with a joyous exclamation.

“Sam Bynner! Why, you dear old—Why on earth didn’t you send up word?”

“Well, I didn’t like to disturb you.”

There was a mild twinkle in the eyes that were beaming up at Dana. “And when
you had just arrived, too. But I was passing. Now we will sit down here, if you have a moment to spare. I am not very good at standing."

Dana had had time to realize and be shocked at the change in his old friend: he seemed to have aged out of all proportion to his years. There was a change of the spirit, too. He had always been a diffident and patient soul, too afraid of wounding to elbow his way very successfully, yet trying most earnestly to do all that could be expected of him. That he seemed in some way to have "graduated" was Dana's first impression; the strain that had carved his face into hollows was over. Then the wide sweetness of his smile, the selfless shining of his kind eyes, seemed to deserve a bigger word. The little man had really taken on something angelic.

"You have been ill," Dana accused him.

"Ah, yes, more or less."

"But that won't do. Why—" Then Dana saw the band of crape on the old-fashioned top hat, and stopped short. Mr. Bynner nodded, still faintly smiling.

"Yes; I am alone now." He spoke as detachedly as he had about his own health, yet with a gentle air of closing the topic. "Dana, I wanted you to know that I had meant to leave my piano to you. Of course you won't need it, now. But you were always kind to what it produced—"

Dana's forbidden sympathy seized the outlet. "Kind!" he interrupted hotly. "I've heard everything since I went East, popular music and all, and there hasn't been a man who could touch you in your line. You ought to be rich and famous, Sam Bynner. Why aren't you? Did you really try hard enough to get heard?"

"Try hard enough?" Mr. Bynner might have been a disembodied spirit, smiling over the little woes of mankind.

"Why, Dana, for thirty years I had only one other thought in life. You remember my opera? And poor Ned Hilliard's libretto? It was pretty good, pretty good; but they wouldn't listen."

"Who wouldn't?"

"The managers. For years and years we were after them, Ned and I—you remember how I went to New York? But they never listened, not once. They made appointments now and then, but they never kept them." He laughed to himself. "We got up an amateur production, and they said they would come—but they didn't. They wouldn't listen."

Dana winced. "What a young egotist I must have been! I didn't realize all this."

"Ah, you were young. And I didn't want to discourage you. As poor Ned used to say, they won't give you a hearing till you've succeeded, and you can't succeed till they've heard you. It is a hard game. I am glad to be done with it."

"But you are not done with it. Now look here." Dana's hand closed on the other's shoulder with touched force. "You are right in line for a scheme Lucy and I are working out. Why, you're just what we want—a dog to try it on. Now listen." He set forth his plan for a simpler relation between the composer of music and a music-hungry world, and Mr. Bynner listened in shining approbation.

"Fine, fine!" he declared. "Ah, then there is something that you can do for me."

"That's just what—"

"No, no! Not that. It is for a gifted little fellow who lives out in the Mission: I am on my way to give him a lesson now. Such born talent, Dana! No money, ignorant parents, but running over with music, the little scamp. I discovered him, just as I did you. I will carry him as far as I can, and then perhaps you— Ah, little Dana Malone, it's queer to think of you as a rich man!" It was only the second time that that term had been offered Dana, but he accepted it as a matter of course.

"Isn't it?" he assented seriously.

"But it is your music—"

Again the lifted hand stopped him. "I have done. Not mine. But Luis Valdez—don't forget him. Here is the address. You can pass it on to him, if you like to call it that."

"I promise you I will. But no one
can ever do for anybody what you did for me."

"You were a great joy." The kind, amused eyes caressed him. "I have been very proud of my pupil. Do you remember the 'Sam Bynner Waltz,' which you wrote for my birthday? I have treasured that funny little manuscript, I can tell you."

Dana laughed. "The 'Sam Bynner Waltz'—of course I remember it. Don't get up. Won't you stay to dinner and meet Lucy?"

"Not tonight—ah, I must hurry. It has been good to see you, Dana."

They walked together to the door, and Dana realized again how feeble his old friend had grown.

"I wish I could do something for you," he exclaimed, a question in his voice. Mr. Bynner pressed his hand.

"Do it for Luis," he said. "I have no needs, dear boy."

As Dana turned back, he saw Lucy coming in search of him. She had put on a delicate crêpe gown that accented the blue and rose and brown of her lovely coloring, and though she had neglected to change her stout little traveling shoes, Dana was blind to such distinctions.

Love for her, amazed pride that so exquisite a lady should belong to him, swept through him like a clean wind, driving out a lurking cloud of troubled thought. Facing the peopled hall, where men turned and gave her long, cool looks, was misery to Lucy, but she kept her eyes serene, her step unhurried; only her compressed lips hinted at effort. But the light of relief in her face as she saw Dana, the sudden, relaxed smile, very nearly landed her in his arms.

"I kept you waiting. I am sorry," he exclaimed. "But dear old Sam Bynner was here. I have adopted a son, Lucy."

She glanced up anxiously, but, meeting his smile, smiled back. "I hope it is a nice one," she said as they turned to the dining room.

"I haven't seen him yet. It is a musical godchild. Luis Valdez—don't forget that name. I am to look out for him when Sam Bynner has—done all he can." Lucy was more interested in the menu.

"I would rather it were a little girl," she said inattentively.

"Well, perhaps we can pick up a little girl, too," They smiled over that. "We must see this boy. Dear me, the things we are going to do in this town!" He took from his pocket a list of names and laid it before her. "There is a dinner party we must give. She glanced at it with a disturbed frown.

"But they will invite us to dinner," she protested. "People always do when you are newly married. We don't need to do anything."

"Oh, this is just for the fun of the thing," he explained blithely. "I chose the very nicest people I knew, without regard to age, sex or station. Such bully people, Lucy! Some of them are so poor they couldn't ask us to dinner, anyway. What night shall we set?"

"Don't decide it now," she said quickly; then her color rose. "I am so tired," she apologized.

"Of course you are, far too tired for plans!"

He put away the list at once, and his very voice caressed and cared for her. After dinner he insisted that she should go straight to bed and be read to sleep. After he had tucked her in, he shaded the light from her eyes and drew up a chair close beside her.

"It is such fun to take care of you," he confided.

The happiness of being taken care of shone up at him. "I don't think I am very well fitted to take care of myself," she admitted. "I have carried such a load, Dana; it has all been so worrying."

"And now?"

"Ah, now it is so blessed that I am half afraid of it."

Dana was awakened early the next morning by a new and joyful consciousness. It had lain, an elusive brightness, along the edge of his dreams all night, as it had touched his waking thoughts with indirect pleasantness for the past two
days; but, until this morning, the definite, powerful, delightful reality that he was a rich man had been an abstract idea rather than a concrete force. He knew that a stream of money from Lucy's abundant resources flowed into a reservoir, that they might both dip freely into it; and the desire—romantic rather than vulgar—to go forth and spend set his heart pounding in his side. The only flaw in his happiness was that Lucy could not share it with him. She was so used to being rich, poor girl!

Excitement made staying still an impossibility. He stole out, and presently stood in the cool October brightness of the early morning, choosing his direction. He had brought his new cheque-book as well as a pocketful of money, but the shops would not be open for two hours yet, and, after a cup of coffee, he was free to wander.

The haunts of his exploring youth tempted him. Little Italy, the Barbary Coast, the steep streets of Chinatown, were snares to his feet, but he would not look at them without Lucy. He strode on until he came to a forgotten remnant of the old city, a tiny house perched on a cliff and reached by a flight of steps. It had once been a thriftily respectable little home, as its dormer roof and long French windows suggested, but squalor had overtaken its later years. The porch sagged; the unpainted wood visibly rotted; even the “For Sale” signs looked draggled and without hope.

Dana mounted the steps as one having a right, and, near the top, turned to look down on a wonderful vista of bay and distant mountain. The greater part of his childhood had been passed on those steps, scrambling up them, tumbling or coasting down, playing games on the landing, with little apparent heed for the view; yet it was the view that seemed to stand for all those happy years, rather than their meager setting. And he had come back a capitalist—little Dana Malone! The thought made him laugh out as he turned for a second look at his old home.

It was startling to find that a silent group had been staring at his back. A young woman with a coffee pot clutched in one unconscious hand stood in the doorway, two half-dressed children at her side, and behind her a tall, sickly-looking man with a shawl about his shoulders. The stillness of the group, its rigid expectancy, puzzled Dana as he caught off his hat and smiled apology.

“I beg your pardon. I used to live here when I was a small boy, so I came up to take a look.”

Expectancy vanished and the group fell apart. The man turned away with a sigh; the very children seemed to droop with disappointment. The young woman’s face had saddened, but she stayed by her hope.

“You didn’t think of buying?” she ventured.

“Oh, no.” Then the meaning of their disappointment reached and touched him. “I’m sorry you thought that.”

“Annie!” called the man impatiently from within; but she still lingered. “You don’t know anyone who’d buy it, I suppose?” she went on in a quick undertone. She had a gentle little face, and Dana fancied that there was a look of Lucy about it—Lucy pale, worn and in trouble.

“You want to sell?”

“It’s his health. If we could go South, and get started before the winter, the doctor says—and he could work down there—We’d sell it—”

“Annie!” repeated the irritable voice. “Yes, Ed. If you did hear of anyone—” She was turning away.

Dana’s heart, already big with new emotions, seemed to open in his breast, letting out a warm rush of human love and pity.

“What would you sell it for?” he asked.

The price sounded pitifully small, for the relief it would purchase. And he was a rich man! No prince consort, but an equal dispenser of the power, by the decree of his dear sovereign lady. All the morning’s joyous desire seemed meant for just this climax.

“I'll buy it,” he said.

Her cry brought back the others, and the tears on her cheeks strengthened and steadied the impulse that had made him speak. What he had done was as in-
evitable as to pull a drowning creature out of a river, and left the same afterglow of warmth and joy. The man tried to meet the news with the offhand, businesslike coolness of an American and a property owner, but his thin hand trembled as he got out his papers and showed Dana the present boundaries of his purchase.

The agent was found and the cheque written. A hearty handshake concluded the business.

Lucy was awake and wondering when he came in, carrying a great sheath of roses. He held their faces to hers as she cried out in delight.

“Oh, Dana! Who sent them?”

“California. With love and a kiss.”

“You, of course. The darlings!”

She reveled in them, touching, caressing them, while he happily looked on. “I suppose you got them for almost nothing,” she added, with a sigh for what roses meant at home. He smiled to himself, for the land of flowers does not give away its blossoms in the streets of San Francisco, and he had gone deep in this first glorious plunge after beauty; but he said nothing. A bellboy brought jars and pitchers to hold them, and Dana arranged them under Lucy’s orders. He had come racing home with the tale of his wonderful morning, yet, now that he was here, he could not seem to begin it; a curious reluctance was quenching his eagerness. Lucy would love the adventure as he did, of course. Why should telling her suddenly appear formidable?

“I suppose I’m hungry,” he said aloud. “Why, of course I am. I’ve been up for hours with nothing but a cup of coffee.”

“My dear! Go down at once and—”

“No at all. We will breakfast up here.” And Dana rang the bell as if he had been summoning waiters and ordering just what he wanted all his life.

“Dana! About these people,” she said after a while—why not have them to tea instead of to dinner?”

“To tea?” he repeated blankly.

“Yes. In the afternoon. It would be so much simpler than a great dinner.”

It was Dana who had to clear his throat. In his averted eyes was a look of bewildered fright. “Do you mean—because of the expense, Lucy?”

“Well, it would cost absurdly, a private dining room and a piano. And when we can get the same thing, can meet them all just as well at a tea—don’t you see?”

“Are we—spending too much? I supposed—”

“Oh, there is plenty, of course. But, Dana dear”—she lowered her voice confidentially—“I thought it would be so very nice if the rent of the Shore house for the summer just balanced this trip. Don’t you think it would?”

“Why, Lucy?”

“Oh, it would be like getting all this for nothing. The old place was never rented before.”

“Do you”—the question came hard, but he dragged it out by main force, miserably bent on understanding—“do you spend much of your income?”

“A good deal. There are those two big houses to keep up, besides all that one has to give away. My grandfather used to say that one should live on the income of one’s income: invest the income, you see, and live on the interest of that; but I have never tried it. I shouldn’t quite want to, I think.

“Of course, if you really cared about it being a dinner—”

“No.”

“Then that is settled. What are we going to do today?”

Dana rose. “Suppose I let you dress now. Then we can go out and do—something.”

He abruptly left her, shutting the door between the two rooms. He knew, now; and all that he had explained away came back to reinforce his knowledge. His princess was clay, like other people. He had laughed at Lucy, teased her for small foibles; but his idealistic youth had accepted her, simply and without wonder, as flawless. And now, with the ugly flaw past denial, he had as yet no thought for how it must affect him. He could see only his heartsickening disappointment.

“Oh, no, no!” he protested aloud, but the denial was only mechanical. He knew.
Fortunately, Lucy was a long time dressing. Chivalry presently rose to combat the desolating sense of loss. Before she opened the door he was sorry for her, tender over her, humbly apologetic that he, so full of vital flaws, should have judged her for this single defect. His one thought was to hide his bruise from the merry, challenging eyes that sought his from the doorway. Lucy had made herself very handsome, and knew it.

"Being married is really a tremendous lark," she confided to him as they went out together. "What did you do this morning when you were out so early?"

Memory of what he had done came back with an appalling shock. He drew breath, nervously, to tell her; but the elevator was not a suitable place, and in the courtyard below they were stopped by an old acquaintance. After that, there seemed to be no time; Lucy was so eager to see the city, so absorbed in its vivid history.

"I'll tell her at lunch," he decided, irritated and ashamed at his own reluctance, but when at last hunger drove them into a café, a new aspect of the affair kept him silent. For a dismal conviction that he had made a fool of himself that radiant morning had been steadily gaining ground under his cheerful conversation. He had taken a goodly handful of his wife's money and bought with it an inaccessible cliff in an undesirable neighborhood. Large sums spent in blasting and grading might bring the tiny lot within reach; but even then it would be of little value until that down-at-the-heel comer of town had suffered a change. To have bought it without her consent might well make her anxious as to what he would do another time.

"You don't seem hungry," observed Lucy.

"Curious—after that breakfast!" He forced himself back to cheerful attentiveness.

"You know, Dana, I am not going to be utterly selfish, out here," she presently assured him, with the earnestness that made people want to smile at her. "You must go about with your old friends, too. They will be hurt if you don't. And I shall be tired and want to rest in the afternoons. So you will be perfectly free."

"I don't know that I want to be free, little Lucy." He spoke more soberly than the occasion warranted, his eyes on his plate.

The waiter interrupted with the card, but she shook her head. "We don't want anything more, do we?"

"I don't." Dana glanced indifferently at the check offered him, then put down a bill with the gesture that is answered by a gratified bow.

"I think that you ought to have added up the account," she said, "to see if it was right, and I think you gave too large a tip for a little lunch." She smiled, to show that it did not really matter, this time.

"And now the Chinese shops," she said, rising. "Don't you think it would be nice if we took a present to Candy?"

They had hitherto known each other only in the country, where there was no buying and selling. Their hour in the Chinese shops was a period of torture to Dana; for Lucy simply could not buy. She was like a timid wayfarer with a chasm to jump—she came again and again to the edge, but her heart always failed her before the leap could be taken. From an embroidered silken robe, tinted like an opal, that would have been a joy to the end of Candace's days, she came down, lingeringly, distressfully, through hangings and table squares, to a modest cushion cover, and Dana, who yesterday could have run the affair with joyous authority, today stood at one side and took no part.

He would have told Lucy what he had to tell her on their return to the hotel, but recollection of an appointment with Sam Bynner made him hurry off to his old friend's rooms with the "Children's Crusade" music under his arm. There, for two absorbed, utterly happy hours, he was conscious only of his work and of his master's enthusiasm.

He went back by the same car line that he had taken after his morning's adventure. That was not nine hours ago; and yet he felt as if a year had
elapsed since a crazy sentimentalist had bought inaccessible real estate with his wife's resources.

He opened his door nerved to make his confession and to take without flinching the surprise, the questions, the troubled warnings that he had so richly earned. Lucy was lying down, with windows darkened, one arm across her eyes, but she waved her hand to show that she was awake. Dana spoke abruptly from the middle of the room.

"Lucy, I made an idiot of myself this morning. I have hated to tell you. I went off before breakfast for a look at my old home. It's a shanty, now, perched up on a cliff—of no earthly value. And I bought it."

Her eyes were fixed on him with strained intentness from under her arm, but she said nothing. He plunged on, his tone dry, almost hostile.

"The people who owned it saw me coming and thought I was a buyer—they had old 'For Sale' signs about. There was a sick-looking man and his wife and two children. When I explained why I was there, they seemed cut up. They wanted to sell it and to live in the South for his health. The doctor had said—well, I guess he had to go before winter, if it was to be any use. The woman was unhappy. Anyway, I made a crazy fool of myself. I left a cheque with the agent, and he's making out the papers. I can't go back on it now."

Lucy had risen on one elbow. "Why, you did right—you did exactly right!" she cried. "You couldn't have done otherwise. Tell me more—tell me everything."

"Lucy, you love! I thought you'd hate me!" He flung himself down beside her, all impetuous boy again. "You see, I was so happy, and I felt so—so—I never had had any money before, and it had all gone to my head. And they were desperate, Lucy. If you had seen them when I said I hadn't come to buy! Even the kids. And they were so nice—the man didn't say a word—just went back into the house. But the poor woman couldn't help telling me, and, someway, I felt as if it might be you—"

she was rounded and gentle and just breaking with trouble. A few hundred dollars did seem so little. And if you could have seen her afterward! But, my dearest, it was a very bad purchase from any other standpoint. You realize that?" He lifted his head to look into her eyes, and found them wet.

"What does that matter, Dana? I am glad, glad you did it. And you worried about that?"

"Yes."

She drew him to her with an intensity that startled him. Then he felt her tremble, and a sob shook her from head to foot.

"Lucy! What is it?" He held her close, wrung with distress. "Tell me, love. Oh, don't, don't!"

"Oh, Dana!" She had mastered herself in a moment, but she could not wait till her voice was steady. "All day long you have been so—so depressed, down underneath—oh, you were so dear and cheerful on top, it nearly killed me! For I thought that perhaps you were bored—that taking me about wasn't as much fun as you had thought it would be, that perhaps you wanted to be alone or to go to your old friends—oh, I didn't know what to think! I wouldn't face it until I was here by myself; I pretended everything was all right; but after you had gone and I couldn't pretend any more—oh, Dana, I nearly died!"

Her misery tore him so that he took refuge in indignant words, spoken between tokens of abject tenderness. "I never heard anything so silly. Lucy Cuyler, you ought to be shaken! Don't you know—don't you know?"

She drew a long, broken sigh.

"I knew this morning; but it didn't help me a bit when you—changed. And to think that it was all that absurd lot! Oh, Dana!"

Guilty knowledge that it was not all the absurd lot made him hide his face lest it betray him. An older man, or one less in love, might have found words then to tell her everything; but Dana could as easily have struck her.

"Don't think about it any more," he implored; but Lucy could not forget her terror.
"I wish we could run away," she exclaimed. "Couldn’t we go away now and come back later?"

He looked at his watch. "How long would it take you to pack?"

"Why, dearest, I haven’t unpacked yet." She had started up, shining with eagerness.

"All right. Get ready while I look up trains."

They had planned to "do" the South like other travelers, but, after a few days’ wandering, fate, knowing a better thing than that, led them into the Garden of Eden and left them there for their real honeymoon. A cottage, perched between a blue-black mountain and a radiant sea, complete even to a piano and a cook, offered itself to them for a month. Twenty-four hours later Dana was working at music in the big living room and Lucy was painting in the garden, and the world of cities and of mortal hurts was wiped out and forgotten. Cool nights, crisp days, evenings silver splashed with stars without, ruddy with firelight within, swept them round the seasons in miniature every twenty-four hours; work cleverly drew them apart in the morning, that they might come together with a new rush of joy at noon. They strolled in the garden and planned excursions that they were too happy to take; they brought out books and were too happy to read them; and the great St. Bernard who completed the perfection of their setting thumped his tail on the porch beside them or laid his heavy head on their knees and loved them unspeakably. Day after day, life stood still at one glorious point, and they forgot that paradise had ever known a serpent.

"Dearest, I have been thinking about —when we leave here," Lucy said at last one day. "You know our lease is up in three days. Should you mind very much if we went straight home?"

"It seems rather a pity—to leave out the chief thing we came to see," he said gravely, almost indifferently.

"Yes, but we can come back another year—perhaps next year—and make it a visit all to itself. But now I truly think we ought to go home."

"Just as you say, Lucy."

She was flushed with relief at his easy acquiescence. "That is dear of you! You see, there is that big house, full of idle servants, and the horses being boarded—it’s bills, bills, all the time. And when one stays at hotels—" She broke off with a sigh, in her face a strained, anxious look, the meaning of which he had already learned. He knew now that she did not spend a fourth of her big income.

VI

The music room offered a wide stretch of glass to the swirling snow, but its panes had been carefully doubled, and below it ran an array of heating pipes that would have seemed exaggerated to anyone unacquainted with the wind that comes over the Back Bay. Heavy velvet curtains hung ready to be pulled across as soon as the light failed, and generous logs in the open fireplace were prepared to add their picture of warmth to the hardly won fact. It was a pleasant room, made harmonious by use and time, though its furnishings would havewarred had they been new. No Cuyler ever gave up—or, if possible, moved—a piece of furniture, so the taste of several generations was represented, buttoned satin and gold legs lying down with puffy leather on spiral springs, carved Renaissance neighboring peacefully with weathered Mission. If a decorator would have shuddered, any home lover must have felt it mellow and inviting, imbued with a reality impossible to rooms that are made up on paper and carried out by rule.

Four o’clock had just struck, but the light was already so dim that Dana, working at a table drawn up beside the piano, had to bend close to his manuscript. He glanced vaguely at the lamp, but would not stop to light it. His eyes looked tired, but his mouth had taken a line of dogged persistence.

The last two months had wrought a subtle change in Dana Malone. Candace, watching him keenly during a brief visit, had realized that one familiar trait
had disappeared: he no longer made excited discoveries. His old “Do you know, Candy!” and the “I tell you!” with emphatic forefinger had vanished, and in their place had come a new abstractedness. It was as if one absorbing major discovery had swallowed all the minor ones.

Lucy complained to her family that he worked all the time, but was obviously a little proud of her grievance. They had accepted Dana with a better grace than might have been expected—perhaps from a general conviction that Lucy was bound to do something queer, anyway; and though the younger members privately referred to her as Mrs. Mulloney and found therein much cause for laughter, they all liked Dana as well as they could have liked anyone who had grown up in a different tradition and whose forebears had not attended school with their forebears. Yet neither their well-meant tolerance nor the friendly advances of brother musicians could reach Dana’s submerged attention; he seemed to have no interest for new ties.

The door opened to admit a head and a protest.

“Are you never going to stop, Dana?”

Then, seeing how dim the light was, Lucy came in to take charge of the situation. Her arms were full of packages, which she dropped on a sofa. “My dear boy, you can’t see! Wait till I light a lamp. Do you want to ruin your eyes?”

Lucy was changed, too. As she busied herself with the lamp, her cheerfulness was uneasy, as though it stoutly denied an inner fear; her briskness could not hide the fact that she was covertly watching him. He leaned back with a stretch of weary arms, letting his eyelids drop defensively over his eyes.

“It is dark,” he admitted.

When she had arranged the lights to suit her she paused by his chair, pretending to study the manuscript.

“How goes it?” she asked. She had picked up several of his phrases, and they contrasted curiously with her superfine personality and gently bred voice.

“All right, I suppose.” He dropped his head against her arm. “I’m too tired to know.”

“Why do you work so hard?” The question was only a reproach at first, but, when he did not answer, she repeated it with startled emphasis: “Dana—why do you work so hard?” His eyes fell away from her troubled look.

“Well, for one thing, I think I ought to have some output to show—soon,” he offered tentatively. “Don’t you think, yourself, that I’d better let the family see—”

“But the family is all right. Why, they have been so nice to you, Dana!”

“No—have they?” with a feeble attempt at humor.

“So they have. Only—well, we do it a little differently at home—that’s all. It would be perfectly natural if they hated me,” he added indifferently. “I should think they would.”

“Cousin Susie said you had a very charming smile and manner,” Lucy insisted. “Aunt Margaret was a little short, but, Dana dear, that was your own fault.”

“I only said that Mt. Vernon Street was steep!”

“I know; but she has lived on Mt. Vernon Street all her life, and her people before her, and it was like criticising her own home to her, don’t you see?”

“But—but—” Then Dana choked down his sputtering protest. “I’m a Yahoo,” he murmured contritely.

“What else mustn’t I say?”

“You shall say anything on earth you like!” She was suddenly all on his side. “I am so proud of you, Dana. And when you play, you are so beautiful, I can’t take my eyes off you!”

The outburst moved him to laughter, but it also cheered and refreshed him. Presently they lit the fire—there were four able-bodied servants gossiping in the basement, but Lucy rarely rang a bell—and sat down on the hearth rug with her packages between them. She had been Christmas shopping, and displayed her gifts with a satisfaction too secure to be critical of his response. A
bankrupt sale had furnished Irish lace for several cousins; an unimportant defect had made a bronze inkstand exactly the thing for Aunt Lizzie; while a chocolate pot of Royal Worcester, miraculously reduced, had been discovered for Cousin Susie, who was devoted to china.

"I had to give her something very nice—she was so dear about living with me," Lucy explained, holding up the pot for admiration. "Wasn't it luck that they would sell it without the cups?"

"But I should think it needed the cups," Dana said worriedly.

"Oh, but they are very expensive. Perhaps I will give them to her next year." And Lucy turned contentedly to a big parcel, in which many small articles had been sent. There were swirling paper knives of greenish metal that left a brassy odor on the hands, crudely embroidered neckwear sewn into unlaunderable shapes, blue and green jewelry of the kind that has been called homemade, glass bottles with thin silver-gilt tops, brocade frames for photographs—a lapful of the things that must be created solely as gifts, since no man or woman would ever dream of buying them for personal use.

"They are only Christmas tokens, you see." She was beginning to be depressed by his lack of enthusiasm. "They don't pretend to be anything else."

"But why not?" he asked impulsively. "It would be so much more fun to give them things they'd love, Lucy."

"But, my dear boy, you don't realize the number of them. Look at that!" She held up a long list before him, and believed him convinced, since he said nothing further. "I have a little thing here for Candy," she went on. "Of course the cushion cover was her real present; she wouldn't expect anything more. But I wanted something for Christmas Day. Here it is. Shall I say it is from us both?"

Dana took the little red blotting pad, still marked $1.10, and slowly turned it over before eyes that did not seem to be looking at it. Then he laid it down and rose to his feet.

"No, don't say it is from me, too," he said, returning to his work. "I'll find her something—or write her a letter."

"If there is anything here that you would like to give—" Lucy motioned generously to her whole assortment, but he would not look.

"Thanks, I'll find—something," he said absently. Believing that genius burned, she sat very still, not even gathering up her possessions lest the sound disturb him. She held his work always in passionate respect.

Dana had lately put aside his ambitious suite and thrown himself headlong into the Celtic songs that had come down to him with his talent from his grandfather. They had grown wonderfully under his hand, taking on a depth and richness that would have startled old Brian Malone, fiddling with easy sentiment for an earnestly staring little boy. Perhaps, if Dana had been wholly happy, he could not have done so well. He was bent over the manuscript now, but he was not working. From behind his hand he could see Lucy's unconscious profile, rosy with firelight, the earnest sweetness of her mouth, the gravity and beauty that lay about her eyes—and, over all, some new shadow. Even sitting on a hearth rug, she kept her youthful princess quality, her beloved little air of decorum: so fine she looked, so fragrant, so ennobled with high meanings, and yet, someway, so touched with pathos, that presently he came abruptly back to her.

"What can I do for you, on all the earth?" he asked, his hands on her shoulders. She lifted smiling lips, and the troubled question, the secret strain of a dread stoutly denied, faded as he kissed her.

"You do love me?" she said quickly. "Yes." Oaths could not have made the simple assent more convincing. She clung to him with breathless intensity. Then,

"Play 'Mary Alone,' " she whispered. She did not ask for it often; it had meant too much to both of them. At
the first bar she could feel the cool
breath of dark June woods on her face
and her heart throbbing against her
side; the dim path that had led her
to the full glory of life was under her
daring feet. As Dana played it, its
wild melancholy usually fell on her ears
like an exquisite refinement of joy, a
longing that is on the verge of fulfill­
ment, and she leaned back now with
closed eyes to let it take her where it
would. But presently her eyes opened
with a start. He was playing it with
new meaning, and its sadness was no
longer the mere veil of joy. Deep was
calling unto deep, and Lucy, hearing,
grew frightened at the blind appeal.
A darkness that she had never before
fully seen lay on his face.

"Dana! Nothing is as sad as that!"
she cried as his hands fell away from the
keys. "Oh, don't play it that way—
don't! Oh, what is it?"
The look vanished and he laughed at
her, swinging into an Irish jig.

"I-only tried it in another key, little
Lucy," he apologized. "I won't do it
again."

He was so cheerful, so contrite, that
she had to accept his explanation; but
the moment was not obliterated. She
wrapped her packages in silence, then
laid them down with a sigh.

"What shall we give each other for
Christmas?" she asked idly.

"Silver and gold. Jewels. Fur coats
and automobiles. Everything heart can
wish." He flung it out with a laugh
that hid a touch of impatience.

"No; but I mean seriously," she
urged. "Do you like fur-lined gloves?"

"No," said Dana, turning back to the
piano.

"Are you very unsatisfactory. Do
give me a suggestion."

Dana was making discordant sounds
with the keys. "Why not a necktie?"
he asked, and then was ashamed of him­
self.

"But you have so many," she an­
swered quite simply. "Besides, that
would not be enough. What shall you
give me?"

"A bottle of cologne and a box of
candy."

"Is that a joke?"

He rose. "My dear Lucy," he ex­
plained, trying to speak lightly, "giving
you handsome presents with your own
money doesn't seem to be quite suit­
able; and I have exactly twelve dollars
of my very own in the world. It came
from the sale of my furniture and effects,
after I left New York. You are there­
fore going to get exactly twelve dollars'
worth of Christmas from me—no more
and no less."

"Twelve dollars will buy a very nice
present indeed," she declared. "But
the money is yours, dearest, just as
much as it is mine. You must not
speak as if it weren't. You have only
to take what you want."

"Good little Lucy," was the vague
answer, and he turned as though to
leave the room, then came slowly back.

"Do you know, my dear," he began,
standing over her with hands in his
pockets, "I think perhaps a man has
to earn his own living. I didn't sup­
pose it would matter, so long as I
worked and we loved each other. But
I'm afraid it does." No casual tone or
careless attitude could mask the mo­
mentousness of what he said; and the se­
cert fright was out in Lucy's lifted face.

"But that isn't fair, Dana!" she
broke in, so hotly that he paused in
surprise. "No, it is not fair! My dear
boy, you don't always know the value
of money; and because I do, because
I've had to speak about it—ah, it is not
fair to be so sensitive, to make that a
barrier between us! I have learned a
hundred things from you, so gladly.
Why shouldn't you learn that one thing
from me?"

The protest must have been long in
her heart, to come rushing out so
fluently. Dana stood helpless and mis­
crable before it.

"We see things—differently, Lucy.
We can't help it. I want to go to work.
Don't make it hard for me." His gen­
tleness, and the note of pain in his voice,
took the fight out of her for the moment.
She drooped bodily.

"What would you do?" she asked
when the silence had become unbear­
"Nothing very big or conspicuous. Perhaps I can get music criticism to do for one of the papers—and you would like going to the concerts. I might take a pupil or two. I sha’n’t try to help you run the house." He tried to lighten the tension with a laugh. "But I must at least fill my own pockets. I guess it’s a law of nature, dear, and we’re up against it."

"And all the time you weren’t doing those things you would be at your music," she said heavily. "I should see nothing at all of you."

He dropped down beside her, taking her into his arms. "But when we are together won’t it be better than it has been lately?" he asked against her cheek. "We haven’t been very happy, have we? With things frank and settled between us—" He drew her closer and closer. "Isn’t three minutes of this better than half a day of strained politeness?"

She turned her face away from his. "It is not fair," she said unsteadily. "If you can’t take, you can’t give—you said that yourself. And I won’t consent to it—I won’t forgive it!" She broke away from him and ran out of the room.

Dana did not go to work. For three days the issue lay silent between them, taking the light out of the sunshine, the savor out of their food, the joy out of their love. Lucy was very cheerful, very interested in everything that came up, determined to prove that she stood firmly planted on common sense and that the heart in her side was not one fathomless ache. Dana, not belonging to the sex that pretends, was frankly melancholy, and gave her little help in her effort after a bright surface. It was she who opened the topic again, marching herself bravely up to it after dinner on the third night.

"Have you given up that idea of going to work, Dana?" she asked, standing in front of him, her coffee cup in her hand.

"Oh, no. I have looked about a little," he admitted. "I haven’t found anything yet."

"But have you realized all sides of it?" She was determined to appear entirely calm and logical and mature. "For one thing, dear, we have a number of engagements ahead. Suppose we had to throw over someone’s dinner because you had a concert to write up? They wouldn’t understand; they couldn’t."

"No, I suppose not," he assented, so spiritlessly that she grew bolder.

"And the wastefulness of it, Dana! Why, when you worked nearly all the time in New York, what did you earn? Wasn’t it just a few dollars?"

"Yes."

"Then, with only a part of your time—can’t you see that it wouldn’t be worth while?"

"Perhaps"—he seemed to have physical difficulty in producing his voice. "Not worth while as a financial proposition, I admit. But, Lucy"—for an instant his clouded eyes looked straight into hers—"I want to."

"But that is absurd. And it’s unkind." Her voice quivered. "Refusing to use what I have to give you—it’s refusing me, don’t you see?" The troubled woman in her suddenly overrode the calm logician. Turning swiftly from him, she put down her cup and walked away, her palms driven against her cheeks. "I’m losing you!"

The frightened whisper broke through his apathy and touched him on the quick. He could not stand out against it. Shame at having so hurt her swept him to his feet, and he drew her back to the big chair with remorseful vehemence.

"I’m sorry, I’m sorry," he stammered, his face buried in her dress. "I love you, Lucy—I’m sorry. I won’t do anything you hate. Please forgive me."

The sunshine was back in the world for Lucy, but Dana, after a day or two of restored cheerfulness, began to feel dissatisfied, even a little ashamed. He could not have done differently; yet his manhood was resentful. The shears of Delilah seemed to be sounding in his ears. A desire to assert himself interfered with his work and made him restless. Two days before Christmas, he went down town with determination in his gait; yet, after all, he came back
empty-handed. For how could he send Candace a lovely old necklace when Lucy had already sent her a small red blotting pad? And the same restraint held him with others: an outer loyalty to his wife's acts was demanded of him, and tied his hands. He relieved his feelings by giving a dollar to a whining beggar woman at his own door, and was not sorry that Lucy, coming out, should catch him in the act.

Lucy's parents had always taken Christmas dinner with the Stephen Cuylers. Other branches of the family assembled at the Mortimer Cuylers, where there was more youth and merriment, but Lucy was unquestioningly loyal to the tradition of the past.

Aunt Margaret always sat like a policeman at the gates of conversation, challenging, correcting and rebuking, an attitude which would naturally check its flow in her immediate neighborhood; but, even at a safe distance, there was no movement. Brief remarks were offered, shy questions and smiling answers, but no social fluid was generated to blend the company; the elements stayed dry and distinct. Lucy, obliged to speak across the table, blushed to her eyes. For the most part, with slightly bent heads and constrained elbows, they ate.

It was in that moment that a new knowledge was given to Dana Malone: he saw with his own eyes the solidarity of family. Lucy sat as the others sat; her shyness was their shyness; her reserves, scruples, complications were woven through them all; her relation to him was incidental compared to the bond that held her to them. Between him and them lay a hopeless gulf; they could never really understand one another; what meant an anguish of boredom to him had some obscure ceremonial value to them, and his natural methods of enjoyment would be wholly alien to their sympathies. Lucy had crossed to his side for a few free and joyous months, but, to his dismayed glance, it seemed now that they were inexorably taking her back to themselves. This repressed, anxious, dutiful guest bore no relation to the blossoming, expanding girl to whom he had made love on the hills of Sky Farm. She was not comfortable, but she was not finding the occasion horrible, as he was. She felt no rebellion. Twenty years from now she would be sitting there, just as timidly sweet and dutiful, and he—But there his smothered protest burst up through the impassive surface. Without realizing what he did, he sprang to his feet.

"A toast?" said Aunt Margaret blandly, a hand toward her glass. Her voice and the startled faces about him brought him back to his senses. It was a dreadful moment, but he managed to take up a glass.

"Merry Christmas!" he said feebly, and dropped down into his seat again, holding back a blush by sheer force of will. They responded courteously, a little surprised, yet ready to accept differences of custom from him. And the ceremony amused and relaxed them. Conversation flowed more easily, after that. By dessert, they were all talking, except Dana, who leaned wearily back and watched them with apathetic eyes.

It was evening when they left, other relatives setting them down at their door. Lucy, still fresh and unwearied, kept her air of content even when they were free and alone again.

"It went off very well, didn't it?" she said, preceding him up the stairs. Dana turned aside into the music room on a muttered excuse and shut the door.

"I'm common," he said with shut teeth—"common! There are Irish jigs in my blood. If I have to sit through that again, I'll die!"

Truly, the gadflies were out after Dana Malone. Before that sting could be forgotten, a letter from Candace brought a fresh attack. She enclosed a letter from California.

"I thought you ought to see this," she had written. "I hate passing on unpleasant things—but I am so certain there is some good explanation for this."

Dana knew with miserable certainty what was coming as he turned to the marked page:

I don't suppose you see anything of Dana Malone, now that he has married into the first
Boston circles. Do you know that he was out here on his wedding trip—people saw him on the street, spoke to him—and he didn’t send word to one of his old friends? We can’t help being hurt about it. We had heard he was coming, and had planned to give him the warmest kind of a welcome, but evidently it wasn’t wanted. It is hard to believe of Dana. I don’t see how even money could have changed him like that.

Dana read the sheet again and again, and if his old friends could have seen his face, they would have had no room left for their own hurt. Then he put it away and went back to his work. He said nothing about it to Lucy, and he wrote neither to Candace nor to California.

VII

Dana’s naturally expansive spirit, having retreated into itself, made the dangerous discovery that it was easier to stay there. He did everything that Lucy suggested with a spiritless assent that nearly broke her heart; he seemed to have neither impulses nor preferences, so long as he was allowed to work undisturbed. He knew, dimly, that he was not behaving very well, but he was young and hurt, and there was solace in the specious dignity of his attitude. The Celtic songs were finished, but he did not send them to his publisher, some vague premonition impelling him to “keep them on hand.”

“I’ll take them to New York myself some day,” he explained to Lucy. “I may want to make some different arrangement about them—sell them outright or something—you can’t tell.” Laid in a drawer, they were tangible assets, convertible property. He turned a key on them with grave satisfaction, and buried himself in his “Children’s Crusade” without a day’s holiday. He would have stayed buried in it indefinitely if a belated notice of a thousand-dollar prize, offered for an orchestral piece by an American composer, had not roused Lucy to excited hope.

“It isn’t the money,” she urged, fighting bravely against his apathy. “Think of having it played by one of the finest orchestras in the country! Oh, Dana, the night we went on to hear it—wouldn’t you nearly die of joy?”

“But nobody ever wins in competitions,” he objected. “Nobody you know, that is. Besides, it closes in—let me see—ten days.”

“Well, you have practically finished it. You could potter over it for twenty years longer, but it is really done, isn’t it?”

“I suppose it is, after a fashion.”

“And you can get help on the mechanical work. Come and play it,” she insisted.

Dana obeyed unwillingly, but presently the music stirred his reluctant hopes. It was good! The childish pilgrims streamed brightly forth, all youth and faith and innocent splendor, and the mothers at home wailed in vain. When the little host, broken and beaten on earth, had been taken up into heavenly glory, Dana saw with fresh eyes what he had done, and was amazed. “Did I write that?” was his solemn thought.

“It is the most beautiful thing in the world!” Lucy had tears on her eyelashes. “Oh, my dear, the night they play it!”

Her faith moved him more than he would show. “All right, I’ll try it,” he assented. “It will be a stiff week.”

“I will do everything I can to make it easier,” she promised. And she kept her word, putting herself aside with whole-hearted devotion. If Dana did not come to a meal, the meal unobtrusively came to him; engagements were deferred or refused for him; the music room was put in order before breakfast, and no one went near it on any pretext afterward. At first, the joy of defending him kept her gay, but toward the end of the week it grew to be lonely work. Dana emerged too absorbed and tired for human intercourse. On the last night, it was after midnight when the music room door opened.

“Hello!” he said surprisingly, for his wife sat curled down against the doorpost, her head resting on her knees. Beside her, on a chair, was a tray holding a thermos bottle, a cup and some sponge cakes.
"I had some hot chocolate made for you—you ate so little dinner," she explained, rising. "Will you drink it?"

"I certainly will," he assented, remotely touched and grateful, though too spent to produce the feelings with any conviction. "Why didn't you bring it in?"

"My dear, I wouldn't have interrupted you if the house had been on fire," she assured him seriously.

"Good little Lucy!" He tried to rouse his jaded spirit to a proper response. "What have you been doing with yourself all this week?"

"Oh, the usual things." She filled his cup, then stood leaning against the table, looking thoughtfully down on him. "Your life is ever so much nicer than mine," she complained. "I have been thinking about it all the week."

The chocolate was reviving him; the moment had become pleasant and homely. "How do you mean?" he asked comfortably.

"The thing you want to do most of all is the thing you must do"—she was almost scolding him for it. "When you have had a perfect orgy of happiness, you have been fulfilling your highest duty. My days are all spent in doing what I don't want to."

"Poor girl! What would you do if you could choose—without any conscience at all?" There was a mocking intonation for "conscience," but she did not heed it.

"Paint, of course. I am not good enough to make it a real vocation, but it is what I want. I would work at painting, and see pictures, and read lovely things, and go for long walks with you; and see Candy oftener—and not do anything formal ever again," she ended with impatient emphasis.

Dana finished his chocolate in thoughtful silence. "I'll tell you what," he said presently: "we'll take a vacation, and for two months you shall do exactly as you please. We'll go to New York and sublet a studio apartment. You shall have a big duplex workroom, and you can go to classes if you like, and see all the exhibitions. And we'll be as near Candy as possible—everything just as you want it. Why not?"

For a moment her face had lit at the prospect; then the light slowly faded. "I couldn't. It would not be right," she said worriedly. "We don't do things in a moment, like that," she assured him. "I might plan it for next winter; but there isn't time now."

The "we don't do it" echoed of Aunt Margaret, and struck irritatingly on Dana's strained nerves. In the freedom of Sky Farm, Lucy had exulted in doing things on a moment's notice. Again he saw the family inexorably reclaiming her.

"Why take half a year to plan a thing as simple as a b c?" he exclaimed. "You tell me your heart's desire, and I show you how you can have a try at it. Why not simply rid your soul of scruples that don't mean a thing and take your chance?"

His force was persuasive. And she had heard about her scruples before, heard enough to disturb her implicit faith in them, even if she could not check their rising. "You think I ought?" she hesitated.

"I do."

"W-e-ll—" It was the slow beginning of concession, but she broke off to ask: "What would the rent be?"

"Oh, three hundred a month, perhaps."

"Three hundred dollars a month?" She could not believe that she had heard aright.

"But you get their linen and silver and furniture. It would probably be more. People always expect a good profit when they sublet."

"Three hundred a month!" It had a downward inflection this time. "I think that is perfectly iniquitous. I supposed you were going to say fifty dollars a month."

"You couldn't get a duplex hencoop for that in New York. You would never feel it," Dana added, rising.

"It is the principle," said Lucy with tightened lips.

"Is it?" he asked, his tone carefully meaningless, though his eyes searched hers. "The principle that you couldn't
spend so much for pleasure when you might be doing active good with the money?"

"I—suppose so." Some faint emphasis on that "active good" made her voice falter for an instant. "Anyway, it is too much," she concluded firmly—"when we have this big house here."

The struggle between them was perilously close to the surface; but a forlorn sense that words were of no use still kept Dana silent. The difference lay in their blood and bones, far beyond the reach of argument. He reproached himself for letting this one thing bulk so darkly between them when in every other way Lucy was so darling a person, yet, no matter in what mood he came to her, some petty aspect of their difference presently blotted out the light. It seemed to him sometimes as though every breath drawn involved the hideous factor of money.

The next afternoon, Dana carried his manuscript to the express office.

"Well, there's a thousand dollars coming to me, anyway," he told himself. He was not flushed or elated: it was a calm statement of fact. "There isn't a man in America who can beat that. One thousand dollars—all mine." It was a reviving thought. He would have set to work at once on a new theme if Lucy had not objected.

"You are tired to death," she declared, trying to scold him heartily, after the manner of happy and confident wives. "It is all nonsense to slave so. I am going to have the music room locked up until next week."

If he would only have objected aloud, scolded back, called her names, she could have lost her point with a glad heart. His "Well—all right," was a discouraging victory.

"What should you like to do?" she asked, rising from the breakfast table for a look at the cold, gray, still morning. "Shall we go out to the Country Club and skate?"

"Have you joined?"

"No, dear, not yet. But Uncle Mortimer doesn't mind putting us up. He said to ask him whenever we wanted."

"I think we ought to join before we go again, Lucy."

"But the skating will so soon be over."

She looked unhappy. "I never have gone there for anything else. And if next year we have a warm winter—"

"True," he assented drily, and turned to the mail that had just been brought in. Presently an "Oh, Lucy!" in a very different tone brought her back to him. He was reading a marked newspaper with startled, grieved eyes. "Poor old Sam Bynner!" he exclaimed. "He has gone—and all his lovely gift with him. Ah, I'm sorry—I'm sorry! He was the best friend I ever had."

His spirit was unlocked by the touch of sorrow; he wanted to talk about his boyhood and Sam Bynner's place in it, and the rush of touched reminiscence awoke a mighty homesickness. He dwelt yearningly on his open, sunny land, on the welcome and gaiety of life there, on marvelous days spent under redwoods or by the sea or on the gaunt mountain—never dreaming how he was wounding his silent listener. Every glowing word put the knife in deeper; a caged creature, given speech, would have poured out just such a tale of his past. For a newly married man to betray so poignant a homesickness was to betray the hopeless failure of his marriage. Lucy sat with her face resting on her hands, cold with a deathly chill from head to foot.

"And there's my adopted son," Dana went on. "Luis Valdez—you remember about him, Lucy? I must give him every human chance. That is all I can do for Sam Bynner."

"You didn't see him?" she managed to say, as he seemed to expect an answer.

"No. We must go out there and look him up. I have an idea that his people are pretty worthless, but I shouldn't want to take him away from them without being very sure."

She looked up, startled. "Take him away?"

"Yes, dear. I want to teach him myself, or oversee his work, anyway. I promised I would. Will you go out there with me?"
"We might go next autumn." She spoke unwillingly, secretly swept by a hot hatred of the place that was so dear to him.

"But I can't neglect the little chap for so long, Lucy."

She was breaking open her own letters. "Can't you get some teacher there to look him up and give him lessons?"

"That isn't my idea of fulfilling a trust."

"But there must be very good teachers in San Francisco. It would be absurd and quixotic to rush right back again; we might better spend all that money on the boy himself—if he is worth it."

They were dangerously near to open hostility. Lucy read her letters with an irritating air of interest, and Dana, not guessing how he had stabbed her, felt her aloofness with a resentment that pulsed for violent expression.

Lucy gathered up her letters and rose. "I think I won't go out this morning. I have some committee business to see to." She crossed the room with a gentle dignity that seemed to put miles between them. At the door his voice stopped her.

"Lucy—is there any reason I should not go to California myself now and attend to this?"

Had he proposed to go back to an old love he could not have struck more sharply. There was a moment's silence; then, "You are free to do as you please," she said with a faint shrug, and passed out.

The masculine refuge of out of doors drew Dana as imperatively as her own room called to Lucy. Half that gray morning he tramped, but he could not walk away from his bitterness. Though anger cooled, it was still a righteous anger; what he had encountered was mean and ugly, and he did right to cry shame on it.

"Something has got to happen," he said harshly as he came back to his wife's house; but he had made no conscious plan. Habit took him to the music room, and, finding it dim and chilly, he put a match to the fire and drew a chair close to the blaze.

Lucy came slowly down from the room above and paused in the doorway, a colorless, exhausted presence that was to haunt him later, though at the time he saw only his grievance. Her forehead drew to a frown as she noticed the crackling logs.

"There is a fire going to waste in the morning room," she said wearily. "Why didn't you sit there, Dana, since you are not working?"

The question was largely automatic, and came from a painful sense that she must act as usual, but it was just the tiny touch for which the great disaster hung waiting. Every protest that Dana had ever crushed down rose up now to cry judgment on her. He stood up and spoke with a deadly quietness.

"I can't stand this any longer. It is too hideous. My wife has got to live with me, in my house. A man can't be subjected to—I am going back to New York. As soon as I can, I will have a home there for you. You may come to it or not, as you please. I don't care what you do with your own money, but, if you live with me at all, you shall live in my way."

She had put a fumbling hand on the back of a chair, but her wide eyes did not falter from the dark blaze in his, and, though she had grown painfully white, the line of her mouth stayed firm.

"Why, Dana?" The question had no sound, but he saw it, and answered with words that had long been gathering.

"Because you are a miser. You are a beautiful and lovely woman with a streak of the meanest sin on earth running right through the center of you. You love money. You hoard it. Look what your income is—and what you spend! If you saved it for a purpose—any purpose—I shouldn't care. But you save it for its own sake. You hate to give. You can do it with gladness when your imagination is really waked up, but it never stays awake for the next case. You forget. I have heard you bargain with a charwoman. I've seen you jubilant over a dollar saved—for what? In God's name, for what? You have warned and reproved me until I hate the sight and sound of your money.
I can’t live on it another day. This is death to me, too, but it had to come. I’m going now.”

He waited for her to speak, but she stood as though turned to ice until he had gone. When he had packed trunk and bag and summoned a cab, he came back to the open door. She sat where he had sat by the fire, very still, her face turned from him but her head erect.

“Good-bye, Lucy.” His voice was strained and hard and he waited there for some response, but she did not move or speak. With a shrug for his helplessness, he turned away.

VIII

Dana left the house as he might have left a battlefield. There was a sense of past horror, a dull relief at his escape, and a weariness of body and soul that wiped out all desires and regrets.

He arrived in New York too late to take any active measures, and went to a small hotel for the night. It was not a white night. He slept—did not consciously suffer; and yet the sight or name of that hotel, for years afterward, came like a sudden blotting out of the sun.

There was a little money due him at his music publisher’s. Thirty-one dollars seemed an ample cornerstone for fortune, as Dana signed for it the next morning and went on upstairs to the editorial offices. A dusty little fatherly man, peering over his spectacles, held out a stubby band to him, smiling from the depths of a square brown beard.

“Well, Malone, how’s genius?” he asked. It was their customary opening, and Dana smiled in answer, laying down a package on the desk.

“I have brought you some Irish songs, Mr. Dickson,” he explained. “And I want you to buy them outright. Let me play them to you.”

“Are they any good?” That, also, was a customary joke between them.

“You listen and see.”

A piano stood in the room, and, as Dana played, silence fell on the adjoining offices. “Mary Alone” brought a group outside the open door. Mr. Dickson sat with a hand on either knee, his bushy head tipped back for closer attention, his eyes nearly hidden under lowered lids. When the songs had all been played and the audience had melted away, he took the manuscript and inattentively turned the pages. Suddenly he spoke.

“Malone, you’re a fool to sell these outright. We can’t give you more than—oh, seventy, eighty dollars for all six of them. We never do. And if they’re as good as they seem to me, they may go on selling all your life. We will publish them, of course; but you shouldn’t let them get out of your own hands.”

“I have to have the money,” said Dana.

“Why, but I thought—” Mr. Dickson checked himself, puzzled and uncertain. Dana felt his questioning look, but made no effort at explanation.

“Of course, acting for the firm, I ought to jump at them,” Mr. Dickson concluded.

“Give me eighty dollars and lend me a piano,” said Dana, rising. “I shall be perfectly satisfied. But I must have the money today. And I want work, a lot of it. Any kind.”

“You do!” There was a promising inflection in Mr. Dickson’s voice that brought their eyes together. “Well, there may be something. Come back this afternoon,” he temporized.

“As soon as I can, I will have a home there for you”—his own words, flung out in anger, became a simple guiding law to Dana. “My wife has got to live with me, in my house.” His course had been laid down, and he bent himself doggedly to following it. He knew the city well, and knew where to look for his first home.

By noon he had found a bright little hole in the air, high up, streaming with south sun and still smelling faintly of fresh plaster, which he might have at a moderate rental for the balance of the year. After October the rent would be higher; but October was a long way off. There was one large room with three tiny appendages labeled bedroom, bath and kitchen, and the lines were pleasant to the eye, the windows well grouped. He intrepidly paid down thirty dollars to bind the bargain, and lunched off as
much of the remaining dollar as his car-fares had left him.

Mr. Dickson had a cheque for eighty dollars weighted down on his desk when Dana came in.

“We’ve got a piano for you,” he said, but made no motion to rise and show it. His meditative silence finally ended in an abrupt: “Schmidt is leaving us. How would you like to come in here in his place?”

Dana was startled, more reluctant than pleased. Eight hours a day over the manuscript music of others was not an appealing prospect, and the limitations of twenty-five dollars a week, the salary offered, were well known to him.

“I suppose it is the best solution,” he admitted, when they had talked it over. “I’m no end grateful to you, Mr. Dickson,” he added on a note of apology.

“Oh, that’s all right. We are lucky to get you,” was the kindly answer.

Dana left the office both troubled and relieved. He had sold all of his daylight for what, with good fortune, he might have earned with half of it; yet he was spared the immediate necessity of waiting on fortune.

That night he sat down in his new home and wrote two letters. He was bent over the first half the evening, yet, when it was written, it was only three lines:

DEAR LUCY:
Please send letters here. I have taken a small apartment and hope soon to have it ready for you. Yours always,
Dana.

The second, though longer, took only a few moments:

DEAR LUIS VALDEZ:
My friend Mr. Bynner told me about you, and I promised him that I would try to help you to become a musician. Mr. Bynner was as good to me when I was a boy as he has been to you, and I owe him such a debt of gratitude that I want to pay it to you. Just now I have no money and can’t do anything, but I want you to keep up your courage, work at your music all you can and remember that I shall help you the first possible moment. I believe in you because Mr. Bynner did, and I mean to be your friend.

Dana Malone.

The few days before he went to work Dana spent in close imitation of the man who sold his straw and lay on grass to buy his wife a looking glass. Heart and mind stayed shut against Lucy, but every cent he had or could raise went toward getting the little place ready for her. The bedroom was at least habitable by Saturday night, but the big room remained stark and ridiculous, with its ornate piano and practically nothing else.

“How do poor people do it? How do they ever get whole houses furnished?” he wondered, sitting on the edge of his cot, tired and discouraged. His need angered and humiliated him. Brooding in the growing darkness, Dana suddenly understood why men commit crimes for money. But there was no crime to his hand—only a dreary possibility of music pupils. Several of his old students had shown a boyish devotion to their teacher, and might be willing to come back to him even at the cost of evening lessons. They had known nothing of his marriage, and would not question his return; and any course would be better than sitting there, facing figures. He set out at once to hunt up the most probable. That there might be an element of absurdity in working himself to death to support an heir to the Cuyler millions did not once occur to him.

A new card on the door of the adjoining studio caught his attention. He read it at first unseeingly, then with a quick shrinking back.

“Ludlam!” he muttered.

He had thought of a meeting with an old friend as the disaster most to be dreaded, but this discovery of Ludlam within a few steps of his door, Ludlam the hostile, the gossip loving, was overwhelmingly worse.

Evidently his neighbor kept different hours. Dana came and went without an encounter until, absorbed in his new work, he almost forgot the danger. He liked his busy office, the rough and ready world of men, his plain fare and bald quarters; soft conditions had become associated in his mind with inner misery. He was not happy, but relief at having asserted his rightful self, taken manful action, was still his foremost feeling, and he gave himself no time to realize what lay in the background. Two pupils had
come back to him and a third was promised; and Adrian Cuyler himself never heaped up his thousands more jealously than Dana scraped together his scanty dollars. He had been working for several weeks before he indulged in a top gallery seat at a concert.

The music left him stirred and excited. The creator in him, held down by care and routine, had suddenly broken loose, filling him with new splendors of sound. All the creation of the years to come seemed to rise up before him, barely veiled from his senses, throwing out faint echoes and reverberations, like a flutter of beckoning white hands. He followed them about the dark streets till the fever of exaltation died down, and a prosaic forethought for the morning's work turned him toward home. Before the glory should be wholly gone, he stopped under a street lamp and set down musical notes as obliviously as if he were in his own rooms.

The curtain of sound that shut him in could not shut out the world. Presently a surprised "Upon my word!" threw it aside. Dana, startled, shrinking as though his garments had been clutched away, found himself face to face with Ludlam. It was a fatter, more prosperous-looking Ludlam, but his pointed blond beard still failed to hide the smallness of his mouth, and his coat fitted at the waist, and Dana hated him with a hatred that felt murderous.

"So genius still burns?" Ludlam had put out his hand, and Dana had to take it. "What is it—an 'Arclight Sonata'?"

"Oh—how are you, Ludlam?" Dana had unsmilingly put away his notebook. To Ludlam his unresponsiveness could mean only the natural and proper hauteur of the rich, and gave him a marked increase in value.

"It is good to see you again." He studied Dana with tilted head and dropped lids, as though he were a work of art, then glanced down complacently at his own opulent effect. "Things have changed a bit since we were cast away together on a desert farm," he admitted, with a small, amused smile for the secret of their scanty past. "How is Mrs. Malone?"

"Well, thank you." Dana's shortness seemed to mark him a billionaire at the least, and Ludlam's approval increased.

"It has been an interesting winter," he said confidentially. "I am coming into my own—as I suppose you have heard. I never doubted; but that is purely a matter of temperament. I've got a little place just round the corner here, in the Dartmoor Studios—it's not bad. Won't you come up?"

"I can't tonight, thanks." Dana was backing restlessly, but the suave voice still held him.

"Ah, to be sure—these married men! I wish you would bring Mrs. Malone in some afternoon. I should like to show her one or two things. Are you in town for long?"

The desire to escape had become an anguish. Needless of consequences, Dana burst through the delicate web of courtesy that had been cast over him.

"I can't say. Well, I must be off. Good night," he jerked out, his hands thrust defiantly into his pockets, and strode away as though bound for the other end of town. Ten cooling blocks lay between him and the encounter before he realized the awkward moment he had prepared for himself, when he and Ludlam should meet in their own halls.

"I'll move, then," he said irritably as he turned and came slowly back. "No, by jinks, I won't!'' with rising rage. "I'll look him in the eye and I won't give a damn!"

IX

Candace Ware's Sunday afternoon peace was broken in on by the doorbell and the sound of a somewhat bustling entrance.

"Hello, Palmer," she said placidly, without turning her head.

Palmer Jacks had no attention to spare for greetings. He came in radiating news.

"What's all this about the Dana Malones?" he began, drawing a chair to the hearth.

"The Dana Malones!" she repeated. "I haven't heard from them in ages."
“Then you don’t know that he is living here, by himself?”

“No!”

Palmer nodded grave affirmation. He was concerned and sorry, but he was undeniably enjoying himself. “I just heard about it from Ludlam,” he explained.

“It’s a queer business. Malone is living in the same building, though Ludlam has only just found it out. And you didn’t know it?”

“Not a word of it. You are sure?”

Palmer’s eyebrows and shoulders admitted the fallibility of all evidence. “I wouldn’t stake my life on Ludlam’s word; but I don’t see why he should invent this particular tale. Now if he had told me that a Russian princess had shot herself on his account—Gad, wouldn’t he enjoy that!—or that a dealer had given him fifteen thousand dollars for a picture, I might have my private doubts. But this sounds pretty straight.”

Candace was frowning at him. “Tell me what you know,” she commanded.

“Well, Ludlam met him first on the street, night before last, and asked him to his rooms; but Malone wouldn’t come—went off as though he lived at the other end of town. The next morning the two came face to face at the elevator. Ludlam naturally supposed that Malone was looking up, and greeted him as a man and a brother—or, rather, as a man and a millionaire. You know Luddy! Whereupon Malone scowled at him and said: ‘I am not looking for you. I live here, on this floor.’ Then he marched into the elevator, and Ludlam was too surprised to follow him. But he asked a few questions—he wasn’t too surprised for that—and found out that Malone has been there nearly a month, evidently alone, and down town working every day. Now what do you make of it?”

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“Well, Ludlam met him first on the street, night before last, and asked him to his rooms; but Malone wouldn’t come—went off as though he lived at the other end of town. The next morning the two came face to face at the elevator. Ludlam naturally supposed that Malone was looking up, and greeted him as a man and a brother—or, rather, as a man and a millionaire. You know Luddy! Whereupon Malone scowled at him and said: ‘I am not looking for you. I live here, on this floor.’ Then he marched into the elevator, and Ludlam was too surprised to follow him. But he asked a few questions—he wasn’t too surprised for that—and found out that Malone has been there nearly a month, evidently alone, and down town working every day. Now what do you make of it?”

Candace was frowning at him. “Tell me what you know,” she commanded.

“Well, Ludlam met him first on the street, night before last, and asked him to his rooms; but Malone wouldn’t come—went off as though he lived at the other end of town. The next morning the two came face to face at the elevator. Ludlam naturally supposed that Malone was looking up, and greeted him as a man and a brother—or, rather, as a man and a millionaire. You know Luddy! Whereupon Malone scowled at him and said: ‘I am not looking for you. I live here, on this floor.’ Then he marched into the elevator, and Ludlam was too surprised to follow him. But he asked a few questions—he wasn’t too surprised for that—and found out that Malone has been there nearly a month, evidently alone, and down town working every day. Now what do you make of it?”

Candace was not to be held at arm’s length. “I am not at all glad to see you,” she returned. After a quick glance about the bare room, her eyes came back to his face, and discovered its secret haggardness, the look that was both tragic and boyish under its smiling defense. She laid a comradely hand on his arm. “Couldn’t it have been helped?” she asked.

“I do need help,” he said desolately. Help knocked at his outer door, but Dana, not recognizing the signal, muttered imprecations, and carefully closed the little room before he answered. “Hello, Candy! ” He spoke with cheerful surprise. “Come in. Glad to see you.”

Candace was not to be held at arm’s length. “I am not at all glad to see you,” she returned. After a quick glance about the bare room, her eyes came back to his face, and discovered its secret haggardness, the look that was both tragic and boyish under its smiling defense. She laid a comradely hand on his arm. “Couldn’t it have been helped?” she asked.

He moved away from the hand; but dropped the cheerfulness. “I’m afraid not. Here’s a chair. Or you can sit on my bed, if you prefer. They’re equally hard.”

She took the couch and deliberately
drew off her gloves. "Nice room," she said. "I have more furniture than I can use. I'll send you over one or two things. Have you a kitchen?"

"Oh, yes." He showed her the kitchen, but made no motion to open the door of the bedroom. They talked at hazard about light housekeeping and furniture, then Candace let a silence preface a fresh attack. Dana did not wait for it.

"A man has to earn his own living, Candy," he said drily. "It's a law of nature. I learned it fairly hard, but—I learned it."

"Does he—at any cost?"

"Yes. The cost of not earning it is always greater. I have done nothing hurriedly, or that I could escape." He turned away with a nervous jerk, hooking his elbow over the back of his chair. "I hope to have Lucy here some day," he explained.

Candace bent toward him, her elbows digging into her knees, a smile of human understanding lighting the hardy brown face between her fists. "See here, Dana—couldn't you have laughed?"

"Laughed!"

"I did. All through Europe."

"I don't know what you mean." He spoke exasperatedly, but she continued to smile on him from between her fists.

"Well, I'll tell you. Haven't you ever noticed how, when it is an ordinarily hot day, we grumble at it; but when the heat becomes abnormal, when the thermometer goes up and up and the ambulances are clanging all day long and people dropping in the streets—a joke element comes into it? Nobody grumbles then; they laugh as they meet. It is so bad, it's funny. There's a wild sort of good humor bred by the very extremity of it. You've seen that? Well, it's the same way with other things. For instance, when a person has eight or nine thousand a year and worries about carfares, that may be necessary or it may be dead mean; but in either case it's annoying. But when a person with eighty or ninety thousand a year worries over a carfare, it is just funny. It is nature gone mad. It's a hundred and two in the shade. You've got to laugh."

Dana had listened with frowning in-tentness. "I think you're talking rot," he decided.

"No, I'm not. Let me show you. Just as an instance—one day in Paris we bought a dozen peaches out of our common expense fund, Lucy and I; and then Lucy wasn't well and didn't eat any of them. Presently I discovered that it worried her—that she had paid half. So I put an extra franc into the fund, and I secretly yelled. For she couldn't help it, poor lamb; it was just Grandpa Cuyler. If he had poked his head up over his monument, it couldn't have been clearer—or funnier."

Dana shivered. "No, I couldn't have laughed," he muttered, a look of shame on his face.

"Well, perhaps not if she were like that all through," Candace conceded. "But that's just it—she is so ridiculously generous about everything else. Did you ever know anyone who would give her time as Lucy does? And her pity?"

She had at last let a ray of light into his darkness. Lucy sitting for hours with a dull old lady in a furnace-heated room, jealously sealed against fresh air—Lucy toiling over committee work—Lucy caught on the street with a heavy, dirty baby in her arms, that a poor woman's load might be lightened—a hundred pictures of a loving and giving Lucy rose up before his startled sight.

"Anybody can give money. That is easy," Candace added. "But to give everything else, without stint, and then balk at that one little thing—can't you see the joke?"

He threw out despairing arms. "Oh, perhaps—perhaps. But the money is there, all the time, in everything. You can't get away from it. You can't use it—and you can't avoid it. Every department of life is smacked all over with it. It can hurt you in four hundred places in a single day. You might get along without, for yourself; but when it comes to deciding that you can't help other people—" He was telling more than he meant to, and pulled himself up. "You don't understand."

"Oh, don't I?" Her brown eyes twinkled. "I know what happened as well as if I had been there—Lucy with
her worried grandpa look, Dana proud
and sensitive and thinking it right to be
proud and sensitive, poor fool of a man!
Now come and have supper with me and
tell me what you are doing.”
He was too forlorn to resist, so she
bore him off, and the homelike meal, the
easy companionship, brought a dim com­
fort. But they weakened his defenses.
The numbness that had made the days
possible was threatened. He stayed as
late as he dared, in dread of what soli­
tude might bring, then tramped himself
into apathy before he turned home.
Spring was in the air as he walked up­
town late the next afternoon. The in­
exorable opening was at hand. City
squares hinted it in their swelling green,
city birds chirped it, city eyes glanced it
into his moody face. The joy of the
pavements was as dead for Dana as all
other joys, but he caught the day’s sus­
pense, the sense of coming riches, and
grew alert for whom or what he might
pass. A figure half seen in the crowd, a
gently rounded girl who lifted sudden
blue eyes, sent a shock through all his
being and roused an insane hope. He
could angrily assert that there was no
one on earth he wanted to see; but he
could not put back the coming season.
An art dealer’s window displayed a
single picture, set forth with an air of
consequence. Dana, seeing others pause,
threw it a careless glance. The picture
showed a single rounded wave of land
heaving up into a sky of noble breadth.
“The Heavens Declare the Glory of
God” was written on the card beneath.
The artist’s name was not needed to set
Dana’s feet on the hills of Sky Farm. He
stood with the June wind on his face and
the shimmer of June romance in his eyes,
the bleak present forgotten. When
others began to glance at him and to
crowd about the picture, he strode on;
but he was no longer alone. He would
never be alone again, so long as he walked
this earth. The love that had come to
him under that great sky was for life,
and Lucy would be there against his arm
until the arm withered. His defenses
were down.
By breakfast time he was at Candace’s
door.
“What can I do?” he asked. He was
as unself-conscious as a child in his help­
lessness and his despair. “Candy, tell
me what to do.” She laid her friendly
hand on his arm and he clung to it.
“Go to Boston,” she counseled. “Go
and ask Lucy.”
The words rang in his ears all day.
“Go and ask Lucy.” Mr. Dickson heard
him murmur the words over his work,
and broke out with affectionate testiness.
“Malone, you look like a ghost. What
are you saying there? What on earth is
the matter?”
Dana stared at him as from another
planet, then laid down his pen and rose.
“I’m afraid I must go to Boston,” he
said. “If I take the five o’clock train, I
can have two or three hours there and be
back in the morning.”
“Don’t do that; stay all night. If
you are here Wednesday morning, that
will do.”
Dana thanked him and hurried up­
town to his rooms. There was relief in
taking action; and there was a sudden,
unlooked-for, mighty joy in going to
Lucy. For the first time, he entered
his building with the step and bearing of
a young man.
A dark bundle lay against his door.
Suspecting an offering from Candace,
Dana went alertly toward it, then stopped
with an astonished “Hello!” For the
bundle proved to be a very dirty, ragged
boy, asleep with his face on his arm. At
Dana’s exclamation, he lifted his head,
and the eyes of old Spain, mournfully
brown, looked drowsily up from a dark
face that seemed to have been rubbed in
coal. As he scrambled to his feet, his
age, by his height, might have been eight
or nine, but there were probably several
more years concealed about his meager
little person. The face had a pinched
maturity. He said nothing, but stared
up into Dana’s face with a tense expect­
ancy somewhat trying to a man in a
hurry. Dana unlocked the door.
“Are you waiting for me—Dana
Malone?” he asked. “I haven’t much
time. Come in and tell me what you
want.”
The boy stood just within the door,
but he still did not seem able to speak.
If Dana had not been more interested in getting down his bag, he would have seen that the little figure shook in its scarecrow clothes, and that the jaw was clenched to control its trembling. The bag had proved full of odds and ends, and Dana was tumbling them out.

"What is your name?" he added without looking up.

The boy tugged at an envelope that was wedged in a pocket. When he had it out, he came slowly forward.

"I'm Luis," he whispered, as one who tells a glad secret. Then he melted down on the floor as if his little spine had been withdrawn. The envelope fell beside him, face up, and Dana read in his own handwriting the name of Luis Valdez. For the moment he was too astonished to move.

There was no time to confront the problem. When a few drops of spirits had revived the boy, Dana lifted him to the couch, gave him a cup of water and prepared something for him to eat.

"Well—did you walk from California?" he asked him.

"Oh, no." Luis smiled over the joke. "Only from—what was it?—Buffalo. And I got lots of rides." The first part of the trip, it appeared, had been paid for by the sale of the piano, which Sam Bynder had left to him.

The doorbell roused a fervent hope of Candace; but it was her furniture to which Dana opened. He was touched when he realized how much she had sent. There were even books and a sketch or two. The room looked pleasantly inhabited when he and Luis had everything in place. The glow of the work and of the hope that lay back of it had cleared Dana's face of its habitual shadow.

There was no question of going to Boston now. Dana devoted the next morning to Luis's affairs, testing his musical gift, which was remarkable.

"It was only a matter of earning a little more," he asserted with a brave front.

Luis, left to himself, had none of the well-brought-up child's helplessness. When he had practised as long as his restless body would permit, he went out into the streets and investigated the neighborhood with the thoroughness of a detective.

A studio door by the elevator was open as Luis returned and he paused to look in. Within, two men stood before a large canvas, one with a hat in his hand, in the attitude of departure. The other threw him a quick, irritable glance.

"I don't want any models," he said over his shoulder.

"I haven't got any, if you did," said Luis composedly. The larger man turned at that, showing a ruddy, handsome face swept by a big gray mustache and eyes twinkling with laughter.

"Just calling?" he asked.

"Well, I thought I'd look in," Luis explained, turning away with a bored air. "Interested in art, perhaps?" "I am a musician," Luis answered. "I live on this floor, at the back."

The other man turned at that. "Who are you, anyway?" he asked.

"Mr. Malone's Luis."

The two men glanced surprise at each other. "I didn't know he had a Luis," Palmer Jacks said jokingly.

"Oh, yes. I have come from California to live with him and become a great musician." Luis strolled away with Castilian dignity. "I will play for you some time," he threw back over his shoulder.

Jacks had lost his air of imminent departure. "That's a queer business," he exclaimed. "Though it is some pupil, of course," he added.

"No doubt," said Ludlam, a smile that was very small half hidden in his blond beard. "It fits in curiously, though, with what one heard about the Malones' wedding trip."

"You mean that they cut it short?"

"I mean that something happened to make them leave San Francisco a few hours after they got there."

The front door had closed and Dana had gone, but Lucy still sat stiffly erect by the blaze that had wrought so much havoc. In all her gentle life she had never before been absolutely angry, and
her anger was to her a terrible and sickening thing that hardened her soul to granite, but set her body trembling and shaking as though dissolution were at hand. She gave no heed then to the charge Dana had made—merely flung it from her as she might have flung off a noisome insect; the bitter failure of his love was all that she could see.

“He is not worth bothering about,” she said with a gesture of dismissal; but still the humiliating physical weakness held her.

Presently a maid’s entrance with letters acted like a call to arms, steadying her nerves and giving her back her composure. She announced, with a coolness that startled herself, that Mr. Malone had been called to New York; and so took up again the interrupted business of living. She had to make the announcement many times in the weeks that followed; and never before had she been so brave with the family, so bold with circumstances.

“Lucy is developing quite a manner,” Aunt Margaret conceded. “Marriage is bringing her out.”

Then, in a resistless flood, came the reaction, and to give herself up to pain, to forget pride and admit that she was hurt even unto death, was a wild relief, after those frozen days and nights. She was too fevered and exhausted to give thought to what had wrecked their happiness: she could only cry out blindly for what was lost, and at last conjure up a presence that took her into comforting arms and let her fall asleep with her cheek on a dream shoulder.

In the morning she felt curiously blank and ill. The one clear thought in her confused mind was that she must get away from her present surroundings. Afternoon found her at the Shore house. The greater part of the house was closed, but a downstairs suite had been put in readiness, and big fires lighted the newly polished andirons. In the bedroom the sunlight fell squarely across the bed, and just below, at the foot of the cliffs, the surf foamed over black rocks.

Here she lay for a week with her eyes on the sea, while health was breathed up at her out of the Atlantic. Then a new softness in the wind called her out. Interesting things were going on in the greenhouses and the garden, and presently she began to show earthy hands and an interest in seed catalogues. But with bodily health came the mind’s inevitable awakening. The moment was at hand when she must face the charge that she had flung aside in her anger, and give impartial verdict.

The gardener begged a word with her, and set forth at length the powers of a new fertilizer, recommended at Washington. Lucy listened with a worried frown.

“But it is twice as expensive as the old; and you have always had good results,” she reminded him. Then, inexplicably to him, she flushed up to her very hair. “Still, suppose you try it, if you are convinced it is better,” she conceded, and went hastily indoors. The unforgettable words were hurrying about her ears: “You are a miser. You love money. You hoard it. In God’s name, for what?”

The charge was there, written in living letters before her shrinking sight, and she bravely walked herself up to it. Perfervid denial could not serve her now: it was a case for grave justice. She closed her door, shutting out the wistful collie, and registered a breathless vow: “I will be big in this if I die of it!”

Then she seated herself, very erect in a straight chair, and invited all the witnesses of the past to bring in their evidence.

The defense crowded forward. There was her grandfather, her practical, careful mother, the family tone before the Mortimer Cuylers had broken away and introduced reckless new standards; there was prudence with her strict facts about the yearly earning power of a dollar; there was righteous example in a spendthrift age. Then, when the clamor of justification died down, other voices began to make themselves heard. They were, at first, mere whispers—unheeded comments and smiles, some words under an ancient cartoon of Adrian Cuyler, shown squeezing a coin until it dripped, Candace’s jibes, and then, in dreary succession, the little tragedies of her married life. She remembered every one, even
that wretched moment of arrival in San Francisco; and things only half understood before, signs of hurt, valiantly argued away, became horribly plain in the searching light of those last words: "You save it for its own sake. You hate to give. The meanest sin on earth—"

Suddenly she rose from her chair, looking about her with startled eyes, as though on changed surroundings.

"It is true!" she said aloud.

The verdict was, "Guilty;" it remained only to pronounce sentence. Day after day Lucy loitered about the place with absent, haunted eyes. Her face lost its childish curve, but took on a spirituality that deepened its loveliness to a rare beauty. Then one morning she went to see Mr. Battle.

All Lucy's affairs were cared for in the office of Stanley Battle, and her manner of business dealings, her sweetness and shyness and desire not to give trouble, were an endless amusement to him. But the latent glimmer in his eyes was quenched this morning when Lucy sat facing him in his office.

In spite of her white cheeks, it was easier for her to speak than it often had been about some trivial matter. What she had gone through had swept aside the little fears and hesitations.

"I have made a discovery, Mr. Battle," she began slowly. "I suppose everyone else has known it; but I have only just found it out. I am a miser."

The lawyer visibly started, then drew breath to protest, but she checked him.

"No, let me say it all, for it is not easy. Only, you have got to understand. A miser loves money, hates to part with it, saves it for its own sake—not for what he can do with it. And that is what I have been. It is a mean sin—one of the meanest on earth. It has nearly wrecked my married life.

"Dana didn't want the money—it wasn't that. But, don't you know, if you commit a mean sin in a person's sight, he is so hurt he can't stand it. Oh, you must follow what I am trying to tell you!" She wrung her hands in sudden desperation, but the lawyer's quiet "Yes, Lucy, I understand" steadied her again.

"I didn't dream it. I thought Dana wasn't very wise about money. And he isn't, you know"—a faint smile showed for an instant—"but the real wrong was all mine. And at last, weeks ago, he—went away. He said he had to earn his own living. I had—humiliated him. He said he would never again—live on—my money." The pain of the words caught at her breath, but her eyes were clear as blue flames.

"You had to know everything," she went on, before he could speak. "What I have gone through since then—never mind that. But here is where I have come out. It all lies in, 'If thy right hand offend thee—' There is no other solution. I cannot trust myself to be different—to stay different. It is like a birthmark, a part of me. I could always be made generous for the moment; but my imagination never stays awake for the next case. So I am going to make over the bulk of my property to my husband. Don't protest—don't warn and advise me. I want this done now, in secret, without letting Dana know."

"Might not some compromise—"

"Yes, there is one compromise. I was coming to that. I will keep the Shore house, and ten thousand a year, which you are to turn over to charity. Not a cent of that is to go through my hands now. But if Dana should lose all the rest—and he may, you know"—again that rare little newborn smile flashed out—"we can retreat there and have enough to live on. No other compromise. I have been through them all—I began that way."

All the lawyer's protests and suggestions were swept aside; her determination was fixed, and the matter was at last arranged as she wished it.

It seemed to Lucy that her only task now was to wait. Dana would come or send. Since she had climbed the barrier and seen things with his eyes, she was as sure of his love as she was of the breath of life in her own body. Sooner or later it would bring him back. Her spirit ached for him, struggling alone in his hurt pride, but she knew that he must succeed, must come to her on his
own terms. Nothing less would satisfy him.

There were begging letters in Lucy's mail the next morning. She started worriedly to consider them, then tore them across with a sudden laugh.

"That is Dana's business now!" was her thought.

A slow step and a rustle on the stairs brought a craven desire to hide.

"Well, Lucy—I took the liberty of coming up." Mrs. Mortimer Cuyler was sufficiently worldly to make a cheerful entrance, even if her errand might be uncheerful; and Lucy was grateful for the respite. As a younger woman, Aunt Frances had been big and plain, but with maturity and white hair had come an unexpected gift of beauty. People stared at her on the street, jumped to serve her in cars; and though she bore this belated flowering with dignity, as a large woman must, her enjoyment of it crept out in little gestures and turns of her well carried head and in the gay assurance of her smile. Even a trying errand could not quite dim her consciousness of the delightful miracle.

"Lucy, I have just heard some annoying gossip. I don't believe a word of it, but I think you ought to know that it is being said." To emphasize the unimportance of the communication, Mrs. Cuyler produced a tiny round mirror on a gold handle and looked critically at one fine eye. Lucy's thought had leaped to Mr. Battle, and she stiffened in a panic of dread and anger. "It is about Dana," Aunt Frances added.

Lucy's color came back in a relieved rush and she sank down on the nearest chair. "Then it isn't true," she said, so convincingly that Mrs. Cuyler felt free to drop the mirror and settle back.

"I was sure of that. It was too absurd. (Lucy, don't you like these shoes? I am trying a new man.) But then, who is the child?"

"The child!"

"The little boy who is living with him. People are saying—ah, one can't repeat such things to you." Aunt Frances again had recourse to the little mirror. "But you must expect gossip, Lucy, if you two stay apart so long."

Lucy's downcast face told nothing. "I want to know just what is being said," she insisted.

"Why, it came through a friend of Laura's, whose brother sat next a New York painter at a dinner the other night. Ludlow—was that the name?"

"Ludlam!" Lucy spoke so sharply that the other paused inquiringly. "A hateful little man—he doesn't like Dana, Aunt Frances. Please go on."

"I haven't it very clearly. The tale was that something unpleasant had happened in San Francisco, and that, as a result, Dana was living permanently in New York with this boy."

"And people suppose that it is his?" Lucy was aghast. "Why, it is some music pupil, of course. I never in my life heard anything so silly, so outrageous. That Ludlam—"

"You can't scold down gossip, my dear Lucy." Mrs. Cuyler glanced at her watch and rose. "I must run—my masseuse comes at eleven. I wish you would try her, Lucy; your color isn't what it was. Of course I don't know what is keeping Dana in New York; but, if he can't leave, you would do well to go there, if you will forgive my saying it."

Lucy was pulling off her painting apron.

"I'll take the one o'clock train," she said, breathless with indignation. "How can people tell such wicked lies? How can they?"

Long before she had reached New York, Lucy had forgotten the cause of her going. Perhaps, after all, her righteous wrath had been largely the soul's pretext for running to him. It was there, a vague support, to serve her if she found herself unwelcome—but at that word she laughed, and her fingers curled tightly into her palms. She planned no introductory sentences. It would be just an opening door, then "Lucy!" and "Dana!" and a close silence. No need of words. She was glad that she was making the first move, glad of everything, even of past pain. Since her interview with Mr. Battle, her spirit had felt a marvelous lightness. She seemed to be skimming over the awakening country on poised wings.
Providence, New London, New Haven, New York; a dream consciousness of streaming human crowds and the crash of streets; then a sudden, dreadful awakening at big, new portals, clumsily ornate. Lucy stood helpless before them, terror-stricken, bodily unable to move. Dana might not want her. She set down her bag, and made her glove an excuse for delay.

"I really am not very well fitted for this world," she admitted, with a gasp for breath. Then she cried shame on herself so effectually that, three minutes later, she was at Dana's door.

From within came the stodgy beat of a piano study, broken at frequent intervals by little flights of notes, escaping in runs and trills. Lucy's knock was a bare touch, but sharp ears heard it, and the music stopped. The door was opened by a small, dark-skinned boy, whose mournfully brown eyes, by the mere act of being lifted, gave a misleading effect of pathos. Lucy shrank back. "I thought this was Mr. Malone's apartment," she apologized. "It is, but he's not here." The boy hesitated, then opened the door wider. "Did you want music lessons?" he suggested. "Because I can tell you when he can give them to you. I know all about his affairs."

"I thought this was Mr. Malone's apartment," she apologized. "It is, but he's not here." The boy hesitated, then opened the door wider. "Did you want music lessons?" he suggested. "Because I can tell you when he can give them to you. I know all about his affairs."

Lucy smiled a little and came in, her glance passing quickly about the room. In spite of Candace's offerings, it seemed to her touchingly bare, and her fear was swallowed up in mothering compassion. She turned to the uncurtained windows, that she might hide her face.

"When will he be back?" she asked obliviously of Luis. He hesitated, craftily considering.

"Mr. Malone is a most remarkable teacher," he announced, standing before her with hands deep in his pockets. "Everybody wants to be taught by him; he has only a little time left. Two, three evenings. I can write your name down; and then perhaps he will take you."

The curious little creature was beginning to engage her attention. "Are you one of his pupils?" she asked.

The boy's chest rose. "Oh, I am his Luis," he threw off.

"His—what?"

"His Luis. I have come from San Francisco to live with him and become a great musician."

The smile was stricken out of the pretty lady's eyes. She looked frightened, hurt. "Not Luis Valdez!"

The name drew a flash of anger. "No. I do not keep that name. I am Mr. Malone's Luis."

"Ah, and he sent for you!"

"No, he didn't send for me," Luis contradicted. "I brought myself. He is the best man in the world," he added. "I would let myself be cut in pieces for him, so"—his hand criss-crossed his little body. "I am to live with him until she drives me out."

"Until who drives you out?"

"His cat of a wife." Luis spat out the words, then, seeing the lady recoil, apologized. "I do not call her that to him—at least, not again. I thought he would kill me." He shivered with an awed memory of the moment. "He stood so—oh, like a lion! Then he dropped his hand and he said, 'Luis, if you speak of her that way again, I will lick the life out of you!' Oh, he was terrible!"

A gentle, gloved hand rested on his shoulder. "Perhaps she will let you stay," the lady suggested.

Luis's headshake was hopeless. "There isn't room."

"But suppose he moved to a nice house, where there was plenty of room?" Male exasperation took him to his feet. "How—in—thunder—do you think we'd pay for it? Aren't we working day and night to pay for this?"

The lady laughed aloud, a laugh so full of warmth and merriment that Luis found his scowl of offense hard to maintain. He turned away, loftily, but she called him back.

"Luis! When will Mr. Malone be in?"

Again he evaded the question. "Did you want evening lessons?"

"I want all the evenings he can give me."

Luis scrambled for a pad and pencil. "Write it down," he said eagerly.
"But I would rather wait to see him."

At last it came. "Well—but he won't be home tonight."

The lady looked ready to cry. "Oh, Luis! Why not? Where has he gone?"

"He might be, of course," Luis amended. "I couldn't be dead certain. But he's gone to Boston."

XI

For several days past Dana had felt despair coming nearer and nearer. The stand he had taken was right, but he could not maintain it. He was not fitted to support a wife. He was throwing his talent and his health—all he had—into his offering, yet he could not make it good enough. The vision of Lucy in those bare quarters, badly served, crowded for space, brought a flush of shame and helpless anger. If he had married some hardy little art student, who could hop into a kimono and get breakfast while he was shaving, they might have pulled through financially and even had energy over for good times; but he had allied himself to a House, and its daughter never entered a kitchen but as a shy, stately mistress with orders. He began to see, drearily, that he who makes such an alliance has to lop off some of his natural instincts: he may not inevitably be the head of his household. Perhaps, if Lucy would live—in her own fashion—where he could earn his living, the compromise might be tolerable. Pride winced, of course; but they had hurt each other so horribly! Sometimes the only thing in life that seemed to matter was to win her back and so ease that incessant ache.

"What if I went to her today?"—the thought had been in his mind that very morning.

A letter was laid before him. At first glance he saw only that it was not from Lucy. Then the printed heading caught his eye.

"Oh, by jinks!" he breathed, and tore open the envelope.

He had felt a calm certainty that his "Children's Crusade Suite" would win the prize; yet, now that it had come, he could not believe his senses. Luis questioned in vain; he was deaf to everything but his own inner shout of joy. A thousand dollars might not mean an established income, but, oh, it meant Lucy! He could at least go to her with full hands and an offering of glory. He dragged out a bag and made a faint effort to pack it intelligently.

"I have to go to Boston, Luis," he explained. "Here's a dollar—you will have to look out for yourself as best you can. I'll be back soon—tomorrow."

The first dismay at finding Lucy gone was wiped out by an awed joy. For she had taken the train to New York, and the address she had left for her letters was his. Dana marveled over it, at first solemnly, then with a jubilant leap of pulses. She had run to him, even as he had run to her, and there would be no need of words.

Luis dearly loved to make a sensation; and he had undeniably made one that evening. The lady half rose, as though she would run to Boston herself, and Luis could not tell whether she was very glad or very sorry. She listened to his account of that morning and the mysterious letter with flattering intensity.

"Perhaps you know about the letter," he suggested, conscious of things unspoken.

She shook her head; she did not seem to care about that. "He will be back tonight, then," she said. "Do you mind if I wait for him?"

Luis was enchanted; he seldom had so devout an audience. The lady hung on his words, and the glow in her face lifted him into an ecstasy of self-appreciation. At her suggestion, he showed her the bare little kitchen and explained their housekeeping devices. But when she asked about the other door, he sprang to defend it.

"You can't go in there," he exclaimed. "That is his wife's room. No one else can go in it, except just the lady that comes to sweep." Lucy turned away, twisting her hands together.

"I cannot bear it," she said softly.

Luis, fearing that she was going,
offered to play to her, and worked off his excitement at the piano, not dream­
ing that his motionless audience did not hear one note. When he stopped, his eyes were swimming with sleep.

"I will play more for you another day," he mumbled. As from a long distance, he heard the lady urge him to go to bed, and he drowsily obeyed.

As soon as he was asleep, Lucy rose and quietly opened the forbidden door. The little room was like a shrine; every object had been placed there in love of her. At first the effort that had gone into it nearly broke her heart. Then she remembered what she had done for love of him, and her head lifted.

"I am not unworthy," she said.

The outer door opened. She had darkened the room where Luis slept, but the light from the little room showed where she was. She stood motionless until he was in the doorway. Then it was all as she had foreseen—"Lucy!" and "Dana!" and a close silence.

XII

"I can't go down to the office—I can't do it!" Dana laughed, in the tone of one who, nevertheless, is about to do the impossible. He sat on the side of the bed, and the coffee and toast he had brought in cooled forgotten on the little oval table. Lucy's morning face had a rose petal flush between her brown braids and her eyes were blue as corn­flowers; but her beauty had gone deeper than these things, and Dana, feeling it, had to bend his head to her hands to express his fealty. He wanted to go down on his knees to her, but, being of his generation, he could only laugh at himself and wait on her with brimming zeal.

"Don't go," she urged, knowing that he would.

"My beloved, I don't believe I even telephoned them yesterday. If I did, I have no recollection of it. I simply lit out." They laughed and clung to each other for the sake of that simultaneous flight. "But you will come down and lunch with me?"

Five minutes later he departed at a run, calling a word of cheer to Luis as he passed. Luis made no answer. His scowling little face was bent over a bundle containing his few earthly pos­sessions. When Lucy came out, de­termined on reconciliation, he had gone.

The "lady who comes in to sweep" had been sent for and bribed to stay by the day, so there was nothing for Lucy to do. Spring called to her at the open windows. Even the breath of the city had an April sweetness. She went down into the streets and walked aim­lessly in a daze of happiness. Once she found herself under the elevated rail­road, and the splashes of sunlight fall­ing through its barred shade trans­formed it into a gigantic semblance of the grape arbor of the Shore garden, and so made her heart thud with delight. The very signs of the shops struck notes of beauty and romance. "Black, Starr and Frost"—who could pass that magic combination without the thrill of keen nights? "C. Hymes" over an obscure door said "Chimes" to Lucy, and the street rang with the lovely word. The swinging doors of the great cathedral suggested that she must thank someone's God for all this, so she stepped into its sudden, rich coolness, and, finding a seat behind a pillar, went down on her knees, burying her face in her arms.

It was Saturday, and Dana had so arranged his work that he need not go back to his office that afternoon.

"What shall I do with you?" he asked, leaning back in his chair, the better to look at her. They had lunched gorgeously and conspicuously, yearning to be seen together by old friends, yet nervous of possible questions, since the future was still undiscussed. They had talked of everything else—of Dana's prize, of "Mary Alone" and Ludlam and Candace and of all the love and misery of those interminable weeks; only the blighting theme of money had been avoided. Lucy debated his ques­tion, but, meeting his eyes, forgot to answer it. "What will you have done with you, Miss Lucy?" he repeated.

Her glance turned to the open win­dows. "Hire a motor and take me out
of town,” she commanded, and so very nearly got herself embraced in a public café. “My dear!” she breathèd, with a gasp for the closeness of her escape. He laughed and took her coat from the waiter. As he held it, his glance, passing over intervening tables, met Ludlam’s pale gaze, fixed on them with an intensity that was almost dismayed. Dana nodded blithely, then muttered a disgusted, “Oh, confound it!”

“What?” she asked.

He did not explain until they were outside. “I saw a man in there that I intended to cut; and I forgot all about it.”

Lucy was amused. “I will wait while you go back and do it,” she suggested; then added a quick, “Oh—was it Mr. Ludlam?” Dana nodded.

“I shall not forget to cut him,” she promised, with early Victorian stateliness.

They sped home for wraps and veils, and a car was at the door by the time they were ready. Not till they had left the city far behind them did Dana remember Luis.

“I meant to see him or call him up,” he explained. “Poor little chap, his nose is rather out of joint.”

“We will see him tomorrow,” she comforted him.

They were sitting over a late breakfast in Sunday morning laziness, glancing through the letters they had been too sleepy to open the night before. She handed three sheets across to him. “What would you do with those?” she asked.

They were all appeals for money. One of them Dana threw aside with a laugh, a second with sounds of contempt; the third he read with kindling interest.

“Good letter,” he observed. “It sounds all right.”

“But what would you do?”

“Why, look it up, of course. Find out if the need of an infirmary is as bad as they say, and how these people stand. If it turned out as good as it sounds, I’d give—let me see: they are trying to raise fifty thousand dollars. Well, I’d give a thousand now, and perhaps more later.”

“And you would enjoy doing it,” said Lucy.

“Oh, yes. I’d like meeting those men and hearing what they had to say. I like human dealings.”

“A rich man should,” she said bravely. “You would be a better person than I to have money, Dana.” The words had an intention that he could not ignore: they said, “You were right,” and her steady eyes repeated the message. The hideous charge on which they had parted lay uncovered before Dana’s shamed sight. He went round to her and hid his face in her shoulder.

“I’m sorry,” he whispered. “I’m sorry—sorry—”

“No; I am glad. I had to learn, Dana.”

Luis had not turned up; and he had been gone twenty-four hours. An elevator boy remembered Luis’s departure with his bundle, and had noticed that he turned east when he left the building.

As a matter of form, Dana called up police and hospitals; but he knew very well that there had been no accident. Luis had a dollar in his pocket, rage in his heart, and he had run away.

“I ought to have given more time to him,” Dana reproached himself. “I could have straightened him out in ten minutes; but I was so wrapped up in you, I couldn’t think of anything else. And, of course, he saw it.”

Lucy shivered. “It is so horrible to be jealous!” He turned to her in surprise.

“What do you know about it, Lucy Cuyler?” he demanded. She smiled, but would not explain. The time had gone by forever when his love for California could go through her like a knife.

They gave the police a description of Luis and set out to search the city streets. The morning was fruitless, but, while they were lunching, a policeman appeared with Luis’s bundle. It had been found hidden in the bushes by a park lake, where the boy had evidently slept; and with it were his cap, shoes and stockings. A remark about
having the lake examined made Lucy turn white; but Dana refused to be alarmed.

"He is taking care of himself, you can bet on that," he assured her. "I know him." Lucy still saw dreadful pictures of a little boy drifting, face down.

"Oh, he must be found," she exclaimed. "We will give five hundred dollars, gladly—" Then she broke off with a gasp; for she had suddenly remembered that the five hundred dollars she had with her was all the money she possessed in the world. Dana, coming back from final words with the officer, found her looking more frightened than ever.

"He's all right, darling," he comforted her. "I give you my word, he's better fitted to take care of himself than I am."

They took a taxicab for the afternoon, and went up and down the city till they were worn out. Five o'clock found them sitting, limp and speechless, in a restaurant in the park with a pot of tea between them. After a reviving cup, Dana went to call up headquarters for news. Lucy sat, vacant with weariness, staring at the bizarre women and sleek, thick-necked men that motors and carriages kept depositing at the foot of the broad steps.

She thought she must have fallen asleep, for suddenly she was listening to "Mary Alone." She started, shaking her head to clear it of dreams; but the strain persisted, a mournful piping—"Mary Alone" done into another language. Others were turning to some sight on the gravel beneath, and their amusement checked the waiters, who had started forward to stop the intrusion. Lucy rose in time to see a small son of Spain, bare-headed and bare-footed, a musical pipe pressed to his cheek, Old World eyes lifted as though to the gods, playing money out of the nearest pockets with an appalling surety. She started forward, but others, rising, blocked her path.

"Luis!" she called, but too faintly to be noticed.

The child stood with the assurance of acknowledged genius, his perfect melancholy untouched by the laughter in the faces above him. He was enjoying himself superbly; and not by the flicker of an eyelash did he betray consciousness of the silver dropping at his feet. Luis was destined to unnumbered successes with women, and a keen prophet might have seen the signs then in the laughing attention bent on him; but never would his charm fly home more swiftly and certainly than it did now to his first real conquest. Lucy had appreciated his devotion to Dana, had determined to overcome her instinctive, class shrinking from the ragamuffin in him and to love him for Dana's sake; and suddenly here she was, filled with warm laughter over him and a mighty, mothering desire to shake him well. She pressed forward, losing sight of him for the moment. When she reached the steps, a park policeman held a struggling, furious Luis by the shoulder.

"I guess you're the kid we're looking for," he was saying with genial satisfaction. "Here, drop that wildcat business, sonny, or I'll—"

"Luis!" Lucy ran down to him, heedless of curious eyes. "Luis, dear!" The voice meant rescue, and Luis's struggles ceased. "My dear little boy, we have been looking for you all day long!" Her arm was about him; her eyes spoke understanding and tenderness. Luis's sullen gaze fell—and encountered the silver. In an instant he had it pocketed with a deftness that brought another laugh from the tables. Dana, coming out, heard the tale, and hastened to get his family away from the intensely interested spectators. The policeman showed reluctance at parting from Luis.

"It was me found him," he insisted. "Oh, yes. You may come for the reward at any time," said Lucy serenely. In the cab, her arm slipped about the silent Luis.

Dana's hand, having brushed Luis's pocket, was unceremoniously thrust in, and brought out a handful of silver and copper.
"H'm—hungry!" he observed. "Luis, I can see that bringing you up isn't going to be unmixed joy. You go into a good, stiff school next fall, young man."

"But he will spend the summer with us," said Lucy.

The reward was paid that evening: five hundred dollars in bills. Lucy was so very grave afterward that Dana was troubled.

"You needn't have paid it," he told her. "He didn't really find him—we were right there. I ought to have said so at the time."

"No; I am glad it happened," was the puzzling answer, and suddenly Lucy laughed aloud, a breathless, astonished laugh that ended against his shoulder. "Oh, Dana, life is so funny!" she stammered.

More than once, in the days that followed, Dana stopped short to demand: "Lucy, what is it? What has happened?" But she would only laugh and slip away from the question. There was some bubbling well of spirits just under the surface. When Dana made a serious business of hurrying off to his office, her eyes mocked him; when he came home tired and fagged, her mothering tenderness had the same mischievous gleam. He had seen her as merry on the hills of Sky Farm, but never as alluringly wicked, and he fell in love with her "all over again from the beginning," as he expressed it. In some mysterious way she had broken the mighty grip that held her, and found freedom. She would not talk of money. In fact, she would not do anything that she ought to, and she enjoyed her own defiance so exquisitely that he could only follow her lead in devout acquiescence.

On the fifth morning, as he was putting together some papers, the frown of the punctual business man on his forehead, she suddenly appeared before him with an air of scared purpose. She wore an absurd little dressing sack with fluttering lace for sleeves, and her brown braids lay on her shoulders. Her hands were clasped behind her back.

"Dana!"

"Yes, dear?" Mortal man could not have shown himself more approachable, yet her color rose and fell, and, in spite of her amused eyes, she visibly gasped. "It's only—Dana dear—I haven't any money. Could you let me have some?"

Could he! His hand plunged into a well filled pocket and offered her its entire contents. She would have taken a modest bill, but he pressed it all into her hands and closed them over it.

"You'll need it, dearest," he urged. Lucy looked down at her hands, still held closely between his, as though making a discovery. He waited till it came in words.

"Dana—I like taking it from you."

"God knows how I like giving it to you!" Then a clock struck, and he had to go.

Lucy painted every morning in her bedroom, where the light was better than in the sunny main room. She was developing from memory sketches made in the Shore garden, and the plain little room, fitted out so laboriously in love of her, seemed to weave a spell about her. So deep was the glamor that surrounded her that morning, that she did not notice the opening of the door behind her, and worked on in happy unconsciousness of a spectator on the threshold. Fifteen minutes later, a voice made her jump.

"I'd leave it there," it said. "You'll overdo it if you go on."

"Candy!" Lucy flew to her, but could get little personal attention; Candace was intent on the sketch. She looked at it from so many angles that Lucy grew worried. "I haven't had any time to work this winter," she apologized.

At last Candace turned to her.

"What has happened to you?" she demanded. "You've got it at last—the thing I've been preaching at you all these years in vain. You've let go. And I didn't think you could. What taught you?"

"Life, I suppose," said Lucy, with a sigh for the price she had paid.

"Go on living, then. That's painting. Come and work with me while you are in town." Then Candace re-
turned to personal matters, a smile curling the corners of her sleepy little eyes. "Well?" she queried.

"All well, thank you." Lucy smiled and flushed.

"Had a pretty bad time?"

"It is over now, Candy. Over forever and ever."

"If'm. It is if you have learned to laugh; not otherwise." Candace turned back to the main room and settled down with an air of having come on business. "Lucy, how about Sky Farm? I have gathered an idea that you thought that rather a failure—the cabin part of it."

Lucy checked an impulsive "Oh, no!" and sat down to consider. "Yes, on the whole, I did," she admitted. "Take them one by one."

"Well—Mr. Ludlam. He certainly was not worthy of being helped. He used and despised it."

"I grant you Ludlam."

"Adamovitch—you remember how he ran away, without a word of goodbye or appreciation?"

"Yes; but he came to me last winter and apologized. He was desperate with homesickness, and he went back to Russia. He told me that the place saved him; he has had a successful sea-

"season. Palmer Jacks did work there that has set him solidly on his feet—oh, atrocious work, I admit, but he sells it and he's happy. And though he is still poor enough, he won't take the cabin for this year. 'Give it to some other poor devil,' he says. Not much harm done there."

"No," Lucy admitted.

"Someone will always have to look out for little Willing; it might as well be me as anyone else. You can't say he isn't grateful. The Dabneys want me to build a cottage there and rent it to them; they must feel that they got something. As for Dana Malone—I don't think his cabin was wasted, little Lucy!"

A vision of what her life would have been if Dana's cabin had not been built brought Lucy to Candace's side. "Oh, Candy, if we hadn't!" she cried.

"I thought as much. Well, now, what is your wish? Shall I go on lending the cabins? It isn't a brilliant record, I admit. I could rent them and pay you a good interest on the investment."

Lucy winced. "Please don't. I want you to go on lending them, of course."

"Very well. I have several candidates in mind." Candace rose. "I want to hear about your plans, but I mustn't stop now. When are you two children coming to dine with me?"

Lucy's pause marked the taking of a mighty resolution.

"Tomorrow night," she said, and so stood committed to telling Dana that night the appalling secret that he was a rich man.

He made it harder for her by coming home in a blaze of excitement over his "Children's Crusade." He had had an interview with the leader of the orchestra that was to play it, and the appreciation shown him had started the strings and brasses echoing in his ears. After dinner he had to play bits of it to her, to illustrate the great man's praises. He seemed wholly absorbed in his subject, and yet suddenly he swung round and caught her in his arms as she stood beside him.

"What's the matter?" he demanded.

"Have you got to scold me for something—is that it? Or have you committed some awful crime yourself? Out with it!" She drew a deep breath of resolution—then let it out again.

"It is going to be so hard to make you understand," she faltered.

"No, dear, it isn't." He had turned grave, and his arms released her. "Say it slowly, just as you mean it, and I will understand. Of course, it is this everlasting money business," he added. "I have things to say about it, too."

She stood hesitating, then, with a desperate gesture, turned to a portfolio on the table and took out a letter.

"I wrote it, in case— Don't be angry—don't fight me! Oh, if you can only understand!"

She thrust the letter into his hands and ran into her own room, closing the door. Dana sat down under the light, and, breaking the envelope, looked about
as though dimly aware that all his world would bear a different aspect when he had finished reading.

Dearest, please read this with all your heart and soul, so that you will understand. When I was up at the Shore house, I saw things as if I had been lifted miles above the earth, and were looking down on a poor little Lucy and Dana struggling below. Not all at once. For weeks I saw only the different sides. I fought it all out, inch by inch, and you won; and then I tried to think what we could do. I made terms and treaties by the hundred, but they were never right—there was always room for more trouble. And, one night—oh, Dana, such a marvelous night! I went straight up and sat among the gods, and I saw this case of Dana and Lucy as clearly and inexorably as if it had been written on stone tablets. My right hand had offended, and it would offend again. Love, I cut it off.

I never was fitted to be a rich woman. I didn't know there was such freedom, such lightness, in the world. It has even got into my painting—Candy will tell you. I have put my burden on you—but you will carry it happily, and use it well, and make another thing of our lives. Come home and be the head of your house. It is all done. You are absolute master of everything, and I am only your wife, who loves you.

At first, Dana could see only his own pained protest. The thing was impossible, monstrous; the red of pure shame rushed to his face. He started up to tell her so, then, remembering her imploring, "Don't fight me!" he conceded to her a second reading of the letter. A slow third reading followed. Its living truth caught and held him. "I have put my burden on you"—there was the change in her made clear—the change that had shown in every movement of her body and spirit. She had broken from her inheritance. She was right: he would carry the burden better.

"But how can I?" burst from him.

Very slowly, with many turnings back, the letter lifted him up to where Lucy had risen, and he saw with new vision the case of Dana and Lucy. He had failed to keep his marriage sweet and whole, and this was his punishment. Instead of meeting evil strongly with love and truth, he had suffered it in helpless passivity, as though the outcome were no affair of his. He had been a sensitive boy, brooding over a grievance, where life had called for a thinking man. Now he must stand by and see Lucy come shining out of that dark failure and go up past him to heights of serene nobility. All the beauty of atonement was for her; for him, the humiliation of being appeased and recompensed, of having his grievance healed. He accepted his part, but his pride was trailed in the dust; shame held him in a constraining grip. He could not go to her and tell her so.

It was then, as he stood faltering, that the outer aspect of the letter in his hand caught his attention. The sheet had come to an end too soon. Lucy had crowded the last page, and squeezed the final lines into the margin. She had given away millions, but she had saved a sheet of paper, and Dana, seeing, was caught unawares by a gust of silent laughter. It shook him, warmed him, lifted him from his abasement and scattered his constraint to the four winds of a radiant heaven; and it put him back beside his wife

"Lucy!" he shouted.

DIVORCE is love's antiseptic.

GENIUS is a game of solitaire where one man holds all the cards.
THE FISH AND THE PHOTOGRAPH

By Edward Boltwood

"YOU lie!" sobbed Henderson.

The legs of Major Garvey's chair creaked discordantly on the floor of the hotel piazza, as he pushed back from the iron table, but the Count warned Garvey by a glance and continued to shuffle the cards. The Major became motionless. For a long moment the silence was broken only by the sound of rustling palms and by the boom of the distant surf on the harbor bar of the little South American seaport.

"A liar?" purred the Count, through his white mustache.

"And a thief!" added young Henderson shrilly. "The pack is marked, and—oh, shoot! Go on—shoot! I'm better off dead than I am this way!"

He dropped his handsome face on his outstretched arms and wept frankly.

The Count looked over the boy's thin shoulder toward the hammock of the Countess, who had just devoted her afternoon siesta to the task of signaling the value of Henderson's cards to her husband and the Major. Now she had glided swiftly behind Henderson, ready to pinion a wrist.

Being a heavy and muscular woman, she was quite competent for the job; but her readiness was unnecessary. From behind Henderson's chair, she smiled at the Count and lazily repeated the odd gesture, which she had made three hours ago, when the men began to play. The gesture was to flap her hand horizontally, like the tail of a fish, and in their code it meant:

"This stranger is also a fish. Catch him."

The Count laid down the pack.

"There will be no shooting, my young friend," he said courteously.

"One does not resent insults in Porta Tulas. And why? Well, because, in a place where everybody may be a cheat—you see?" He fluttered his long fingers expressively. "You waste your breath to call a man a liar in Porta Tulas," he went on. "The name signifies nothing more than if you called him a biped."

The grizzled Irishman screwed up his mouth, as if he tasted something bitter.

"If I had a pistol!" murmured Henderson from his shirt sleeves.

"Observe that we are three to one," suggested the Count.

Henderson raised his head.

"Three?" he inquired fatuously.

"Allow me to present you, señor. You did not notice her. The Countess, my wife."

But the blonde Countess, with a disdainful shrug, was retreating to her hammock. A long, if obscure, career upon the operatic stage had taught her how to walk; and her figure was still magnificent, crowned by thick coils of light golden hair.

"Come, come, Mr. Henderson," said the Major. "Lose your money like a man. These cards aren't marked. See for yourself."

"Oh, what's the use?" rejoined Henderson in a weary voice. "If you were straight, I'd 'a' been shot full of holes by this time, even in this rotten empire where there's no law or extradition or nothing! I wish I hadn't got here this morning, a day ahead of the steamer. I wish—I wish I was dead!" he wailed, and beat on the table with his fist.

"Quit that, can't you?" grunted the Major disgustedly. "Don't be so much of a kid."
"You shall have your passage home to your friends tomorrow," the Count hastened to say, but obviously more for Garvey's benefit than for Henderson's.

"Friends?" echoed Henderson. "Do you suppose I'll have any friends back there in Paracca City when they know what's happened? That money you've got wasn't mine. It belongs to the firm. You've made me as crooked as you are."

"What firm?" casually asked Garvey.

"Beckle Brothers," said Henderson. "I'm engaged to be married to the old man's daughter. That is, I was; and now—and now I'm a crook. Well, here's to us!"

But the glass of rum, which he poured with a childish air of bravado, made him choke violently; and again the Major grunted his disgust.

"Beckle Brothers, of Paracca City," mused the Count. "A very good firm."

"Finest on the coast," Henderson sighed.

"I suppose," continued the Count thoughtfully, "that a personal introduction to Paracca City by the future son-in-law of Senor Beckle would guarantee one admission to the best clubs, the best circles of society—"

"What!" broke in Henderson, staring.

"Where one," the imperturbable Count resumed, "could play discreetly for stakes of large consequence. It is possible—" Here the Count paused to shuffle the pack slowly. "It is possible," said he, "that by granting us such an introduction, Senor Beckle's future son-in-law may escape immediate disgrace, and the loss, if you will pardon me, of his bride."

"A bargain, eh?" blurted Henderson. "I introduce you in Paracca, and you give me back the firm's money! But what if you get caught in Paracca and queer me up there?"

"That is a chance of our profession," answered the Count blandly—"my profession and yours."

"Mine?"

"As you have just said, Senor Henderson, you have this afternoon become a gentleman of fortune."

"I said a crook," moaned Henderson, "and I guess you're right. I guess it's got to be a bargain. The steamer sails tomorrow, early."

II

There was a bench close to the waterfront of Porta Tulas to which the Major and the Count often resorted in the evening when their professional labors permitted. It was screened behind by tropical shrubbery, but open to whatever night wind might drift in from the Pacific; and beyond the crumbling sea wall the gleams of phosphorescent sharks darted picturesquely through the purple waves. The Major and the Count, who were neither phosphorescent nor picturesque, seemed to have a certain envy of the other sharks, and liked to sit on the bench and throw stones at them.

But tonight it appeared that the Irishman, at least, was not to be amused. He chewed a brown cigarette discontentedly, and punched his bamboo cane into the soft stone of the sea wall.

"Count, there's extradition in Paracca," he grumbled. "How do you know they won't nail us for that Los Angeles business? Uncle Sam's got a long arm."

"My friend," said the Count, "if there is extradition in Paracca, there is also much money and high play. And here we starve, the Countess, you and I. We starve in body and in soul. We must have the gaieties of life, my friend, or we expire. We need the society to which we are accustomed; we need music, the theater, the club, the restaurant. By the credentials of this our Henderson we procure them, n'est-ce pas?"

"But have we got the right grip on Henderson?" Garvey said. "He gave in pretty easy. It may be just as easy for him to own up to his firm about the money."

"You forget," remarked the Count—"you forget his girl."

Major Garvey sniffed cynically.

"Perhaps the kid isn't really stuck on the girl at all," said he.

"Dear friend," the Count protested, "in affairs of the heart you must trust to
me, for my experience is superior. A year ago I had never seen the Countess. Today I would risk all rather than lose her. And similarly, this Henderson—that is our grip on him, Major."

"Henderson's probably making love to the yellow-haired Countess this minute," retorted Garvey.

"But no," said the Count patienty. "He secludes himself from the incomparable attractions of my wife. That is why I am so sure he is ruled by his love for the Señorita Beckle, and, through that love, by us."

"How are we going to be sure of any such thing?" complained the Irishman. "By the mortal, Count, all I'm sure of is that this infernal hole of a place is killing me by inches! If I knew Purgatory was worse than Porta Tulas, I'd reform."

In the dusty plaza beyond the shrubbery the dozen instruments of the town band were shrieking, like lost souls in torment, the finale of the nightly concert. The Major mopped his perspiring cheeks and rose stiffly and leaned against the wall. Gazing down a narrow path, he could see by the dismal oil lamps the forlorn crowd in the treeless park—the squalid Indians, the dull-faced Spanish women, with their unclean, ever shifting shawls, the runaway sailors and the ragged beachcombers. Such was society in Porta Tulas.

Next to the bullet-scarred cathedral, a woman stood behind her table and whirled a stick of wood between the palms of her hands, mixing a sweet drink for a fugitive ship's steward, with whom the Major had vainly contested that morning, in a game of piquet, for a share of his thievings. Garvey shook his fist at the zinc roof of the distant hotel, sullenly in the moonlight.

"Great heavens, only to be out of this!" he groaned. "We've got that Henderson fool's money, haven't we, Count? Well, then, let's skip at last. Not to Paracca, mind you, but down the coast somewhere, anywhere."

"Tell us," sentimentally urged the Count; and Garvey, who had never known the love of a good woman, punched his cane an extra half-inch into the wall, scowling savagely.

III

"It isn't much to tell," began Henderson, "only that I might have been in a mess like this a year ago, if it hadn't been for her. She saved me then. She came down to the office one night and saved me. We were alone in the office—just us two. It was the night of a ball, and I'll always remember how she looked that night, dressed like a young queen, with jewels on her white neck. She couldn't have guessed I'd made up my mind to monkey with the books in Beckle Brothers' office—but I don't know. She guessed I was in trouble, anyhow, and she ran off from the ball and came straight to the office, same as if somebody had sent for her. Funny, wasn't it?"

"Hush!" admonished the Count, and turned sideways on the bench. "Good evening, Mr. Henderson," he said.

The boy dropped on the seat and knocked the ashes from his pipe against the rubber sole of his shoe.

"Evening, gentlemen. Just taking a stroll and didn't expect to meet you. This town's an awful dump, isn't it?"

"Plain hades, net," said Garvey.

"You'll like Paracca a lot better," said Henderson. "It's a lot different there—everything, the place and the men and—"

"And the young ladies, I suppose," interjected the Count softly. "For instance—Señorita Beckle."

Henderson caught his breath, and then moved his arms and shoulders with a sort of shudder, as if they were entangled in a snare.

"I'd ought to smash you for letting her name pass such lips as yours," he muttered, "but I can't now. I haven't got the right, have I? I haven't got the right to talk of her myself—me, a crook! And, Lord, gentlemen, when I think of what that girl's been to me!"

"Tell us," sentimentally urged the Count; and Garvey, who had never known the love of a good woman, punched his cane an extra half-inch into the wall, scowling savagely.
couldn't. I was only her father's clerk, and I was in debt, and what was the use? She glided up behind me in the office at Paracca that night, and she laid her firm little hand on my shoulder. 'What troubles you?' she said. 'Fear no trouble,' said she. And from that minute I was a man—I was a man, till today!' The Major picked up a fragment of stone and tossed it thoughtfully into the dark water. The responding flicker of golden bubbles seemed to engage his earnest attention.

"Did the touch of her loving hand save you?" inquired the Count rapturously.

"I took her hand and I kissed it," Henderson replied, "and I asked her if she trusted me and would wait for me. And she told me that she would always trust me and would always wait for me. She looked like a young queen, in that ball dress. When I kissed her—"

"Ah!" sighed the Count.

Somewhere in the distance the elusive notes of a worshipful guitar throbbed a serenade. Garvey glanced up sharply. The Irishman's eyes were not searching for the serenader; they were turned toward the horizon, where the fitful glow was visible of the approaching steamship, which would touch soon at Porta Tulas on her way to Paracca. Henderson gripped the Count's arm.

"Now, do you think I love her?" he demanded fiercely. "Now, do you think I'd risk anything sooner than forfeit that girl's trust? You've got me where my hair's short, you two, just because of Kathleen."

"Kathleen?" echoed the Major, with a queer start.

"She has Irish blood," said Henderson. "Here's her picture. Here's Kathleen Beckle's photograph."

The Count snapped a pocket cigar lighter, and eagerly examined the portrait of a girl whom he did not know.

"Would that I had seen her!" he murmured. "Black hair—black eyes—a slender, willowy princess!"

"Don't you suppose that I'd do anything—even vouch for you in Paracca—to win a girl like her?" asked Henderson. "Have a look, Major."

"Kathleen's a mighty fine name," said Garvey. "Wish I'd seen her, too. She has a pretty face."

"Pretty!" exclaimed the Count, recovering the photograph. "Her face is bewitching. It affects me, I avow, like a drug."

"The steamship's turning through the jetty," mumbled the Irishman absently. "She's going to make a night landing. That means we must hurry."

Suddenly the Count tore his ecstatic gaze from the slip of pasteboard and met the Major's glance, riveted upon his own.

Long coöperation in their hazardous profession had taught the two old scoundrels to read one another's eyes correctly, but it is to be doubted whether either had ever before read there anything which was not rascally. Now, when their eyes signaled a good and generous impulse back and forth, the shock seemed to petrify them with astonishment.

But the shock did not petrify them quite beyond the point of action. Slowly and silently the Count nodded at the Major. Slowly and silently the Major nodded at the Count. Then the Count rose from the bench and bowed to Henderson.

"Youthful senor," he said, thrusting a hand in the breast of his coat, and withdrawing it, filled with banknotes—"youthful senor, you are free. Behold, we restore to you the money of your employers. The steamship sails again within the quarter-hour. You shall embark, my friend, and alone. For the sake of the sweet face of your lady love, you are free."

"What!" gasped the boy. "You won't come with me to Paracca?"

"No," declared the Count. "Shall we, then, shatter by our dealings this dream of affection? A thousand times no, my friend! I make but one condition—that I retain this photograph. I may? Say no more—we forbid it—and farewell!"

Henderson, incapable of speech, huddled himself in a corner of the bench and watched the Count and the Major as arm in arm they stalked away toward the hotel. Then he glared down at the
money in his lap. Then his bewildered eyes became incongruously very angry.
“Fooled!” he cried indignantly.
“Fooled, by blazes!”

IV

Early the next day he who in Porta Tulas was known as Henderson sat perspiring before his exasperated chief in McDougal’s Detective Agency at Paracca City.

“But what blocked the game, Jones,” demanded Mr. McDougal, “after you had the couple of crooks started so nicely?”

The younger detective shook his boyish head ruefully.

“Hanged if I know!” said Jones.

“They seemed to be falling for my story, and I cooked up a good fake, too, about my boss’s girl being in love with me. I laid it on thick, ’cause I overheard ’em doubting their hold on me. Why, I even showed ’em a fake photograph—an old cigarette picture I’d ripped the ad off of!”

“Maybe you laid it on too thick,” meditated McDougal. “Well, I’ll have to write the Los Angeles folks that we can’t serve the extradition papers, that’s about the size of it.”

“Anyhow, I nearly had the gang up here, where we could serve ’em,” said Mr. Jones, formerly Henderson. “You think I overdid it, and got soaked, eh?”

“There was a parrot once, who talked too artistically and got soaked,” concluded his superior oracularly.

“Gee!” lamented Jones. “I’d like to know what they’re saying about it now, down in Porta Tulas!”

What they were saying about it down in Porta Tulas may be briefly stated. At that moment the Countess was pacing the hotel gallery, waving a photograph wildly at her husband and Major Garvey.

“Imbecile fishes!” she hissed. “Was it for this you paid him back his money? For this—a picture of myself as Carmen, taken twenty years ago in Montevideo!”

“Then it was some kind of a police plant, and we’re well rid of him,” retorted the Major gruffly.

“But the money—imbecile fishes both!”

The Count did not seem to mind. He smiled radiantly at his wife.

“What a proof of my love!” he exclaimed. “Thus did your picture affect me, and I not guessing it to be of you!”

HER HOME-COMING

By James B. Kenyon

WHERE, on green banks, through still and dreamy hours,
The yellow sunlight slumbered all day long,
Steeping in golden mists the drowsy flowers,
Hushing in sweet content the whitethroat’s song,
Now cool soft flakes are slowly sifted down
Round withered stalks and branches bare and brown.

But though, with trailing clouds and frowning skies,
Winter hath come to shroud the world in white,
Within my singing heart old splendors rise,
And June still bathes the world in rosy light;
For one dear face that vanished with the May,
After waste, weary months, returns today.
THE OLD BOULEVARDIER

By Reginald Wright Kauffman

ALL the women I've been friends with (for a night or for a decade—
For a soul or for a body—for a tress of black or gold)—
How I managed to forget them in my youth when they pursued me;
How their memory pursues me now they shun me once I'm old!
At this boulevard table seated with my opal glass before me,
Of the living faces passing none to love or know me seems;
Yet about them and above them
(How they know me! How I love them!)
They, the dead girls, shoulder, thronging
With an eloquence of longing
Through a mist of tears and laughter down the pavement of my dreams.

Claudine, Gabrielle and Clara (for a brown eye, for a blue eye,
For a hand to clasp) or Françoise (for a bosom bold and strong):
They were Second Empire spirits when the court of Little Louis
Taught the mode of little passions that were neither light nor long!
Délia, Daughter of the People, Communarde (old Thiers shot her
With a hundred of her sisters by the wall at Père-Lachaise) . . .
Jeanne is dead and Julie married.
Laure, who fled and Paule, who tarried:
All that kissed and cursed, forgetting,
I remember unregretting
To the painted bought-and-paid-for Phrynes of the later days.

What a brave life, that! I knew them, dark and fair and all conditions,
For a kiss or for a louis, for a drive along the Bois,
For their lingerie or laces, for a blush box for their faces,
For a supper after Patti—"Troubadour"—à l'Opéra.
Now? Well, even yet, I wager—Garçon, bring again the bottle,
If it please you—There's a chic one!—Did she mean that smile for me?

If this absinthe were not by me, I would show you!—She's like Fanchon,
That grisiote I loved and buried in Montmartre in eighty-three.
Yet, so odd a thing is fancy,
Such a riddled necromancy,
That the clearest face of all to me is one both pure and cold:
Just an unkissed child of Heaven,
Whom I loved when scarce eleven.
How I managed to forget them in my youth when they pursued me;
How their memory pursues me now they shun me—and I'm old!
THE MOTH
By Oliver Herford

The curtains of the tall French window are drawn aside, and across its wide panes the massive cornice of the building opposite and the naked immensity of the skyscrapers beyond loom monstrous in the moonlight. Beyond the shadowy cliffs of steel and marble stretches a frozen sea of glimmering roofs, and far away, hanging like a majestic constellation above the lesser stars of the river front, gleams the pale tiara of the Brooklyn Bridge.

The city lies in sleep, the tormented, fitful sleep of the wickedest city in the world, broken now by the muttered ravings of an elevated train, now by the despairing groan of a distant ferryboat, or the muffled nightmare shriek of a vessel passing through Hell Gate.

Outside the French window, the low stone balustrade and the urn of growing ferns and flowers, that stands upon its ledge, make a sharp black pattern against the luminous picture of the sleeping city. The shadowy nasturtiums stir darkly and the black plumes of the overhanging ferns tremble in the faint night breeze.

Low and vibrant, as though the voice of the moonlight itself, comes the sound of the Metropolitan Tower clock striking three, and as the last stroke dies away a miniature cathedral clock somewhere in the dark room chimes an elfin echo.

For a moment the room is intensely still, then, piercing the dull thickness of the wall, comes the sound of quick footsteps in the hall outside. As the sound ceases abruptly, there is the low jiggle of a groping latchkey, followed by the click of the turning lock, then swiftly and silently the door is pushed open and as swiftly and silently closed and locked again by the man who has entered and now stands quite still in the shadow of the portière.

The man is in evening dress. He wears a black opera cloak and opera hat. He stands close to the door and listens. His face is very white. Silently he draws the heavy portière across the door, then noiselessly, crossing the room to the French window, draws the long curtains over the moonlit panes.

Now the room is in darkness. Suddenly, with the click of some invisible button, comes a glow of light from a silk-shaded electric lamp on a table near the center of the room. Beside the table stands the man. His finger still touches the electric button. His left hand clutches at his side; he breathes heavily; there are drops of moisture on his forehead that glisten in the light of the lamp.

The air of the room is stifling. He has taken off the heavy opera hat and laid it upon the table; now he tugs at the collar of his cloak, breaking the fastening, and the white oblong of his shirt and waistcoat shines wanly in the lamp-light as he throws back the folds of his cloak.

All at once the man is shaken as if by a blow from something invisible. He turns sharply. Probing with faltering eyes the obscurity of the darkling corners, he listens in an anguish of suspense for the repetition of that vague, muffled thumping, fearful as the beating of his own heart, faint as the flutter of an escaping soul. There is no sound but the ticking of the clock, one moment terribly loud, the next scarcely audible.

Released from the tension, the man...
drops into the chair beside the mahogany table and buries his head in his hands. The next instant he is sitting bolt upright, his nerves aquiver, like the antennae of a frightened insect.

What was it? Where was it? It was as if something without substance had brushed his face, something unseen had vanished.

The man jumps to his feet and hearkens fearfully. Moving with stealthy steps toward the door, he listens again in the shadow of the portière. There is no sound in the hall, no sound anywhere.

Once more the man stands by the table, and his head is bowed and his face is hidden in his hands. But through his hands peers something which no darkness can hide, no shielding hands can blot from view.

Thrusting out his arms with a violent movement as if to push away the dreadful vision, the black cloak slips from his shoulders and drops to the floor behind him.

At the same moment there comes a sound, appallingly loud, yet muffled, like the sound of a gloved fist upon a heavy oaken door. Instantly the man's body becomes rigid as with the shock of electrocution—his hands thrown back at his sides, his fingers extended, his wide staring eyes fixed upon the door, he waits for what must come.

For a long half-minute he listens, scarcely daring to breathe; then, as he feels the cloak about his feet, the power of reasoning returns.

Stooping quickly, he picks up the fallen cloak and from a pocket of it draws forth something that gleams wickedly in the lamplight. With a shudder, the man turns away his face as he places the revolver upon the table before him. Something that had been coiled about the handle of the revolver slips like a white snake to the floor. It is the long glove of a woman, and upon it is a bright red stain.

There is something moist on the man's right hand, something moist and clinging between his fingers. Holding his palm toward the light, the man stares fascinated at the stained fingers, self-accusing witnesses whose lightest touch would print an irrefutable seal to their dreadful testimony, and a fit of trembling seizes him.

As he looks about in desperation his eye catches the gleam of white, unnatural white, in the shadow of the table, and he starts as a horse starts at a white paper in a dark roadway.

Controlling himself with an immense effort, he stoops and picks up the glove, the long white glove of a woman, and the light falls upon the bright red stain.

The glove drops from the man's hand upon the table, as he shrinks back with shut eyes and distorted face.

Something passes before his closed lids, fanning his cheek with the faint chill of its passing. As he opens his eyes, the gray bulk of a huge moth lurches heavily against the lampshade, rimmed with the blur of whirring wings and drumming horribly against the stretched silk with a sound like distant death drums.

As the eyes of the man, at first dilated with the dread of what they feared to see, catch sight of the moth, their pupils contract with rage and hate.

Forgetting his horror of the bloody stain, he picks up the long snakelike glove and slashes viciously at the whirring shadow, striking only the lamp and leaving a moist translucent streak on the green silk shade.

Blanched with rage and abhorrence, the man turns sharply in the direction it has gone, but the moth has vanished. Only for a moment. Again the hateful thing appears and circles about the shaded lamp. Again the man strikes at it with the blood-stained glove, and once more, like a mocking sprite, the moth soars out of reach and vanishes into the shadows.

Breathless and baffled, supporting himself against the chairback, the man waits, his hand still clutching the glove, the pupils of his eyes contracted with hate and fear, searching the darkened corners of the shadowy room.

As he gazes, hearkening, through the intense stillness, there comes again the sound of distant death drums, and along the ceiling, blurred and formless,
reels the uncanny visitant, shockingly enlarged by its gray close following shadow.

Nearer and nearer it comes, and the man's hand shakes as he clutches the long glove of the dead woman. Now again it circles the lamp and beats its ghostly tattoo against the drum of the stretched silk shade. And the man's eyes, dreadful with the livid reflection of the lamplight, follow it as the eyes of a snake follow a fluttering bird.

Suddenly, as if dazed with the glare, the moth stumbles in its flight and falls clumsily upon the table. In an instant the lash of the descending glove has maimed it hopelessly. In vain it strives to rise, spinning round with whirring wings and standing grotesquely on its head like a fantastic acrobat. Again the glove descends, and now the hateful thing lies crumpled, motionless.

Loathingly the man bends over the dead insect, shuddering anew as he sees upon its dark and battered thorax the gray symbol of mocking death. Picking it up by its frayed and twisted wing, he carries it across the room to the window.

With his hand upon the curtain, he pauses as if checked by a sudden fear, and returning quickly to the table, presses the button of the electric lamp, extinguishing the light.

And now, as he draws aside the window curtain, the fear-haunted room is purified by the gentle presence of the moonlight, blessing with silver hands the dark mahogany, dark as blood, transmuting the lattice panes of the tall bookcase to pale sapphire, and turning the silver and the cut glass on the sideboard to pearl and opal.

Fearful of the dead creature he holds, and daring not to measure with his eyes the abyss before him, the man stretches his arm across the narrow balcony and flings the loathsome thing over the stone ledge; then, seized with a panic fancy that the winged horror may come to life and drag him with it into that floorless dark, he shuts and bolts the window with feverish haste and, drawing the curtain, feels his way back to the table and turns on the electric light.

The sight of the revolver and the blood-stained glove jerk him, as with the hangman's jerk, back from the dead horror of his fevered fancy to the living horror of himself.

Once more there reel through his brain, like moving picture films, the scenes of the past few hours. The suspicion, the proof, the accusation, the reproaches, the pleading, the tears of the man that was himself; the taunts, the insults, the curses of that other, the woman; and through it all the growl of the piano in the room above, muttering the weird malisons of the Danse Macabre.

A cold sweat breaks out on the man's forehead; he presses his hands against his ears; but he cannot shut out the memory of the woman's awful shriek.

The cut glass decanter shakes in the man's hand as he pours out a full tumbler of brandy, and the thin glass clatters against his teeth as, clutching the sideboard for support, he drains it at a single gulp.

Even as he swallows it, the glow of the brandy is chilled by an icy fear that stiffens the shaking terror of the moment before into a stony semblance of courage.

Motionless, with lifted glass, a grim caricature of good cheer, he glares fixedly at the long green window curtain.

There is something outside the window. Something—somebody—is beating against the window. At first, light as the tap of a rain-bent ivy leaf, faint as the drum of a moth's wing, with each thump of the man's heart it grows louder, more insistent.

But no ivy ever climbed to that window one hundred and fifty feet from the ground; no moth ever drummed to the grisly ragtime of the Danse Macabre.
The brass rings make no sound as the heavy curtains are slowly drawn apart; there is no sound of a bolt as the glass doors are pushed open.

Standing in the moonlit window frame is the tall figure of a woman. Her face is gray-white; her eyes are glazed and staring. Her mirthless lips are parted in a stark vermilion smile. Upon her left breast, close to the edge of her corsage, is a deep crimson spot, rimmed with livid purple, and the edge of the gray corsage is stained with crimson. A winglike fold of her moth-gray ball dress is looped to either arm by a bangle of wrought silver. Her right arm is encased in a long white glove. Her left arm, save for the silver bangle, is bare. As the man gazes, his heart seems to stop beating. The empty glass, loosed from his fingers, falls splintering upon the floor. He tries to look away, but he cannot take his eyes from the woman's face. His lips form the twin syllables of her name, but they make no sound.

The light of the lamp behind him falls full upon the woman's face, illuminating with terrible distinctness the glassy eyes and the changeless porcelain smile. As the man gazes, his fear gives place to a fascination that is fear intensified.

Suddenly there is the click of an electric button and the light of the lamp goes out.

A new terror clutching at his heart, the man turns his head, and there, by the mahogany table, her pale eyes and the frozen laughter of her mouth gleaming in the moonlight, stands the woman, her arm extended as she draws over it the long white blood-stained glove.

With shaking knees, catching for support the sideboard, the sofa, anything that offers, the man edges his way toward the door, his only thought to get out into the street, no matter what the risk. The woman neither stirs nor turns her eyes, yet as he moves, their glassy stare seems to follow him as the painted eyes of some sinister pictured face in a portrait gallery.

Covering his eyes with his hands, he sinks into the nearest seat, a long, low sofa covered with heavy Kelim drapery. As he crouches trembling, his face buried in his hands sobbing incoherent prayers, cursing his cowardice that he durst not turn the pistol upon himself, there comes to his ears the dull complaining voice of a piano in the room above.

That there is no apartment above the one he is in, nothing but the steel girders supporting the roof, does not seem strange to him. At first confused and unrecognizable, each moment the music grows more distinct, until presently the whole room shudders with the unearthly syncopation of the Danse Macabre.

As the man listens, unspeakably awed, not daring to uncover his face, something light as a cobweb brushes across the back of his hands.

She seemed to float rather than to dance. To the man's fancy it was as if the demon music cast a shadow and this was the shadow. A tortured soul tossed on the Stygian sound waves of that unearthly melody, poising, drifting, now a shapely nix writhing in the moonlight, now a formless shadow slouching in the darkness, as the thin web of her draperies alternately flouts or caresses her swaying body. Now as she circles toward him, she beckons with her hands, but in her staring eyes is neither speech nor invitation.

Mastered by an overwhelming impulse as abhorrent as it is beyond control, the man moves forward to meet her with arms outspread, but as he closes them about her, the woman melts from his clasp and slips, staring and beckoning, into the shadow.

Round and round the dim room dance the strange speechless pair like tormented motes in the quiet moonlight, the woman mothlike, repulsive, the man mad with hate and desire, a maniacal marionette grotesquely pied in the black and white of evening dress, and the deathly pallor of his distorted face, now laughing, now sobbing hysterically, but never pausing in the mad measure, as round and round the dim room he follows the gray woman, stretching out his
arms beseechingly and clasping nothing, clutching savagely with tense fingers and gripping only the air.

At last, baffled and panting from exhaustion, he drops heavily upon the low sofa, his fingernails piercing the coarse weave of the Kelim rug. The music, as if it, too, has spent its evil forces, has changed to a low, tremulous waltz measure, through whose grieving cadence now and again, like a skeleton tramping through swaying lilies, jogs the ghastly motif of the Danse Macabre.

Across the room, dimly cameoed against the graying sapphire panes of the tall bookcase, stands the woman, with drooping arms and head thrown back as though swooning to the dying throbs of the waltz.

As the man watches her from the sofa, his tense fingers clenching the fabric of its draped covering, a change comes over his white drawn face. In the graying light from the window, his eyes have the glint of steel.

With a cry like a tortured animal, he grips the rug in both his hands, and springing upon the woman, crushes her body beneath its heavy folds.

There is no sound but the sound of breaking glass, as the man stumbles forward against the door of the bookcase and the rug falls limply to the floor.

As he looks from the shattered glass and the unbroken row of books behind it to the disordered drapery at his feet, moved by a strange impulse, the man stoops and lifts a corner of the rug.

Upon the floor before him, where a moment before the heavy fabric had lain, a gray Thing stirs uncouthly. As he draws back with physical loathing, the moth, with a shruglike movement, lifts itself into the air and circles about his head in uncanny, sprawling flight.

Covering his face with his arms, in abject terror the man stumbles blindly about the room, round the gleaming mahogany table, past the books, past the bookcase again, followed at every turn by the circling moth, and cringing with unspeakable horror under the ceaseless thud of its soft body, the chill breath of its whirring wings upon his hot hands, his burning forehead.

Now, with unsteady feet and lowered head buried in his arms, with no thought but to escape the torment of the buzzing maenad, the man stumbles blindly over the threshold of the open window and, stretching out his arms to save himself, falls forward with all his weight, cringing desperately at the urn of flowers that stands upon the low balcony.

There is a sharp crunching sound of loosening concrete as the slender urn tips slowly outward with the man's weight.

Unable to regain his balance or to release his hold on the toppling urn, his feet straining in futile resistance as they are lifted from the ground, the man tips stiffly and quietly forward like a mechanical figure.

As the moth plunges silently upward into the cold deeps of the morning, from the pavement far below comes faintly the crash of shivering stone.

A MAN may find a woman's love true as steel and yet be sorely disappointed at the temper.

WRINKLES are the nick of time.
HERE AND THERE A THOUGHT

By H. E. Zimmerman

MEN are mostly like tea leaves—real strength and goodness do not properly come out until they have been in hot water.

Time will tell on a man, especially a high old time.

Better be one-sided than two-faced.

After a young man succeeds in printing a kiss on the lips of a pretty girl, he isn’t satisfied until he runs off a large edition.

Time flies, but the orchestra leader can beat it.

Many a man who has made a failure of everything else imagines he is a success as a husband.

A little sighing, a little crying, a little dying and a great deal of lying—that is love.

Some men are like hitching posts—they are steady enough, but they never get anywhere.

Appetite and reason are like two buckets in a well—when one is up the other is down.

HEARTBREAK

By Harry Kemp

FIE, for shame! To curse all women
Just because one broke your heart!
Would you go and drop to nothing?
Still there’s life, and work, and art.

Pluck up courage, give up grieving,
Come and join the world of men.
Somewhere there’s another waiting—
Who will break your heart again!
OUT in his garden lounged the ponderous M. Léon Perigord. Around him bloomed gorgeous flowers, before him frisked a litter of kittens, over him sang the birds and beside him sat Madame Perigord, his very devoted young wife.

M'sieu clasped her hand. "Ah, Thérèse, little crumb of comfort, it is too much—all this that is about to be. To think that in a month my sight will be restored again! And then to gaze upon you—you—for the first time! Such a situation—such sentiment! Picture to yourself my emotions, Thérèse—that I shall have been wed to you these ten years and as yet have never beheld your features—you, the mother of our two children!"

Madame Perigord wept gently at the thought; also she wept for other reasons, but she returned delicately the pressure of his clasp, and drew even closer to his side.

"And fear not, my dear," continued M. Perigord in deep and reassuring tones, "but that I shall esteem you more tenderly than ever. It is not to be said that Léon Perigord is more gallant with his eyes shut than with them open. That you are an estimable woman, devoted to me above all else; that your life has been sacrificed to my affliction; that all my friends who are here so frequently have discovered and commended your qualities of excellence—all this, Thérèse, you may attribute to the credit of your soul." M. Perigord drew a deep breath of complacency and plucked a clawing kitten from his knee with a superb gesture.

"But," said Madame Perigord timidly, "I have only performed my duty," and about her there was a singular agitation.

"That is just it," said M. Perigord pompously. "Such a great thing is duty, and so frail a thing is woman. But for me there has been much contentment even in my sorrow, and for that I thank you, Thérèse. Contemplate, for instance, my sensations had I been burdened with a coquette for a wife. How could I ever have enjoyed all these years the interesting companionship of that old roué, M. Prendre, who is yet my cherished friend? And how faithful has he been, coming here as if he were indeed a homing pigeon returning to a mate! And think what anxiety of mind I should have endured over the weekly visits of M. Mercure Ribault and his cousin—both, of a truth, faultless as companions, but so—so full of the intensity of life! Bien! I have been spared much by marrying such a woman as yourself, Thérèse."

And m'sieu nodded vehemently and again caressed with tenderness the hand of madame.

Still Thérèse trembled. She endeavored to speak but could not. It was true that she had much to be thankful for, but also there was a trouble in her life of which m'sieu knew nothing. It was that her husband—an exceptional man certainly, but of a violent and insanely jealous disposition, to whom she had devoted every thought of her being—had always supposed her a woman of severely plain and unattractive appearance, whereas she was nothing of the sort.

That m'sieu had never discovered this, even considering his blindness, was surprising indeed. For he had often
passed his sensitive fingers over her face with all the seeming perception of which the blind are so deftly capable, and, as a matter of fact, he had even imagined her rather irregular features quite devoid of beauty, thereby deriving much composure of mind when his *bon vivant* companions surrounded him, as they had faithfully continued to do.

But now there was to be a great awakening, a grand surprise perhaps, a tragedy—who knew? For Thérèse had lied to him, and it had been like this: “Your complexion,” he had been wont to remark in their intimate conversation—“tell me, my cherub, is it improving? Describe yourself to me like a good angel—ah, Dieu, what a monotony is this life when one cannot even behold the blemishes of a dear one!”

And Thérèse had glibly prevaricated, staring the while into a mirror that reflected a skin as exquisite of texture as a rose petal. “Alas,” she would respond, “it is as muddy and sallow as ever.”

Whereupon M. Perigord, quite aware that his friend M. Prendre would arrive in due season to partake of dinner, would settle himself comfortably and murmur: “But then, little crumb, what does that signify? It is only that I love you more than ever, as you well know.”

That was the way it had been, Thérèse keeping up the tender and brave deception to save his helpless soul from the violent bitterness of jealousy, and he basking in the security of his utter ignorance of her exquisite and alluring charm.

Madame Perigord rose from the bench with a little fluctuating shug of her shoulders. What a predicament truly! What could she say—how explain? And yet of a certainty she had loyally reserved for him his friends. She had rescued him from the torturing despondency that usually assails the existence of the blind. His home because of her had been a rendezvous for his brilliant confrères. They had visited with him and amused him because of her imperious type of fascination, or charm, or whatever marvelous quality it was that she possessed to attract these men to such an extent that for her sake they dutifully cultivated the companionship of her helpless husband.

“I am going in for a little while,” she said gently. “There are the wines to attend to and some flowers to arrange. I will return later,” and giving his hand a light touch, she walked slowly away.

After her departure m’sieu stretched out his feet far in front of him, and sniffed pleasantly of the odor from a clump of carnations close by. There was an impregnant balm in the air, and the solitude of the garden was quite conducive to a meditative state of mind. M. Perigord, thus enticed, reflected solidly. He pondered upon this and that, of the things that had been and were to be. It was indeed strange, a miracle, in fact, how all this great change in his life was to come about. The renowned oculist who had promised him the restoration of his sight seemed a wizard. In a month’s time! It would be as if M. Perigord had really been born again.

He sighed ecstatically at the thought. There would then be the promenades renewed, the haunting of the boulevard on pleasant days, the old companionships of the Quartier Latin, the fishing trips, the piquant excursions to Versailles or Fontainebleau, the *fêtes* at Auteuil, and also the expansive sensation of being again a capable and alert host, a man proud of his wife and his two very pretty little daughters. All of which was most gratifying, until m’sieu bit his lip and squirmed at the traitorous lurking regret that came cringing to the surface of his somewhat shallow anticipations. It was atrocious, this thought—like so much slime—this regret that Thérèse, so estimable and all, should be so *ordinaire*— alas, so impossible in some ways; and that he, Léon Perigord, a man famed for his taste and a connoisseur of all things rare and beautiful, should have for his wife one who had never attracted the flattering envy of his friends.

For, of a truth, it was one affair to be utterly blind and helpless and wedded to a virtuous paragon of homely but modest appearance, and quite another
matter to be an ultra-fastidious man-about-town burdened with an unattractive wife.

M'sieu rose with vehemence and kicked the gravel viciously to the right and left of him. He was as a great incensed rooster scratching for bugs. He despised himself. What was he? An ingrate, a dog—and more besides.

"I am a beast," he declared. And this was quite true, but he could not at all help it.

He strode despondently down the path, whacking his way along with vicious jabs of his guiding stick. It was as if he saw himself—the sensitive Léon Perigord, the boulevardier—pointed at like this; as if he might hear the purring voices of people say: "Ah, but yes, there goes Léon Perigord, a fine man—such discernment; but you have heard of course of the mesalliance. He married a poor girl, you know, when he was blind and helpless—a homely, sympathetic creature, with a good enough heart, but, ma foi, what a face! Would you ever have imagined it of Léon?"

In the throes of these ignoble thoughts M. Perigord became limp as a rag. The perspiration stood in beads upon his brow. What would you—he, a man with a sensitive eye, or rather with a prospect of a sensitive eye, about to be forced to endure such inevitable comment as this!

The tortures came thick and fast. He paused weakly in his walk and raised his sightless orbs to heaven, while his groping stick whacked at the lattice work of a little summer pavilion.

There was M. Prendre, who had an eye for beauty like an old hound with a scent for the hunt. And there were the others, the Ribaults, as critical a pair as might be discovered in all the cafes of Paris. Men they were, all three, who had always dissected the beauty of women as a botanist would a flower. So—so—now he knew all; now he understood their subdued silences when he had praised his wife. At last it was evident why they had maintained such an eternal reticence all these years. It was because—ah, Dieu—she had been too unattractive for words.

M'sieu sank like one exhausted upon the seat in the pavilion and groaned.

A step came crunching in his direction; somewhere in the garden madame's poodle barked sharply, and, "Good day, my friend," sang out a convivial but unfamiliar voice to M'sieu Perigord.

"Good day," he returned in stilted accents.

"And where," went on the strange voice, "is that sister of mine—the little Thérèse?"

Voilà! M'sieu now understood. It was that great rollicking bête of a brother of Thérèse—the one who had ever followed the sea, never returning home, or writing either, save to send huge bunches of pressed seaweed made into atrocious picture frames. And here he was, arriving in this hour of trial, this monster of an uncouth sea captain, and at such a delicate period when all the courage and composure of M'sieu was needed for the deep resolution of the future.

However, M. Perigord was not of good blood for nothing. To be a Perigord was at least to be courteous on the surface. With an inward groan he rose and groped toward the intruder.

"And such news, my brother-in-law," roared the Captain—"such news for you and the little Thérèse! It is that I am retired at last. I go no more to the sea. I will come and visit with you—perhaps live with you and cheer you, my dear friend, in your advancing years—and all will be well."

M. Perigord gasped and choked. "Aha, but it is good to see you. The same you are as before, Léon, never changing. And Thérèse, where is she—and as beautiful as ever, like an empress—hnn?"

M. Perigord drew himself up like a cobra. "Sacré!" he swore to himself with vehemence. The fool—what disrespect was this, to inquire after a homely, commendable sister with so evident a sneer! Beautiful, indeed! M'sieu snorted—he was aware of a jab being thrust at the honor of the Perigords. He turned green. "Simon Marie," he said with effort and much impression—"Simon Marie, be assured
that it is with the most profound respect that I regard your estimable sister, and I will not permit nor will I tolerate any allusion to the appearance of madame, my wife."

"Ma foi," growled the brother, "but what is all this about? I apologize—a thousand times, yes, of a certainty. But I am amazed. I return—I am here—I greet you with courtesy, ecstasy—I ask after the health of my so beautiful sister. But it is to you as if I offer an insult. What then? Alons! I go—first to my sister, to pay my respects to one who I will have you understand is of my own flesh and blood. Her photograph, which I carry always along with that of our adored mother, did attract the admiration of all to whom I have displayed it. What eyes—what a pensive mouth—what little ears! Bien, it is enough. I shall bid you a very good day. I go, and not to return until I receive an apology for your offensive outburst."

With a magnificent pomposity the brother-in-law went bowling down the little walk, heaving for all the world with the peculiar swaying motion of an elephant as he went.

As for M. Perigord, he could not speak. He was assailed with a fear of apoplexy; he ground his teeth and wriggled with nervous rage.

So this, then, was one of his wife's relations, come to annoy, to be a thorn in his side, to disgrace him!

Another step sounded—a brisk step; some jaunty personage was approaching, surely. M. Perigord, fortunately thus diverted, and probably saved from an "attack" of much import, listened intently with his head on one side.

A gay little song greeted his hearing. He sighed with relief. A tear stole down his cheek. Here at last was a true friend. M. Prendre had arrived.

"Aha, there you are—there you are, my friend!" enthused M. Prendre with touching cordiality. "And you are overjoyed—you are here alone—you anticipate—you are engulfed with unique emotions—you almost suffer from the great restoration that awaits you. You are saying to yourself: 'Soon, soon I shall again behold everything'—and you are overcome at the thought." All this from M. Prendre, the most devoted and dependable of friends.

M. Perigord inhaled a great breath of air. He experienced a sudden calm. A faint perfume of essence of violet emanated from M. Prendre's well groomed person. There was a refreshing crispness in his very presence which asserted its existence at once.

"It is all as you say, Maurice," he assented, much mollified.

"And madame," went on M. Prendre, like so much oil—"how is she this beautiful day?"

"Madame also is finding herself well, and—at present—M. Simon Marie Maillard, her brother, is with her." This with meaning, as one who shall insinuate to another very good friend the great patience one has with the other members of one's family.

"But yes—but yes," murmured M. Prendre comprehensively, "I remember M. Maillard quite well, although he has followed the sea these many years. He was one of those never to be forgotten. Has he still his seven trained monkeys and parrots?"

"That I could not say, but this I know—he will not remain here as before. He comes but to depart—and very soon."

M. Prendre coughed delicately. "Let us promenade slowly down the path," he said soothingly. "It grows late and the air is somewhat chill. You must have caution, my friend, not to contract a cold in your head, as it would certainly affect your eyes."

For a while they sauntered in silence, M. Prendre linking his arm through that of his old friend and thus firmly guiding him. Then a crafty thought came to M. Perigord. He would see—he would test M. Prendre to the core—he would probe insidiously as to the appearance of madame, his wife. It would have to be deftly put—but then M. Perigord prided himself upon his tact.

"And madame, my wife," he said tentatively as if to himself—"what pleasure she will experience when at last I may gaze upon her!"
Was it his imagination that tricked him? Surely the arm of Maurice Prendre had trembled as he spoke.

"Why, yes, of a certainty," assented his friend. "And this will be a grand reward, this being at last the observed of her husband. Ah, Léon, with what appreciation you will gaze upon her modesty!" And then again a pregnant silence as they walked.

Modesty, thought M. Perigord to himself. There it was again—most gratifying—and from one who never as a rule mentioned women who were fair in any way save but to comment on their physical charms. But again M. Perigord put forth a test.

"To you," he said in a tone of warm confidence, "I will declare, Maurice, that I regret that madame, my wife, is not more artistic—that is to say, chic—in the appearance. But then, as we all know, the good God cannot bestow upon us everything, and so I strive to be content. To be the husband of an excellent woman is indeed to be consoled. So many, of a truth, are beautiful—and not excellent."

Again a spasm seemed to contract the assisting arm of M. Prendre, and, "Ah, my friend," he said very gently, "but she is indeed that and much beside."

"Much beside?" questioned M. Perigord suspiciously.

"That is as you shall see," evaded his friend. "When your eyesight is restored, Léon, you will understand what I mean." And again he was abruptly silent.

M. Perigord frowned and tugged viciously at his huge spreading beard. The day had been most disconcerting—things were not as they should be. Even one's best friends could be asses at times. And at this moment they found themselves at the door of the house, M. Perigord devoured by a hundred torturing suspicions and his friend much alarmed over the peculiar tone that had been introduced into their congeniality.

It was not until many weeks later that M. Perigord again walked in his garden, this time alone—and with his eyes wide open.

It was quite a different Léon from the one who had helplessly leaned upon an uncertain stick in the old blind days. He was, in the first place, even more immaculate than ever—more bristling, to put it aptly. His eyes snapped through huge formidable spectacles; his mustaches swirled fiercely upward; his shoulders were well squared—and on this day his entire mien portrayed symptoms of a seething, suppressed rage.

It was, in a word, that M. Perigord, now wholly recovered, had summoned to his home his friends—his three old friends who had been so assiduously devoted to him these many years. With morbid impatience he awaited their coming, and as he waited he ran his fingers through his hair and flung wide his arms and shook his fists at the heavens with consummate wrath.

Ha—so it had been a trick—a trap! He would attend to such falsity. He would see to it that the honor of all the generations of Perigords should be avenged, but yes—and avenged to the last drop of blood.

In her boudoir Madame Perigord wept steadily. Annette, her maid, stood beside her agitatedly proffering smelling salts. Suzanne Perault, her intimate friend, consoled with soothing words. To say that madame herself was distressed was to speak of the affair as if it were a bagatelle. To be candid, she was consumed with a nervous frenzy. In her hand she held a little silver mirror.

"Oh, but Suzanne, I wish I were dead—c'est vrai!" she moaned. "Here am I, a passable woman instead of a freak of nature, and M. Perigord is about to become a criminal on account of it. Mon Dieu—mon Dieu! And if I had possessed a pock-marked skin and a cocked eye he would have rejoiced." Madame's voice trailed into a wail.

Out in the garden the suspense was beginning to be intolerable for M. Perigord. Would the hour of three never arrive? What a snail of a watch he possessed—always slow! How irritating was the shrill trilling of madame's canary—and the fool of a young man who lived in the tiny house just at the end of his property, did he imagine himself
a genius that he should practise on the
flute four hours a day like a dying cat?
The situation was unbearable—every­
thing was unbearable. Here was he;
there was madame, weeping. Where
were his fine friends—where?
At last he beheld them. They ap­

drected en masse—afraid to come
alone, that was evident.
M. Perigord at once assumed his most
vivant manner.
"Good day, messieurs. Good day—
good day," he said three times impres­
sively to each, bowing with a supreme
show of ceremony; and then, straighten­
ing himself up like a brigadier, he waited.
"It is the first time that we behold you
since your convalescence, my friend,"
vented M. Prendre.
"And it is good to know that you can
see again," volunteered the elder Ri-
bault, attempting a genial
sang-froid.
"But yes," responded M. Perigord

glacially. "And it is also good to ob­
serve that you are aware I can see." Then,
looking them full in the eye, he
flung forth his thunderbolt.
"Messieurs," he said, "the feelings of
Léon Perigord are his own. His senti­
ments are the same. I have been
cruelly and basely deceived—by each of
you—in so delicate a matter that I will
not even attempt to describe where your
offense lies, since your consciences must
sufficiently accuse you. Messieurs, I
challenge each of you to a separate duel,"
and stepping up to the astounded men,
he slapped one after the other vigorously
on the cheek. For a moment there was
silence—as if all had been shot with bul­
lets;'then,
"But, m'sieu, this is madness!" ex­
ploded M. Prendre, his face purple and
the veins swelling out on his forehead.
"It is insanity!" chorused the Ri-
baults with vehemence.
"No, messieurs, you mistake—it is
honor." And M. Perigord regarded
them with true Gallic insouciance. That
was the way of it. The air was as if
charged with a malevolent electric cur­
rent; everyone was enraged; even the
flute of the neighbor trembled with mad­
dening discords. Of a truth, all this was
to be the remembered affair of a life-
time. "Not one of you, my friends,"
said M. Perigord, "ever so much as in­
sinuated to me the marvelous beauty of
madame, my wife. For that matter, you
purposely deceived me, designing doubt­
less to pull me into security. According
to your evasions, madame might have
been as vilaine as an old fat concierge, or a
poissarde. Bien, it was like that, and so
while you visited here you conversed
with me that you might bask before
madame. Sacré! I could run you each
through for it!"
They trembled. It was a fact that
M. Perigord was a large-boned man, pos­
essed of enormous strength and much
determination, whereas they were as
spindle legs by the side of him.
But suddenly the attention of all was
diverted by an intruder, an uninvited
guest—unwelcome certainly—and no
less a personage than that roistering
captain of the sea, M. Maillard, the
brother of Madame Perigord.
"Mille tonnerres!" thought M. Peri­
gord. "Why does he come, and always
at the wrong moment?" Here was he,
the injured husband chastising ingrate
friends, and along comes the bête of a
brother-in-law to destroy the grand situ­
aton at once!
M. Maillard advanced with measured
tread. It was as if he came slowly but
surely like a Nemesis. Nor was he
filled with his habitual abounding joy.
He looked neither to the right nor the
left, until he stood before them; and be­
hind him loped a great bloodhound with
flopping ears.
"Messieurs," he said crisply in his
booming voice, "I have the honor to
address you all, I perceive." And he
clicked his great boots together as he
saluted the four.
"But I come, M. Perigord, to you di­
rect, to resent the insult that you have
visited upon our family—first because
of your unseemly language to me, and
also because of your insinuations about
my cherished sister. You, m'sieu, may
as well understand that while you were
blind it was not possible for me to offer
violence to one so afflicted—but now all
is different. If the Perigords have
honor, the Maillards possess yet more.
Observe then, m'sieu, how a Maillard inflicts punishment upon those who outrage him,” and with that another resounding slap hissed through the air, and this time it was M. Perigord who was the recipient.

Alas that such strife could be! Here were duels—and more duels to be fought. It was as if an army had invaded the peace of the garden.

M. Perigord gasped. He was too paralyzed with amazement to speak; instead, he seemed to be swelling up like a balloon. The huge dog shifted his standing position and cocked a ferocious bloodshot eye at all. Here was indeed a grave and complex entanglement.

“IT shall never be said, messieurs, that Simon Marie Maillard lies,” went on the Captain. “And when I spoke to M. Perigord of his so beautiful wife, who is the most adored of sisters to me, he resented it—he inferred that I, a man of repute and gallantry, had spoken disparagingly. He addressed me grossly—picture to yourselves—and for nothing. Mon Dieu, no man may do this to Simon Marie Maillard and live—unless apologies come. And there you are. None came. Not a word nor a line. Sacré! So I am here—I come, messieurs, to demand reparation.” And M. Maillard struck himself grandly upon the chest.

Now it is a fact that the little things of this world often divert the great catastrophes, and as these combatants stood there consumed with malignant hatred, Pitau, the poodle dog of madame, came slipping up the garden path with a bone in his mouth which he intended burying, and, perceiving the intrusive bloodhound, barked at him furiously.

It was quite true that he but performed his duty as a watchful guardian against all stray canines. But the hound did not stop to reflect upon this. His great ears moved; so did his loose joints; his short hair bristled. In a word, he strode forward toward the enemy, and before anyone could interfere he had the unfortunate Pitau firmly by the neck, and a fearful and heartrending mêlée ensued.

Then all was commotion. From the house came the screams of women; from the men arose maledictions. Jean Auguste, the chef, came streaming from the regions of the kitchen. Madame, tear-stained and full of horror, leaned forth from her window and implored wildly. M. Perigord, M. Maillard, M. Prendre, the two Ribaults all forgot the point at issue and hastened to the rescue of the under dog.

M. Maillard was magnificent; he shouted directions as if he were in a storm at sea. Clutching the hind legs of the attacking brute, he pulled mightily, directing meanwhile that M. Perigord should snatch away the poodle, while M. Prendre bravely and obediently endeavored to pry open the clamped jaws of the larger dog with his stick and the Ribaults and the chef belabored him with kicks and shoves.

It was a supreme moment.

“Ah, brother-in-law,” gasped M. Perigord, “if you will but save the poor Pitau! He has been so faithful all these years—an innocent animal—a brave watchdog—the cherished pet of madame, never harming aught save the rats. Save him—I implore you!”

“Diable! But what a grip!” swore M. Prendre, puffing like an engine.

“The little Pitau dies! He expires! Mon Dieu—mon Dieu!” screamed Madame Perigord from the window, and then she mercifully fainted.

But presently a more dreadful thing occurred. M. Perigord, in his extreme efforts to extricate Pitau, permitted his hand too near the fangs of the bloodhound. In a trice the vicious beast had released his hold on the poodle, only to snap at the hand. But it was enough. The blood gushed forth from the thumb of M. Perigord in a crimson jet.

However, all things must end, even dog fights. And it was Louis, the aged gardener, who finally displayed the presence of mind to turn the garden hose full in the face of the atrocious invader, and none too soon, as those who saw the limp form of the poor Pitau could have testified.

It was a great stream of water, gushing this way and that, drenching all and cooling all. And then of a sudden, while M. Maillard chastened his miserable
beast with his stout cane, while Madame Perigord revived to the assurances that her pet had been rescued, a great wave of reaction and generosity expanded the soul of her husband. Bandaging his mangled thumb as best he could, he bowed with great humility before his friends.

"Messieurs, it is that we have all been together in this hour of extreme danger—that we have remained side by side like brothers, caring naught for our personal safety so that we succored each other. Messieurs, I am not ungrateful. I apologize to you, M. Prendre—to you, Messieurs Ribault—to you, brother-in-law." And he stood before them grandly like a martyr of old.

M. Prendre was the first to respond. "But yes," he said with great dignity, "the blood of m'sieu has also been shed—that must be taken into consideration."

"A wound is a wound," agreed M. Maillard heartily, having returned from the chastening.

"Of a verity," assented the elder Ribault, "a wound is a wound, whether it be inflicted by a rapier or a pistol or a dog bite."

"Then let it suffice." And M. Prendre extended his hand toward M. Perigord with a superb generosity.

And so the affair ended, just as madame and her children came flocking volubly through the flowers to see the exhausted Pitau. Madame—the charming—the much avenged—the beautiful! But really no more of a deception than all the others of her enigmatical sex.

A SONG

By Lizette Woodworth Reese

LOVE along my garden went,
Plucking white and red,
Just a little wreath to make
For his idle head.

When I followed after him,
Sobbing and forlorn,
Not a rose or white or red—
But a many a thorn!

HILTON—Did you agree to turn over a new leaf this New Year?

TILTON—No; I had already reached the cover.

WIFE—John, wake up! There's a burglar downstairs.

HUSBAND—Well, what of it? Ever since I got my life insured you've been trying to push me to the front.
A HUSBAND is one of the necessary evils that go with a wedding. He is seldom ornamental, and he usually gets stage fright and spoils the show, but the bride knows she must take him, along with the rice and old shoes. And a woman is willing to endure anything, if—for once in her life—she be allowed to take the star part in a marriage drama. Her Wedding Day, to a woman, is what Coronation Day is to a queen.

But husbands do not rain down from heaven, so a woman is naturally proud of the one she lands. True, he may not be worth the money she spent for cosmetics, voice culture and other bait, but the size of her catch is not of the utmost importance. Anything from a minnow to a whale qualifies a woman for membership in the Matrimonial Anglers’ Club, and a bride writes “Mrs.” before her name with the same pride that a hunter has when he displays his pair of antlers, or a soldier his badge of honor.

It is one of the fictions of the matrimonial game that the men do the choosing; but picking out a wife looks to a man a whole lot like hard work, and he is grateful to the girl who saves him the trouble. Then, too, a man’s mind is so occupied with business, baseball and other important things that he cannot waste time on so trivial a matter as choosing a life partner. So, when a woman wishes a mate, she tightens her girdle, takes her vanity box in her hand and goes in search of him, comforting herself with the assurance that she is obeying the Biblical injunction: “Seek and ye shall find.”

Hunting a husband is the most fascinating of all games to a woman, because in this pastime are combined the quiet joys of fishing, the pleasant excitement of the chase and the incomparable delights of shopping. A woman may not need a husband, any more than she needs the finery she fights for at the bargain counter, but she cannot resist the temptation to grab a man away from other women who want him.

Then, as before stated, a male victim attired in mourning is necessary to complete the triumph of a woman’s wedding day, and it is indeed exasperating that a lady should be put to so much trouble to secure the mere adjunct to a marriage ceremony. She is often compelled to search the continent over to find a strong, serviceable man, stylish and rich-looking, yet warranted to wear well. Sometimes years are spent in the search, and then when a suitable assistant is at last discovered, he may be so shy or ill-mannered that he will run away. Even Lillian Russell declares that to capture a husband a woman must be on the job every minute, and no one can deny that Lillian is an authority.

Some day husband hunting will be made easier. There will arise a great genius, with the instincts of Cupid, the artistic sense of Oscar Hammerstein and the commercial talent of the late Marshall Field, and he will put all the eligible men under contract, classify them and exhibit them in stores, where ladies can view hundreds in a day. Think of the crowds that will flock to these stores, and imagine the crush on bargain days, when shopworn bachelors and marked-down dukes are sold for less than cost! It will be an inspiring, as well as perspiring, spectacle.

In the meantime, the women must go out into the highways and byways in
search for husbands, and capture them as best they may. And no man objects to being chased; indeed, he is vastly flattered by this attention, but when he tries to figure out a woman’s reasons for the choice she makes, he usually brings on a brainstorm.

Let us inquire into that complex puzzle—a woman’s ideal husband.

First, money covereth a multitude of sins in the matrimonial game—which is lucky for the men, as they usually have a multitude to cover. Men, too, have been known to run like deer when a poor girl made eyes at them, and then go unaccountably lame when a rich girl got on their trail; and a man will admit that gold can gild a freckle or atone for a temper. But how women can believe money an elixir of youth is beyond his comprehension, and when he sees a young and beautiful girl marrying a senile, mummy-faced millionaire, he wonders why Cupid doesn’t throw up his job in disgust and go to shooting Indians in a Wild West show.

Another dark mystery to the mind of man is woman’s worship of titles and her love of high-sounding names. He can figure out tariff schedules, baseball averages and other complicated things, but when you ask him why a woman will urge her husband to work like a slave that they might buy their daughter a duke who regards work as a disgrace, he merely butts his head against the door. Or maybe he will butt your head. And a man is mightily insulted when he sees a half-dozen girls hot on the trail of his friend, Reginald Stuyvesant Smith, while only one lorn damsel is following the man his parents blessed with the designation—Hiram Obadiah Jones.

But the most disconcerting thing to a man is that when a woman estimates his worth, outside his possessions, she puts him in the same category as coal or potatoes. She judges him by weight and bulk and demands good measure. She may accept a small man, if she can do no better, but her ideal husband is always a broad-shouldered, six-foot giant, who makes the rocking chair creak dangerously, and can lift the cook stove and crack hickory nuts in his teeth.

Yet there remains one hope for the small man—clothes. Women adore a “good dresser,” and even when she marries a man of plain attire, a woman has a secret hope that after marriage she can persuade her husband to wear a giraffe collar, a spotted vest and some lavender hose.

But this is not all. It is not enough that a man must attire himself like a vaudeville actor; he must have a care that his various garments are of tints that harmonize. Chameleon-like, too, he must reflect the gorgeousness of his wife, else, like the Milwaukee woman, she may divorce him for wearing neckties that do not match her gowns.

To sum up then: the first four things that attract the average woman to a man are his money, name, size and clothes—all superficial from the man’s point of view. About the man in the clothes a woman is seemingly but little concerned—except as to his past, which she prefers shall be dark and dubious. Not all women, of course, but a great many are attracted to the man who is “delightfully” wicked. Now, as like attracts like, and yet women are admittedly more moral than men, we have the problem that puzzled Adam when Eve first flirted with the serpent, and has baffled his sons ever since. Feminine curiosity and woman’s mania for reforming folk are two of the excuses offered for the mating of virtue with vice, but whether or not these explain the contradiction, it is certain that a man doesn’t have to be an angel to marry one.

That some women have excellent standards for measuring men is not denied. A well known writer has set down six qualities that an ideal husband should have. They are brains, truthfulness, generosity, enterprise, a good laugh and sisters. This list is certainly to be commended, though the last requisite is not particularly flattering to the women. She explains it thus:

“To a man without sisters, the revelation of a woman’s mood when she has a bad headache or tight shoes on a rainy day is a shock from which the highest sentiment seldom recovers.”

From this frank confession, it would
seem that the writer should have added fortitude to the list of an ideal husband’s virtues—or, at least, the possession of a cyclone cellar.

Now turn to the standard of an English portrait painter who has lately married the grandson of a great American poet. She has set down three rules of conduct for the ideal husband.

He must not smoke.
He must not drink intoxicating liquors.
He must not eat meat.

These are excellent rules also, the only difficulty being that they would bar most men from matrimony. However, the woman who secured one of the few eligibles would have a nice, amiable husband that she could bring into the house without first having to deodorize him, and if dinner happened to be late, she would feel no uneasiness lest he fly into a passion and kick the cat.

But it is to be feared that few women agree with these charming ideals. In fact, a clever writer of the feminine sex hoots at the rules of the portrait painter. She says that the ideal husband is a regular man with red blood and a hankering for the fleshpots, and that a wise wife will not object to smoking nor put the pedal down too hard on moderate drinking. And another writer startles us with this declaration:

“If I had a husband who wouldn’t quarrel with me good and hard once in a while, just to show that he cared whether I was cross or not, I would divorce him and marry a Bengal tiger to get some excitement into life.”

This will be cheerful news to the timid, peace loving man who is contemplating matrimony, and before he recovers his equilibrium he is confronted with the peculiar requirement of a feminine playwright, who declares that her ideal husband must not wear whiskers. She says many women who have married men with beards are shocked and disillusioned when their husbands take a freak notion to shave.

No doubt, but is it wives alone who are disillusioned after marriage? Suppose the prospective husband who was asked to remove his chin mask should respond with a request to see his future wifewith her hair down! “’Tis a thought that must give the ladies pause.”

While mere man may feel a little dazed after reading some of the above quotations, it will doubtless be a great relief to him to learn how easily he may qualify as an ideal husband. Good habits, even, are not required. He may be a glutton, a tobacco fiend and a moderate drinker—yet satisfy some women; and he can prove his affection for his wife by quarreling with her. Even a prize-fighter might please the woman who wanted a Bengal tiger mate. But if women marry for excitement, why do they rush to the divorce courts and demand a decree on the grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment the first time “hubby” makes invidious remarks about their cooking?

It may be objected that the women quoted are all writers and artists and not truly representative. Then let us turn to the ideal of a woman in private life, who has recently made public the precise qualifications she decided upon for her future husband. There is nothing vague nor indefinite in her demands. She has gone into details—not only prescribing the tastes, habits and beliefs her ideal must possess, but stating what must be his height, complexion and the shape of his ears. Among her peculiar requirements are the following:

He must have thick, curly hair—not red—over his left ear, eat ice cream with a fork, have decided ideas on raising pigs and poultry, wear his clothes like John Drew, never have been in love, like Robert Chambers’s stories, be a Republican and a money maker, dance the turkey trot and swear like a gentleman.

There—you see what a noble and inspiring ideal a woman can evolve when she makes up her mind to it! Also, you know that a man may swear and like Robert Chambers’s stories—yet be a gentleman still! What you don’t know is how this woman will determine if her ideal has ever been in love, and it may puzzle you a little to decide why his hair must be curly only over his left ear. Possibly she thinks a wise husband will know enough to keep always on the right side of his wife.
Of course a mere man might pick flaws in this ideal. He might think it more important to have decided ideas about rearing children than about raising pigs, and he might wonder why the lady should be so concerned as to her future husband's politics, yet require no religious belief at all.

And it would be just like a man to say that this woman would die an old maid, but, unbelievable as it may seem, she declares that she has found a man who fulfills in every particular the specifications she had decided on, and that she is engaged to him. The fact that she is a New York heiress may account for the riddle, but it is sad to think what some men will do for a paltry fifteen million.

But possibly man's scorn of feminine ideals is due to the fact that he cannot get a woman's point of view. Back of her apparent superficiality there may be a reason. Though clothes do not make the man, she may believe they help, and that a silk hat and a lovely spotted vest will inspire noble thoughts and deeds. She may take the proverb—"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches"—literally, and think a man with a high-sounding name will feel compelled to live up to it. And who knows what good reasons she may have for wanting a husband who is big and strong? She may figure that a large man's clothes will be easier to make over for the boys, and that a strong man will be handy to have around at house cleaning time. And as for his cracking hickory nuts with his teeth—well, she probably knows better than anyone else how adamantine are her biscuits.

But admitting that there is method in her madness, a woman's ideals are none the less perplexing. For one thing, no two have standards alike, and to be sure of pleasing some woman, a man would have to combine the ideals of several. And if he tried to be the composite ideal of the women quoted in this article he would find himself a vegetarian fond of the fleshpots, a teetotaler fond of drink, a smoker who didn't use tobacco, a man of brains dancing the turkey trot, and a moral, bulldozing brute; and he would find it necessary to dress like an actor, swear like a gentleman, quarrel like a fishwife, curl his hair on the side and wear detachable cuffs and whiskers.

This would require some versatility, to say the least, yet the New York heiress calmly tells us that it would be better if every girl would carefully formulate her ideal and paste it up where "all who run may read." Heaven forbid! If her ideal is a fair example, all who read would run, and they wouldn't stop running this side of Africa.

No, ladies, don't ever tell the men your ideals of a husband—not unless you want to die old maids. Every man would like to be the ideal of some nice little woman, if he were sure he wouldn't have to become a freak. But he is never quite sure. Besides—just to whisper a little secret in your ear—a woman wouldn't recognize her ideal of a husband if she met him every day in the year, and she wouldn't marry him—no, not if he were the last man on earth!

"Is marriage a safe proposition?"
"Yes—if you remember the combination."

No sooner said than done—"Amen."
THE DOCTOR SMOKES A CIGAR

By Charles Francis Read

The smoking compartment of the Pullman is empty save for the doctor and his cigar, but gradually fills with a company of the doctor's patients, who enter silently one by one at the invitation of the familiar spirit whose particular business it is to see to it that the physician keeps in touch with his clientele. The doctor's wife, daughter and son spend the summer in the mountains or by the sea. He is supposed to be with them during August, but the outing generally dwindles into a ten days' affair at the fag end of the season, when he finds himself going while everyone else is coming back, and is scolded for appearing so late, being so careless of his health and forgetting to bring evening clothes. At the end of a week he pays the bills, helps to carry the luggage home and is glad to get back to the grind that is life and livelihood to him.

The doctor is a bit of a philosopher, very much of a materialist—with strange outcroppings of a suppressed mystical trend—and seemingly a lonely man. Twenty years of hard country riding by day and night, fifteen hours out of the twenty-four away from home, have so silenced a tongue not naturally facile and so turned into inner channels a stream of thought naturally quick-flowing and deep, as to render the following ten years of successful practice in a city powerless to effect a change. His wife and children now go their ways with slight reference to him; his patients admire him for his skill while they stand in awe of his taciturnity; at the club where he plays an occasional rubber of whist he is known as the silent man, and his professional brethren who call him in counsel wonder why they had not thought before of the diagnosis that comes so readily as he approvingly listens to them expound it.

As the train moves out into the country he carefully cuts his cigar, lights it, sinks back in his chair and looks out of the window at the flat and uninteresting landscape. While he is thus engaged, a woman with an oddly twisted back and dull eyes enters the compartment with a roll of clothes, that proclaims itself a baby by various upheavals and the waving of a disengaged clawlike hand. She seats herself and begins to joggle it vigorously. The doctor's eyes light with reminiscent pride not untinged with apprehension as he gazes at the cornfields now racing past outside.

From out the hinterland of a nebulous consciousness of rest and comfort a stream of thought emerges into the open, unspoken but none the less clear because of the years of practice in self-communion. At times it seems momentarily to lose itself, only to emerge again, replenished by deeper springs.

"If the corn crop—" the stream runs—"only turns out as good as it promises now, there will be a lot of ready money this fall. Jamison's bill ought to be good if frost holds off for a couple of weeks more. If it doesn't—well, there's another kid in the world anyway—and if it pans out a little less shiftless than Jamison and a little less brainless than his wife, I'll have added to my credit by giving the world another little boost. Some class to a Caesarian section in a farmhouse at two A.M.! Appleby, when I called him, said it couldn't be done. Darn Appleby, anyway—all technique and no common sense! I'd have done it with a pair of shears and a darning

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needle before I'd have let 'em both snuff out while I stood by and whistled for an operating room. H'm!

"That's only one side of it, though. What about young John Henry? Who's going to take care of him from now on—who's going to make him an improvement over his boneless father and half-baked mother? Why can't somebody tell me that—why can't they? Evolution? Huh! Statistically all right perhaps, but individually—rotten. Something—some power—has got to help the John Henrys, or I might as well be raising corn—perhaps a blamed sight better."

Another comer enters and sits down beside the mother and child. She is a pretty girl in a flat sort of way, eyelids swollen with crying, hands nervously fingerling her dress. She glances hungrily at the bundle and then at the woman, who nods comprehendingly. The doctor smiles gently as she lifts the child to her breast, burying her face in its wrappings.

"Perhaps I might have saved Mary's baby"—the stream runs on—"if I had worked a little harder, but somehow it wasn't in me. Just another John Henry. Poor child, she couldn't keep him and work out; and what chance would the little devil have had in an orphanage? Queer how she took it when I told her the baby couldn't live. I suppose it's only instinct—but, by thunder, I hate to believe it. Bred by instinct—nursed by instinct—growing up by instinct, to reproduce again by instinct. Bah! I can't say it isn't so, but if it is, the whole thing isn't much better than a cornfield and a deal more painful."

Another visitor comes in. She is expensively dressed in village style and wears some poorly chosen but costly jewelry. As she sits down she draws away from the young girl, glancing at the baby but showing no interest in it. Evidently she does not care for children. The doctor frowns and closes his eyes.

"Forgive me, O Hippocrates! It was only the once anyway, and her husband was anxious, and I made myself believe she wasn't strong enough."

Suddenly he leans forward and curses as he used to do years ago on the cold, wet nights when his horses mired themselves in the muddy road. The woman preens herself a bit and draws farther away from the girl without a wedding ring. Several happy children with tousled hair and flushed cheeks run in, followed more slowly by a little fellow, who moves about stiffly as if trussed up in some kind of a splint. The doctor quite suddenly relaxes. As if caught doing something he is ashamed of, he coughs apologetically. When he has finally pulled himself together, he surveys the group, at first approvingly, and finally, one might almost say, chestily.

"Well, after all, that particular score is balanced, I guess. Pretty fancy work for an old fellow—diagnosing a case of poliomyelitis within twenty-four hours and getting the serum into the girl in another twenty-four. Practically a perfect result. I'll bet Saunders hasn't paid many bigger bills in his life. That thousand will just about make the difference between the old machine and the car Belle wants for next year. The 1912 model looks pretty good to me, but if she likes 'em up to the minute I'll get her what she wants. Johnny's compound fracture will pay for extra equipment—Dorothy's pneumonia will take care of the gasoline, and Tommy's back—oh, well, if I'm real lucky, that case will just about pay for the wind in the tires."

He chuckles, and then quickly frowns as a Polack laborer slouches in. The right arm is a bandaged stump below the elbow. He stands awkwardly, hat in hand, gazing dumbly at the doctor with eyes wide set in a flat, pallid face. The doctor bites his cigar hard.

"Confound the cursed cars, anyway! They are worse than juggernauts. Perhaps I might have saved that poor devil's hand if I hadn't been fussed by that blowout on the way to the hospital. I ought to have taken more time to consider the case. The right hand—gad! But ten to one it would have been infected if I had tried to save it, and he would have died. Hunkies don't feel things the way we do, anyway—he grunted when I told him it had to come off. I guess it was all right."
He shifts his cigar comfortably while the bandaged man looks down at the stump and back at him slowly, dully. The deformed mother, the young girl, the childless woman and the children at play pay no heed to him. He is quite alone with his stump until another man shuffles in, whereupon he is suddenly galvanized into life and harangues the newcomer voicelessly while he shakes the stump in his face. Slowly, however, as he gazes into the other man's white, drawn face and anguished eyes, he ceases, as if recognizing there something beyond his own agony. The doctor's cigar is going finely now and his brow is serene once more.

"The hunky is better off than his boss, anyway. I really must send Randolph off somewhere to a rest cure. Great pity, too. A hundred good dollars a month off my books, but he'll die on my hands surely if I don't. Perhaps I might have kept it all from him, but that old she-cat would have done for him some other way if I hadn't put him on his guard. Rotten mess I made of the diagnosis for a while—signs and symptoms all staring me in the face while I fairly dislocated my neck trying to see around them. Arsenic poisoning isn't so common in respectable communities as to be thought of in a hurry. Queer, too, how I finally tumbled to it the day she asked me if I thought he could last much longer. Beautiful tears in beautiful eyes they were, but the gossip at the club the night before and the glance I caught in the mirror as I started into the surgery turned the trick. How she raged the day I completed the tests that convicted her—and how she begged and wept! I never again hope to see as much easy money in sight as she offered me that day. Twenty-five thousand—and Lord, how good it looked! Why the dickens didn't I take it, clean up the Canadian mortgage, stock the farm with modern machinery and take six months in Vienna—Berlin—Paris—London? Gad, what a fool I was! But she would have gotten him later on, or he would have gotten her and she would have squealed on me. Ho, hum—after all, honesty is the best policy. Funny Randolph can't seem to get onto the fact that his pretty wife fed him arsenic; I believe he'd take her back now if he weren't afraid I'd laugh at him. Small danger of that, though. I must send in that account when I get back; think I'll add another hundred or two by way of interest on what I lost on the deal."

For a moment the stream of thought is lost as he gazes vacantly at the passing fields, until a young Italian with a red scar upon his neck enters, bowing with an ingratiating smile. The doctor turns his head and smiles in recognition.

"Probably it isn't Randolph's fault, after all. It's love that's the funny thing. What very small things we think, and what very big things we feel! Queer, Paloto's case comes to me just now. I sewed his throat up neatly after he tried to kill himself—and he recovered so completely that within six weeks he is back again to have a mole removed from his cheek—because, forsooth, his new sweetheart Dominica objects to it! But why smile at the boy? After all, he is only playing the game with a little more abandon than we cold-blooded mortals are accustomed to. I would rather have his capacity for emotion than discover the cure for cancer. Yes, by jiminy, I would! Other men can do the most of your thinking for you, but only you yourself can feel—and what a lot we miss because we think we ought to be ashamed of our poor crippled and strangled emotions!"

The vivid young Italian has now, by some strange inner fire, brought to the faces of the other passengers a pale sort of reflection. The girl-mother of the still born child nurses the borrowed baby more avidly. The worn man's eyes glow with a faint light. The hunky straightens his bent shoulders so that he can look forward without looking up, and only the children and the childless woman remain unmoved. The latter is evidently a finished product. The doctor is aware of a faint stir, and turns about to meet the eyes of a tall woman standing in the doorway, a woman of thirty-five perhaps. She is quite pale, with faintly flushed cheeks and soft gray eyes with a trace of tears. Although
her chin is well up, nevertheless it is as if she were about to say, “May I not come in, too?” The doctor breathes fast and smokes hard.

“Fool! Fool!” he mutters—the only words he has spoken aloud. “I shall have to quit calling there. She is playing me for a cure for ennui. There isn’t anything the matter with her and she knows it, and knows that I know she knows it. She must think that I like the game—and I’m afraid I do. Why is it I can talk to that woman? Belle told me just before she left that she had heard I was a brilliant conversationalist. H’m—when I begin to acquire a reputation like that, it’s time to stop. Mrs. Debreaux is very interesting, but she goes a little too fast for me. I had better stick to a thinking part—moral and more becoming to my years. I’ll recommend her to Tate when I get back. Tate’s single, and he’d make love to anyone for the sake of increasing his neurological practice.”

The figure in the doorway clutches at the curtain with one hand and thrusts out the other toward the doctor, who resolutely sets his face to the flying fields, until the woman turns away and drops the curtain behind her. For some time, however, it is evident that she is still lingering there; the curtain is moved this way and that as she turns, and the perfume of clematis pervades the room. The doctor’s mouth at times moves in curious grimaces and again sets in stony hardness, while his eyes stare unseeingly through the window. Once again he mutters “Fool!” From all of which it is quite apparent that he is fighting something below even the plane of conscious thought, until gradually the movements behind the curtain cease and the odor of clematis fades away.

Quite briskly then the curtain parts again, and a young girl with a crutch hobbles gaily in. She takes in the company at a glance and makes for the baby, playfully buffeting the children aside as they flock about her. To the Italian she gives a nod of frank comradeship, the light in her eyes matching that in his own. The doctor turns with a sigh of relief.

“Tate’s diagnosis of ‘hysterical’ pain in Wanda’s case didn’t amount to much when I got an X-ray picture of the osteomyelitic infection that caused it. Now if the tibia will only reconstruct itself along the graft, I’ll make him wish he had studied something besides mental and nervous diseases. How crestfallen he looked when I showed him the picture—it was really pitiful! Served him right, though, for referring to me as ‘one of the old school practitioners’ at that banquet. I warned him then that before the year was out I’d get his goat in a perfectly ethical way, and I smiled so benignly that he never knew how hard he’d touched me.

“Wanda’s a pretty child; for Don’s sake I hope she gets well. I’m afraid the boy is pretty hard struck—as kid love goes. And I guess she isn’t far behind. But she can’t marry him if she’s to be a cripple all her life—I won’t have it even if her father has got a bunch of money. Belle is for it, willy-nilly, but Belle doesn’t know how easy it is for a man to drift away from a woman sound in limb, let alone a lame one. There are a lot of things Belle misses by talking too much and observing too little. But then the leg will get along all right no doubt; the youngsters will fall out and go their separate ways. In the end it will be all pretty much the same. Don will settle down to work hard for some woman, forget how to feel or muzzle his emotions so that they are worse than useless to him, do some ordinary thinking, imagine he is living, and that will be the end of it all for him.”

The doctor’s arms drop to the sides of his chair and his face settles into deep lines, not the lines of strength that have marked it, but those of unguarded weakness and weariness.

A woman enters—a tall woman with a white face of amazing sweetness. Her eyes are closed, but in spite of this she finds a chair without difficulty and sits there with marblelike rigidity as if looking straight before her through her eyelids. The children and the lame girl pay no attention whatever to her. The deformed mother and the nursing girl shrink a bit, and the laborer crosses himself stolidly. The emaciated man smiles
and nods his head in recognition. But the childless woman springs to her feet as if to scream, then sinks back, cowering, with both hands before her face. She is plainly not a finished product, after all. The doctor straightens a bit and evidently struggles to put on a brave face, but with small success.

"Why must I always come back to this? Death isn't so hard. There is almost always the anesthetic effect of disease to deaden the perceptions at the last. Mrs. Hallowell didn't die hard, after all. I wish I could believe that her queer vision of something beyond wasn't a mere hallucination due to the delirium of fever. True, even after this she selected her hymns, said good-bye and all that in orthodox fashion—but all the time she was poisoned through and through and died in a stupor. It can't be. And yet who knows? That's the question they can't answer. Who knows that there isn't something back of it all—giving and taking—picking up the broken fragments and welding them together again? I'm fifty-five, and twenty years more to go, if that leaky mitral valve doesn't upset my calculations. But what's the use if we are merely bits of matter so highly organized that we think to move our limbs, in place of expanding petals to the sunlight in heliotropic reaction? Perhaps it's only my weakness. Perhaps I can't face the music like some men. I'm only a child afraid of the dark—afraid of the dark!"

His chin drops and he gazes wistfully into the face of the trussed-up boy playing on the floor, as if to wring from it something he cannot find within himself. Suddenly then tears come to his eyes and he snatches the cigar from his mouth. The child is kneeling stiffly, its baby lips moving silently, the hands approximated palm to palm with painstaking accuracy, point upward. The doctor smiles, swallows hard, and as he takes to wiping his glasses the hopeless stare gives way to the look only his children know. It would almost seem, if it were not a foolish supposition, that he is praying with the child.

"Tommy!" he whispers aloud, then lapses into silent speech.

"He prays for his doctor every night. Started it all by himself, his mother says. And I've called him a charity case! Tommy, if there's any cure for tuberculous spine you shall have it. Why, boy, you are the answer—you are the answer all in yourself! You little rascal, you've got to come through all right. I'll just cut out the seashore business—they'll never miss me, anyway. I'll go on to New York and see Marsden about you tomorrow. Marsden ought to know what to do if anybody does."

The doctor chuckles to himself shakily, tosses his dead cigar away and rises. The other occupants of the compartment slip away unobserved as he leaves. All save Tommy, who follows the doctor back to his section.

"When would you say a song becomes popular?"

"When four-fifths of the people begin to curse every time they hear it."

A PESSIMIST is a man who loves himself for the enemies he has made.
THE MAD SEA KING

By Harrold Skinner

WHEN the sun rides low, when the gull hawks high,
When the flaming sword in the western sky
Stabs the haunt of the king of termless seas—
He the grim dread czar of ships’ destinies—
Then I seek my love, as I hark the moan
Of the Mad West Wind on his molten throne.

When the ocean, writhing in wild unrest,
Takes the frail ship unto her heaving breast;
When we race for life with the howling gale,
As it shrieks and lashes our goosewing sail;
Then I woo my love—lo, I cheat the grave
Of the Mad King’s sexton, the Seventh Wave!

When the gull hawks high, when the sun burns low,
When the astral sky sends a deep, deep glow
O’er the ocean’s breast in a fulsome flood,
Till the ship fares forth on a sea of blood;
Then I lure my love with the strident hail:
“Helm’s alee—about—all hands shorten sail!”

Under courses thrashing and light sails clewed,
And the wild caprice of the Mad King’s mood,
Comes the crashing ice on the racing tide,
And with arms uplifted my love, my bride!
Then I’ll wed the sea; ’tis the King’s behest,
That I sleep for aye on her heaving breast!

“I HEAR that Mrs. Topnotch had the most noticeable gown of any guest at the Neurich ball.”
“Yes—she outstripped them all.”

THOSE who never have any luck are the ones who believe in it most.
THE original tale:
A bank clerk, walking by the sea, hears cries for help. He swims out into the waves and rescues a drowning woman, who loses one of her shoes near the shore. A dockhand wades out up to his knees, and picks up the shoe for her. Whereupon the lady munificently rewards the dockhand, and curtly dismisses the bank clerk.

As written by Victor Hugo
Night is a great and terrible mystery. In the night are all things increased, enlarged, aggravated.
Mme de Courreseaux lost a slipper in the daytime.
Therefore our theme is comedy rather than tragedy, laughter rather than tears, mirth rather than sorrow.
This was in 1862.
Mme de Courreseaux, turning to her rescuer, said: "I wish you a good day; but beware of the approaching night!"
In this sentence lies a deep significance, not to be appreciated until, fifty years later, the Comte de la Fountaine murdered the reverend Bishop of O—, the uncle of the author of this history.
To return now to Mme de Courreseaux, shivering piteously on the shore. Receiving the slipper from the hand of Lambert, she tossed him a franc piece with these words: "Your mind, being little, gropes after little things, among them the acquisition of riches."
Suddenly the sound of a gun shot rolled across the waters.
What could it be?
The three stood on the shore and listened intently.

As written by Maurice Hewlett
"Ha! Death o' my life!" snapped the chill voice of Montfaucon Seigneur. This fair youth was newly come from the fires of Canteloupe, there a striver (it might be asserted) in the Temples of Gold.
He sprang forth into the waves, looked once into the east, and dragged the damsel from out the tumultuous waste. The Lord knows, the lad was deserving of much, but, happing by at the time, he of the long tongue, strolling player, singer of ribaldry, chorister of the Gates of Satan—I name one Giles de Sanscriter (fat knave!)—drew from out the brine the tender slipper of my lady. The she-wolf smiled. All the North was in her smile. Forthwith she slipped moneys into the paw of that plump varlet, Sanscriter, and struck back our youthful hotblood with a look of ice.
"By the ten toes of God!" swore he fiercely.
But, "Back dog! To your kennels, cur!" she broke in.
Which (as Henry Dantier, the pious abbot of La Roussante, would say) puts the sour smirk to Dame Fortune's straight lips.

As written by G. K. Chesterton
I should like to tell you a little story of infinite charm. These others have told you the story the way it really is, which is all wrong; I will tell you the way it is not, which, after all, is the only right way. For if one wishes to be great, one need only study the actions and thoughts of the mass of humanity, and then act and think otherwise. I will now give you an instance of my own greatness.
One blue and burning June day I sauntered forth (along with other interesting people) toward the galloping sea, the sea that sounds the keynote of Old England.

As I—but you have read what these other cheap litterateurs have said. I shall not repeat the tale, although it is so simple, so devoid of point, that it especially appeals to my mind—a mind, I need scarcely remind you, that can force the little facts of life to give forth their mysterious significance.

The high-spirited lady, let us say, stands before us rescued; her shoe—no, now that I think of it, it was not her shoe that she lost, but one of my inimitable essays which she was reading with great delight, when she happened to be washed overboard from her yacht—this essay, I repeat, is in her hand, and the two youths stand meekly before her.

To the saver of her life, she says: "The others had me dismiss you curtly, but I am a creation of Mr. G. K. Chesterton, and am therefore more original. Hence I give you the 'munificent reward,' this priceless essay, which I advise you to read often."

Turning to the other, she says: "You have been rewarded so often that it seems to me that for once you should receive punishment. Hence I positively forbid you to read any of Mr. Chesterton's sparkling and brilliant works."

As written by H. G. Wells

She sat far into the night, after the fatal episode, staring in a dumb sort of way into the hearth. She wondered dimly whether she had been justified. The moral sense of acute distinction between right and wrong was, she felt, not lacking in her composition, and yet somehow a certain troubling regret, a desire now cold and in ashes, crept slowly around her heart with a pain almost poignant. . . . No, she reflected, the basic theory of Socialism was not wrong; life itself had schooled her in that. The hinterland of doubt had been crossed long since. . . . Her mind was set at ease. . . . She rose from her vigil, and satisfied at what she had done, crept off to her room, self-triumphant at having defeated the armies of skepticism.

But none the less, her sleep was vaguely troubled by curious dreams.

As written by George Jean Nathan

Being a dramatic critic, I may say that this truculent tale disturbs my glabrous brain bowl with its repugnant Ohenryism. Therefore—but pardon me a moment while I run across the street for luncheon; the cook on whom I have lavished my affections for years left last evening. . . . Ah, here I am back again! Kind of you to wait for me.

To proceed. If you join me in wishing Mayor Fitzgerald in Matteawan; Ruth Maycliffe's voice embedded in a ten-ton safe with the combination lost; Paul Armstrong's characters locked up in the Tombs; myself a millionaire (I am one, anyway); Fra Eaton and Alan Dale in a duel in which both must inevitably be killed; alarm clocks abolished; a hair tonic invented that can raise hair instead of merely a smell; the Great American Drama arrived; Arnold Bennett's nose less like a prominence; Strindberg's ghost made King of England; George M. Cohan possessed of a throat as well as a nose; and my prowess as a rib-jabbing gullet shaker with a hatred of bombastic buncombe and maudlin claptrap more widely acknowledged—if, I say, you join me in wishing these little things, then there is no need of your reading such willy-nilly little tales of females without shoes and rescuers without rewards.

Everyone has his little weakness. Even I! And when I discovered that the chorus of the Winter Garden succeeded in singing me to sleep, I fear it is but a confession that I am growing old. Perhaps I may have to take to writing such inferior stuff as the plays of Shaw or Barrie, and—perish the thought!—I may even descend low enough to accept the Presidency of the United States.

Oh, about that story! Don't read it—I didn't.
THE BEAUTY
By Archibald Sullivan

"BUT you can't even afford to keep my hands," I said, looking softly down on them. "If I marry a man he's got to understand how to feed my hands. They want a diet of rings. My wrists would die of cold if you didn't cover them with bracelets, and my throat wither away like the stem of a white lily unless you could clasp it in a pearl dog collar."

He stared round the shabby little room—at the sun-bleached walls and the threadbare weariness of the cheap carpet, at the tiny reproductions of enormously expensive pictures in their shabby frames and up at the Japanese parasol that covered the damp-stained ceiling. He was trying to fit my words into my surroundings. The two things didn't match.

"But—" he began.

"Oh, say it," I put in hurriedly. "Tell me I ought to be content because I've got four windows and two rooms like a dilapidated pillbox. Tell me my conversation ought to hinge on cheap breakfast foods and the resoling of my solitary pair of shoes. Order me to think only of pearls and emeralds in connection with the Revelation of Saint John and the Crystal Sea. Do you know what I would do if an angel came fluttering in at that window?"

"No—never," I said furiously. "You're a man and would never understand. What's the use of hair that shrieks gold autumn and copper color, if you have to crown it with a seventy-five-cent hat? Look at my hands. Why, they're dipped in hell every day. You thought hell was a place of vermilion rocks, perpetual fireworks and perspiring fiends. Hell, to me, is a shabby pair of black cotton gloves, faintly green at the finger tips and invariably gaping at the wrist. What's the use of my body?"

"I never knew," and he sighed, "that beauty could be so hard. How many times have I asked you to marry me and you've refused because I haven't got the money?"

I let the question go fluttering past me like a butterfly. I didn't want to catch it. It was an old friend, and I knew each tiny detail of its wings.

"Suppose I married you"—my hands clasped each other for protection in the faded lap of my gown—"suppose I lived at your rooms with nothing to do but blacken the miserable little orphan of a stove and try and brush some newness into your clothes. Why, man, you don't want me—you do these things far better yourself. Were my hands made for that? Look at them. They want a maid for every finger and a valet to look after every little pink line."

"But suppose the invention went
through—that I made a huge success, and the money—"

"I can't wait any longer. Unless you can take me by these white hands and lead me through a rainstorm of jewels and a soft hurricane of tinted silk, the thing is finished—done."

"And you can let me go like that?"

He stood towering over me, the veins on his forehead bulging like little angry ropes. "Let me go because I haven't got this filthy, cursed money? And you love me! You've lain against my heart and told me—pressed your lips on mine and whispered it a hundred thousand times. Where's your heart? Oh, don't turn up those wonderful sapphire eyes and hold out hands that look like a statue of white pleading done in marble. Where's your heart—the real part of you—the thing that's brave and doesn't mind the hard places in the world?"

"God forgot to put it in"; and I even smiled. "He knew it would be the color of a great ruby and that it would please me. He just said: 'Give this woman a great ache for all the delectable things of life instead. Let her veins run with longing instead of blood. Make her face from white flowers and ice. Crown her head with burning hair that is like nothing but gold on fire, then turn her loose in the world and show her a shop where she can buy a book called—"The Guide to Eternal Damnation"—'")

His face went a tired, startled white. "Then I was right—you are mad."

"Five days out of every week, I think."

He sat heavily down in a wicker chair, that creaked with dry complaining, while his hands, strong, bronze and compelling, covered his face.

I felt that I was something carved on the divan with its pitiful frivolity of cheap cushions. Outside in the street Life purred by like some great contented cat. And Life wouldn't behave to a woman unless she could feed it with golden mice and give it crystal saucers of silver milk. Then she was allowed to stroke the soft seductiveness of its fur and ride triumphant in a Paquin gown upon its back. It would purr for her and flash great eyes of topaz delight. But if she couldn't—if Life, the great creeping, stealing cat, called at her door and she had nothing to give—it turned on her, tore at her heart, lined her forehead, deep and lasting, with its claws and sprang on her at last with furious power and hid her away in a cheap cemetery where the trees died from sympathy and the hard, sunburnt clay resisted its daily present of straight and confined death. And I'd been fighting the Cat of Life—fighting with battlements of cold cream and orange sticks for spears. But now my hands were tired and I could fight no more. The man turned in his chair, which creaked shrilly, then fell into silence as though ashamed.

"Do you want to help me?" he asked.

"You are going to ask me to go somewhere—to some office or something with your invention. Somewhere you have tried for an interview and failed. Some big door you have beaten against with those giant fists of yours only to find it immovable. Now you come to me. You say to yourself: 'Here is a woman with cunning hands. She has lain against my heart, and those silver hands of hers are very clever. They will open the big door and I shall go on my way rejoicing.'"

"You're quite right. There is the door I can't get past; but for whose sake do I want to pass it?"

"Perhaps—but remember the first letter of success comes before the first letter of woman. That's the way of the world—and of men. Don't you think I know what the invention means to you? Why, you've starved for it. I'll go for you. I'll use my hands and eyes for you, but—"

"What?" he said, coming over and sinking down among the cushions beside me. "What, dear?"

Something had suddenly come to me—intuition. Something would happen to me if I went and flirted my way in through that great immovable door.

"There's a risk."

"Risk!" and he repeated the word with a laugh. "How—why?"

"What is it you are asking me to do—exactly?"
He made two white prisoners of my hands before speaking.

"To get me a hearing. To use your woman’s charm and tact. Even to flirt a little if need be. Fascinate the manager into seeing me. He’s old and terrifyingly rich."

Old—rich. The words stabbed my heart. Old—rich. What wonderful words! Once upon a time, like the hero in a fairy tale, he must have been young and poor. Now he lived the golden ending. Old and rich!

“And, by the way, I hear he’s unmarried.”

Another valuable word. Unmarried. The woman in me, the plotting, scheming woman, knelt down before those three little words and worshiped as though they had been three little shrines. Old! Let us pray. Pray with lights, flowers and flickering candles of hope that he may die and leave this golden-headed worshiper with her white supplicating hands—everything. Rich! Let us pray. Pray with a glimmer of sacred gold and the blessed light of sacred jewels. Pray that they may glide, glide like a fairy stream between her fingers. Unmarried! No praying now. It’s not “Let us pray” but “Let us scheme.” What if his hands are like the withered branches of trees and his face colored with the parchment tint [of Egypt? Let us scheme—all the same. The mad reasoning of my brain stopped abruptly.

“You know all this,” I whispered, wide-eyed, “and yet you can let me go! Old—rich—unmarried. Have you forgotten what I said? How I must go out—now to gold, glitter and the servitude of soft-footed servants? Go out to motor cars, lace and the rainbowed intrigue of satin? I must be kind to my body—it’s so young. It’s a child and can’t understand things. Cheap clothes and lingerie; dull, monotonous food, and the unshaded harshness of blatant yellow gas!”

“You mean—” and the word seemed to dart across his pale lips in a dagger flash.

“Yes,” I said, “I mean it.”

Then he began to laugh—laugh with his head thrown back and his white teeth flashing at me like stars. He tunneled his elbows into the cushions. He slapped one knee, went on laughing, then stopped as abruptly as he had begun. Red ran up like a flag under the bronze of his skin.

“Why, dearest, I’ve heard he looks like a mummy. He’s small—shriveled. A withered specimen of a man preserved in gold. And you—your whiteness—that arm rounded like a rose petal—why, it’s impossible even to think of!”

“So you are quite willing to take the risk?”

“Absolutely,” he said, finishing the word with a smile.

The last bar of evening sun drew across the drab wall in a gold-colored hand. It looked as though it had come to take the pictures and didn’t find them worth stealing. In the street far below an organ babbled with hysterical sweetness. Somewhere a church bell did chiming penance over the heads of men. I gathered these sounds together like trinkets and catalogued each one of them. Perhaps in some distant diamonded year I might want to remember them again.

“So you are quite willing to take the risk?”

“Yes, dearest, quite.”

Then he leaned over through the lengthening shadows and kissed me on the mouth.

He stared at me across the slim ivory paper knife that he held with fleshless yellow fingers. They curved round its slender shaft like small determined snakes.

“And you are the young lady who insisted on seeing me! I’m difficult to get at. They guard me so well that it was clever of you to get in.”

The pale, loose lips did something with a cunning droop that was intended for a smile.

“Time is money—money is time,” he went on, “so tell me exactly what I can do for you.”

“A friend of mine has invented—” I began.

The thing in the red padded chair
mumbled at me across a yellow pointing finger.

"A romance then—love's young dream. Poor fellow who can't get a hearing. Beautiful, oh, such a beautiful girl, can't get married to him. No money—no prospects—nothing. Sad, eh? Beautiful girl comes to me because I am rich and powerful. I—I might take up the invention. I might—but I won't. Oh, no! Don't need anything just now. Dull season for beautiful young girls in distress and unknown inventors."

The small, deep set eyes never left my face, never faltered, never blinked. They reminded me of dull jewels, looking out on endless centuries. Nothing that happened could matter to them. Very guiltily I put up one hand and loosened my veil. It fell away like a thing of smoke.

"Pretty—pretty," cooed the old man in the chair.

Mechanically I drew the tawdry pins from my hat and laid it on the table. "Gold—all of it. Real, living, coiling gold," and the old man in the chair passed one dry hand over the other. "Perhaps some wonderful amber snake lives in it and only comes out at night to rest on those slim young shoulders."

Then we sat staring at each other. I felt like a child. Would he let me take off my shoes and stockings and paddle in the deep-sea-tinted blue of the carpet? Could I pull down one of the heavy curtains and dress up in it? Should I make gruel in the huge brass inkstand and offer it to him at half past eleven?

"And so," he said at last, just as if he were going on with a story, "the invention will never be sold. The inventor will go away in a big boat and make money probably at something entirely different. The rich old man in the chair will sit on and on and on, hearing the pleasantest sound in the world—money turning into money. But what's to become of the beautiful young lady—the lady who keeps the amber snake in her hair? Where will she go?"

"Mad or bad," I said, strangling the cotton gloves in my lap, "but I don't know which."

"What a pity!" The yellow fingers had curved lovingly round the ivory paper knife again. On one of them a great emerald fluttered like a captive peacock. "What a pity!"

I stood up and stretched out a stiff, nerveless hand for my hat. The angle of it looked shocked and frightened. "Mad or bad," he repeated—"that's not nice for a beautiful young lady. There's another thing she'd be, too: sad. Mad, bad and sad. But it mustn't happen."

My hand drew back from my hat almost hopefully.

"Sit down and we will have a rich talk—rich, because it will take time, and, as I said before, time is money. No, don't put on your hat. I like to see your hair—it reminds me of the sun. It takes so much sun to warm an old man. Your hair is very long, I know. Good—ah, good!"

Yes, now I was mad, for I raised a rough, hasty hand to my hair and it fell in a gleaming cascade—fell over my shabby gown, buried my cotton gloves in a golden pool, shrouded me in a miracle that swept its way across the carpet and trailed toward the door. Through its fineness I watched the old man in the chair—peered at him through a window of gilt.

"No mother or father—no relations. Just the inventor, who doesn't matter now because he's a failure."

"Nobody," I said.

"Good—ah, good! And beautiful ladies must learn to forget failures and only look ahead. And what do beautiful ladies see? Silks and jewels— comfort and ease—motors and carriages. Young men can't offer these things. A shriveled face isn't so disagreeable to kiss, and who would mind a hand that's king of a chequebook?"

I fought desperately for words. "What do you mean—what do you want?"

He tottered over, the great emerald on his finger blinking like an evil eye. "Marry me, lady with the wonderful hair. Oh, such a grand wedding! Flowers, bells and rice afterward. Rice for the happy pair. Rice for the ideal
couple. Rice for the beautiful bride and the golden groom."

The words staggered drunkenly up and down my brain. Life the Cat could be fed at last. There would be room on its back for me now. And he was so terribly old! Why, perhaps in one short year— Something came through my hair and touched me on the cheek. I killed the shudder and looked down at his hand. A thing carved in yellow ivory—an antique trembling in its desire for the sensations of the new and young.

"Think it over," and the hand drew slowly back. "Think about it—here, now. There's money for you. I'll let you take it away. See how I trust you. Then afterward we'll travel. How the people will stare at your new jewels and old husband! You shall see Egypt and spend long hours with the sellers of precious stones. On the Mediterranean you shall have sapphires to match its color. All this and more—after the wedding."

Oh, what did anything else matter? Here were graceful ease and languid hours of luxury and warm artificial light. Who wanted love? What could love count for? Nothing, absolutely nothing. I gathered the long amber length of my hair between my hands, tying it in a great gleaming knot. He, the old man, was standing outside the screen of it for my answer.

"I'll marry you," I said, "now—tomorrow—whenever you choose."

Then I lay quietly back in the deep padded chair—waiting—for my cheque. I think the stairs leading up to my rooms that day were a thousand miles long. Each step seemed like a different country. I wanted to stop and see its sights and make inquiries about its national customs. There was so much of interest on every step, and at the top of them all what was there? Death perhaps. Men in history killed the women they loved. If he killed me, how would he do it? Not with a knife, because he didn't carry one. Strangle me? Yes, that was it. Then my face would turn black and they'd bury me in a negro cemetery. I looked up the long flight of stairs and laughed. Hanging over the banisters was something waiting for me, large, pale and terrifying—something like a balloon painted with distorted features. His face. Anxious out of all proportions. Words he called out bounded past me like hoops. I couldn't catch them, tie on the required answers and send them bounding back to him. More steps! I should be an old woman before I got to the top—as old as—as old as— He caught me in his arms as I swayed across the top step, and carried me to the divan. I'd miss those strong arms, but perhaps a heavy application of bracelets would ease the pain.

"Why, your hair's all down, and—"

"Yes, I know. Isn't it pretty? You can kiss it good-bye if you like, then send it a bottle of expensive hair wash for the voyage. It's going to travel, but we're only to visit the countries that it will really show well against. They'll have a bullfight about it in Spain, and when we reach London I'm ordered to Buckingham Palace. The King wants to decorate it."

"You're ill," he said, bending over me. "Something's gone wrong."

"I'm not ill but dead. I've only come back for my brush and comb bag before descending into hell."

Then I turned my face to the wall. What was I crying about? I didn't know. Beside me I could hear the man waiting for news.

"Well," and the voice sounded hard and harsh, "haven't you got any news? Isn't there anything to tell me?"

I turned to him in a tangle of red cushions, undried tears and loose gold hair.

"He won't take the invention."

"God!"

"But he's taken me!"

Then I turned back to the wall again and waited for him to kill me. The fifty-cent clock ticked off the minutes with cheery gaiety. Perhaps he was getting something ready to do it with. What could he use? The bread knife was too blunt. Could a man murder the woman he loved with a nut cracker? I should have to turn again and see what he was doing. I had a right to know exactly what he meant to kill me with.
Everything in the room belonged to me, and he'd have to ask my permission before borrowing it. A great dark mass lay huddled at my feet—a mass that had twisted agonized arms over its head. Then he wasn't going to kill me—only cry! That would be a thousand times worse.

"Don't cry," I stammered, "because I'm not worth it. Tear me right out of your life. It's easy for a man to do that. I'm going to be married tomorrow to a curio. Laugh—it's a joke."

The dark mass at my feet raised its head and stared at me—a creature full of eyes.

"Married tomorrow!" it said. "To that dried root of a man with his skeleton hands! The hands that could crush the life out of anything except money! I'm flung aside for that!"

I crept along the divan and took his face between my hands. It was cold—terribly cold.

"He'll die," and my words ran in and out among the cushions like a tiny silver stream, "perhaps in a month—perhaps in a year. He'll wither up at the feet of the Sphinx and go blowing along the desert sand like an autumn leaf. The blue, ever youthful sea will sweep him away in the sapphire hollow of its hand, because he is so wondrously old. Then you will come to me from some distant glowing corner of the world and find me more golden, more white, more radiant than ever before."

His head fell forward between my burning hands like the head of a jointed doll.

"But I know better. He'll live. The very youth of you will keep him alive. He'll live on your beauty and flowery freshness. He'll buy back the strength of his youth at the price of yours. You will turn yellow, wrinkled, parched and old—that's what will happen."

I touched my cheek with a terrified finger.

"Don't—don't even talk about it. Beauty is my religion; that's why I am going to marry him. I shall never grow old. Five, six, eight hours a day cleverly spent at the glass will baffle time. If you ever think of me at all, think of me fighting—fighting to retain my youth."

He stood up, shaking himself like some great dog. Our scene was over. His the way of uncertainty—mine the path of gold. Nothing remained but to say good-bye. I shoved away the cushions. "You know it's no use pleading with me."

"Yes," he said. "That nothing could ever make me change my mind. Nothing."

"That's why I can go away so easily. I shall only remember you as a picture I loved—a picture for which I couldn't afford to buy a proper frame."

After that I simply stood with statue stillness in the middle of the floor. He picked up his coat and threw it like a dead black thing across one arm. Then his hat, gloves and stick, while I waved a long mental good-bye to each one of them. After that came the bit at the door—his standing with half-turned head and my eyes fixed wide and blank on nothing. It wouldn't be this room tomorrow. It wouldn't be this threadbare carpet and these rheumatic cripples doing surly duty for chairs. It wouldn't be—The door had opened and shut. Feet were on the stairs. Later the banging of another door. Now the world had got him and swept him away in a crowd. Then I went to my mirror and stared. The eyes that looked out at me were serene and calm.

My husband has given me fifteen golden minutes all for myself. They are not a wedding present, because they're unstudded like the others with diamonds and square-cut emeralds. But they're exactly what I wanted. They will give me time to adjust myself before my maid helps me on with my sables, and the pearl gray car rolls noiselessly toward the station.

It's over! The farce, the ceremony, the sacrifice, or whatever you choose to call it. They set him among the lilies on the chancel like a twitching little scarecrow, and told me to trail up, all white satin and pearls, to marry him. But they shouldn't have put him among the lilies. It wasn't fair to him. Per-
haps they thought the comedy of it all
would amuse me and make me smile.
Words flashed through my brain like
heliograph signals. “That ugly little
thing gibbering between the palms is
yours. You’ve promised to marry him.
You can’t say no, because he’s going to
dress you beautifully and take you
round the world. Think of your jewels!
Consider your motor how it speeders!
Even Solomon in all his glory was not
arrayed by Paquin as you are today.
Courage—courage! Turn your face
smilingly across your bouquet. Love
simply hasn’t come to your wedding be­
to your wedding because you were too busy buying clothes
to ask him.” Then quite suddenly I
found myself climbing the marble steps
that seemed manufactured from endless
slabs of potted meat. The choir boys
fluttered, a mere covey of doves, and the
clergyman, like some snowy-breasted
swan, strutted forward to meet me. And
the funny little thing standing under
the palms? He ran out at me as though
he were a spider determined to catch
this white-satined fly in a golden web.
The clergyman asked intimate questions
and I answered them as politely as pos­
ible, the ring sank over my finger, the
organ became splendidly egotistical, and
we finished by writing our names in
something that looked like a stamp
album.

But I should have carried my husband
down the aisle. It would have been
kinder and quicker. He clung and
dragged at my arm with curving ape­
like hands. I longed to climb the pulpit
and announce that I was taking him to
the zoo, but would visit him with mon­
key nuts and kindness every third Thurs­
day, but we passed the pulpit and the
chance had gone.

My time is almost up. A tiny watch
with a wonderful emerald on its back
announces the fact for the first time and
seems utterly content with the process.
I’m not going to think of anything today.
The past died a wealthy death in my
second glass of champagne, and it’s no
use trying artificial respiration now. My
maid has come into the room with my
going-away dress trailing across one arm.
Surely, surely, if a bride goes away with
aigrettes in her hat, she needn’t look for
regrets deep in her heart.

Months since I wrote. Perhaps a pen
has been too common a thing to hold,
and my long fingers refuse to toy with
anything but heavy bracelets and mar­
quise rings. There’s a lull now, and I
have become used to being rich. A tiny
package that looks as if it came from
a jeweler no longer flutters my heart,
while the huge gray car is only a vehicle
made to eat up miles of intervening road
and get me somewhere by specified time.

There are a thousand questions I
want to ask myself. Am I happy?
Has it been worth while? Has my
beauty kept its promise and thrilled to
purer white and gold amid all this lux­
ury? I want to know, and there’s no
one to tell me. Beside me as I write,
my husband in his steamer chair looks
like an incredibly old child lost in a val­
ley of traveling rugs. He hates the sea,
and moans at it in his sleep. But the
sea doesn’t take any notice. It goes
spinning on in a tapestry of pearl and
sapphire and long, deep hollows of un­
embroidered blue. On the deck people
walk past whispering and staring. They
wonder at my sables and titter at the
peevish, ape-like face of my husband.
The world understands me so well,
knows what he bought me for and why
I allowed myself to be sold.

We are going to Egypt because he is
always cold. Don’t people sometimes
die of it? Sometimes I feel if only I had
one solitary snowball I could knock him
over the edge of the world into eternity.
But he won’t go to Switzerland for snow.
Perhaps he guesses what I would do
with it.

Below the terrace of our hotel all
Cairo went by in an opal mist. Brown
arms draped with yellow and blue shot
up into the golden air like fountains.
Modern parasols sailed above the crowd
like scouting balloons over a war of rain­
bows. The white screens of the houses
shone faint pink and yellow. Bells rang;
children calling to each other fluttered
like brown birds about the edge of the
crowd; while a great, gaunt camel went
by nodding its neck as though in benediction. My husband leaned forward from his wicker chair that was gaudily picked out in stars of red and gold.

"Warm, isn't it—wonderfully, beautifully warm. But the sun isn't as golden as your hair, or the doves overhead as pale as your face. Yes, your face is a dove and your mouth a scarlet blossom. A dove carrying a scarlet blossom. What a poet I am becoming! Can't old men say pretty things?"

I tilted the parasol farther over my shoulder, the amethysts in its handle glowing like live violets.

"Yes," I said mechanically. "Oh, yes."

Then I suddenly realized that he was looking at me through his gold-rimmed glasses—looking hard—staring as a man would stare at the half-detected flaw in some priceless work of art.

"There's a tiny wrinkle," he said, "at the corner of your eye. I didn't notice it there yesterday."

My heart gave a great bound—then stopped. A wrinkle? Impossible! Why—why—why—I turned in my chair, while Cairo for the moment ran on like a black river. A wrinkle! Why, it wouldn't dare! Someone in the crowd below had flung it up at me. It wasn't my property—didn't belong to me. My maid must have slipped it under my flower laden hat by mistake. I'd discharge her for this—I'd kill her.

"A wrinkle," and my husband's voice was like a fine steel drill cutting into my understanding. "But we don't want such things! Oh, dear, no! The beautiful young wife can indulge herself in any other way but that. But she mustn't grow old. Her husband has enough age for them both. What a naughty little wrinkle! Run away, dear, and do something to it. Raise your maid's wages and tell her to fling it out of the hotel."

I got up slowly, the rough amethyst handle of the parasol cutting cold and knifelike into my hand.

"I'll go and lie down; I'm tired—the sun."

And he watched me go. All down the long terrace his eyes were fixed like two steady insects on my back. I passed through alleys of smart women, groups of tall, light-suited men, bending over tiny cups and small tables in poses that were redolent of Rodin. But once in the hotel, I raced, madly—didn't even wait for the lift—up the stairs with closely gathered skirts. The parasol slipped from my hand. I left it there. The world held millions of parasols, but a wrinkle—a wrinkle. Perhaps God meant to pay me out in wrinkles. Perhaps they were wedding presents from people who hated me, and I should have to wear them for the rest of my life and write conventional letters of thanks. My room—at last. Yes—the mirror. That wouldn't lie to me. I sprang across the room and half fell in front of it like a jointed doll.

"No, I'm not hungry," I said. "Send something up if you like, but it won't be eaten. Let me rest."

His small yellow hands closed over the brass end of the bed. His lips smiled and worked.

"So the lonely old man must have his dinner all alone. Too bad, too bad! Shall he tell everyone that his beautiful young wife is upstairs crying out her heart about the tiniest wrinkle in all the world? But perhaps she'll hide it under a little powder and come down."

"You can't show me off tonight," and I turned my face quickly toward the wall. "Take a list of my frocks and jewels if you like. You can pin them to the back of my chair. It will interest the women and surprise the men. That's all you want." My hands went over my ears and stayed there till the bedroom door shut at a thousand-mile distance. The mirror hadn't lied. It was a wrinkle! My maid couldn't understand—couldn't obliterate it. Perhaps it wanted to see Cairo, and would eventually leave me at the railway station for the face of some other woman who had just arrived. It haunted me. Everywhere I saw wrinkles; the crumpled coverlet of the bed was deep with them. They figured on the patterned carpet and ran a wild race up the gently fluttering curtains. The only real thing in life was my face. It gave me comfort.
and rest, eased me with its beauty, helped me through the day—helped me to forget the frightening age of my husband. And now—a wrinkle. Tomorrow might bring me another. Who could tell? Perhaps in a week God might have changed me into something funny for people to laugh at!

After that the horror began—the horror of growing old. It ate into my heart in great gnawing teeth. It sat beside me in chairs and chanted the Endless Litany of the Ugly Woman. I had married this small, withered manikin to keep young, done it to save my body and retain the soft white splendor of my hands. Love I had stabbed to death and hidden away in the dark past. Now something or other was taking its revenge. On paper the thing sounds mad. A young woman aging before her own very eyes! Impossible! The days for magic and wicked spells are over.

Then suddenly, in a lightning flash, I knew. The very fear of wrinkles was bringing them. The horror at the back of my heart called them into actual being. I raced through valleys of expensive face creams, climbed mountains of cleverly advertised powder, splashed in scented lotions as a healthy woman would splash in the sea. Terrified, I turned to massage, and lay back for long patient hours while the instrument hummed on like a thing that could never grow tired. After that I prayed. Possibly God knew of some new treatment—something the angels used before they hung their wings over a star and went to bed. There was nothing in the world but wrinkles. They hung fruitlike on Egyptian palms, sailed up and down the Nile in flotillas, draped themselves in a fringe across the somber forehead of the Sphinx. They followed in a little escort, forbidding me to think of anything save their tireless devotion. If I picked up a book they fell out between its pages and went wriggling away across the cool tiled floor. One day on our balcony, that hung like a tiny birdcage over the crowd, my husband slowly lowered his paper and turned small shifty eyes in my direction.

"The beauty's going to seed," he said softly; "that's bad—that's very bad. Can't understand it. Good air, good food, endless money and a devoted husband. Why, it's absolutely ungrateful. Who is it you want to see—a doctor or a clergyman?"

I sat perfectly still like a statue paid to listen.

"And what a pity it will all be later on! Later on, when you've hidden away your small shriveled husband in a little black box and flung one small wreath where you think his head would be."

"I don't know what you mean," I stammered.

"The men, dear," he said, catching at one of my hands—"the big broad-shouldered men who ought to have been rich enough to marry you—they'll flock like flies to honey—golden honey—honey the color of your hair. But they won't flock if you're wrinkled. If they do, you'll say over and over to yourself: 'It's not me—it's the money.' Sad, isn't it? Sad and tragic. Why, the day you came to the office, your eyes—"

He shrugged his narrow shoulders and let go my hand. Everything he'd said was true. The afterward, when he had really died, and I was free—what would I look like? The caricature of a woman danced in the Egyptian sunlight, dim, distant and horrible, through my tears.

"I know you are not here professionally"—my voice was quick and hurried—"but great men are always kind, and I want you to help me."

The man in the chair pulled the Panama farther over his eyes and stared at me with half-shut eyes.

"Honestly," he said, "I've been wondering about you ever since my arrival."

"Then it shows?" I gasped. "People notice it?"

"Do you mind turning up your veil?"

For once my long white fingers were clumsy and trembled. Then the searching sunlight swept across my face, and I sat there perfectly still under its microscope. The doctor stared.

"You must tell me the truth," he
said—“everything. Things that seem unnecessary details to you may prove of vital importance.”

We were alone in a shaded corner of the terrace. Geraniums glowed at my feet like rounded pools of blood, and overhead the air was a snowstorm of doves. Somewhere someone played music I had never heard on an instrument I didn’t know. All the world for a moment seemed resting.

“I’m just growing old,” I said softly, “without any apparent reason. My body is well and strong. I suffer no pain. I eat my meals and take a vague enjoyment in the things I see.”

“That’s what a woman always tells a doctor. There’s something more.”

I turned toward him in my chair.

“Yes, I suppose there is. But you’ve seen it for yourself. I married age because it was the only way to get the money. I think my heart is dead—if I ever had one. And now at twenty-eight I am growing visibly old. Everything’s been done and tried.”

“You meet very few people, I believe.”

“My husband doesn’t approve. He considers it his legal right to keep me exclusively to himself.”

“That is why you are growing old before your time.”

My head gave a sudden jerk. What was it the other man had said—the man who couldn’t afford to keep my hands—the man who should have killed me and didn’t? “He’ll live. The very youth of you will keep him alive. He’ll live on your beauty and flowery freshness—buy back the strength of his youth at the price of yours. And you? You will turn yellow, parched and wrinkled. That’s what will happen.” How vividly the words came back!

“Then you mean—”

“That his constant companionship is at the bottom of everything. He allows you no antidote. There’s another thing, too. What do you think of all day long?”

“The horror of growing old,” I said—“nothing else.”

Down from the blue sank the snowstorm of doves and stiffly paraded the golden graveled walks. He watched them for a moment without speaking.

“Leave your husband—it’s the only remedy.”

“And you can tell a woman who has married money—that?” Here I actually laughed. “Give things up—after suffering so much for them? Where would I go? Do you think I could do without a maid, make my own frocks and break my heart over one pair of cotton gloves—now?”

“You say you are ill and ask my advice. I have prescribed.”

Then he raised his hat and left me alone, staring at the blood red of the geraniums.

Give it all up and creep back to some shabby little room? Give it all up? The lazy hours, the soft, comfortable times when there’s nothing to do but think what an easy thing life really is? But—but—oh, how brave I have been in these few sentences! Somebody ought to give me a medal for them. Yes, I’m brave, but not brave enough to cross the room and look into my mirror. That would deserve the Victoria Cross. There are more of them. More wrinkles. They’ve entrenched themselves at the corners of my eyes and grouped pathetically round my mouth. Nothing can be done for them. Nobody can whistle them away. Yet if I were to go—now, tonight, I feel so sure that in a few short weeks—Give it up and save my face! Which do I care for most? God won’t answer the question.

It is a wonderful night—deep, illimitable blue spangled with great sulphur-colored stars. Below me are music and lights. Somewhere in the palm court a woman is singing about youth and love. The notes come up like little birds and rest upon my hand. They seem alive and glow like fairy jewels. I have just turned my head and looked into the sitting room. My husband has fallen asleep, his thin strawlike neck tilted back at an impossible angle. A tiny trail of cigar ash creeps across one pointed knee. The thing I married. The thing that won’t die. The thing that by some subtle magic is changing me into an old woman.
How long does it take for gold hair to turn gray?

Five years have gone over me like great concurrent waves. And he's beaten me. He's made me old. A weary, painted woman intricately traced with wrinkles absolutely unremovable. Rage and tears helped him, and the great ache in my heart. That came forward, too, and did its best. My maid decks me out like the grandmother of all the French dolls in the world. Paquin praises my figure and suggests that a thicker lace veil than the last one would prove very becoming. My jewels are shocked at me, my sables surprised. They were bought for a young, faultless girl, and now—

He's been ill for weeks. Sometimes I fondly imagine that it's because I have grown old—imagined he drew warmth enough to live from my flower face when he married me. Now that's done with and he's fading out—but oh, how long it takes! Afterward, when he's gone, somebody will want to marry me for my money—just as he said.

The marks of his fingers are still on my wrist. The nurse came for me softly gowned in gray and faintly scented with antiseptic. I found him sitting up in bed like an angry little doll. A bandage was round his throat, and he plucked at it with twitching yellow fingers.

"They say they can't do anything more for me—they've got to let me go. 'Tain't clever of them, is it?"

"I'm sorry, terribly—"

"Oh, no, you're not," and he chuckled.

"Happy release you'll call it afterward. But if you hadn't lost your looks, I'd never have left you the money—oh, dear, no. Beautiful woman with her dead husband's money—it wouldn't do; I wouldn't like it."

"I want to ask you something."

He choked convulsively for a moment, then nodded.

"How did you manage it—my face?"

In a distant mirror I caught sight of it, delicate with lacelike tracery.

He choked again, then sat half up in the bed with a wave of his hand that was almost girlish.

"D'you think I was going to leave you beautiful for someone else? Me, the clever business man who was never done in all his life? Oh, no—oh, dear, no. What's any other man done for me that I should bequeath him such a jewel? Nothing, dear—nothing."

"Mental suggestion." His head jerked mechanically and he caught my wrist with cold, damp fingers.

"How did you manage it—my face?"

The second time my question jumped upon the bed like a pet animal.

He grimaced at me, and the nurse hurried forward ready to do her duty to death.

"Mental suggestion." His words fell one over the other. "I—strong mind—made you think—wrinkles." His voice ended in a little scream like a frightened child. Then he half sat up in the bed, dabbed at me with one yellow hand and fell back.

Then he lay perfectly still, the only thing alive about him his emerald ring, green and shining against the sheet.

EVERY woman should be a man's second wife.

THE man who stands in his own light is so thick that no one can see through him.
MODERN DEFINITIONS

By S. S. Stinson

HUMILITY—That paradoxical state of mind that makes us proud of the fact that we have no pride.

CONCEIT—That irritating quality in a man that prevents him from recognizing the superior order of our intelligence.

HYSTERIA—A baffling psychological affliction that causes a woman to cry at a wedding and laugh at a funeral.

EGOTISM—The happy faculty of pleasing ourselves.

MARRIAGE—The boundary line between Romance and Reality.

DESPAIR—The gravedigger of dead hopes.

MORALIST—A person who is always digging up things to shock other people.

IDEALIST—A very young man who thinks all women are angels.

REGRET—Something we feel for the mistakes of our friends.

POWER—That which enables a man to transform his enemy into a doormat.

CONTENTMENT—The knack of not wanting the things we know we can’t get.

GUERDONS

By Arthur Wallace Peach

THESE are the precious guerdons of the years:
To see with clearer vision truth unguessed
In youth, to know joy surely follows tears,
That at life’s end there is an Inn of Rest.
LOS ANGELES—THE CHEMICALLY PURE

By Willard Huntington Wright

WHAT of Los Angeles—America's one unpronounceable city? Her resources, her bank clearings, her Brobdingnagian fruits, her mellow temperature, the amount of her shipments, the unprecedented growth in her population—these things are familiar to the Easterner and the Westerner alike. Her fame has spread as has that of few other cities. The glories of her climate and her flora have been emblazoned across the skies in every corner of the United States. But leaving these facts to the statisticians, let us consider her character. What trait does she exhibit to the stranger? What temperament does she impose upon the tourist? The Easterner who has never been to California, and who has come to look upon Los Angeles as the wonder city of America as regards growth and opportunity, will be startled to learn that she is the one city of her size in the United States, and perhaps in the world, whose personality is that of the rural pietist, of the rigid and uncompromising Puritan. She is obsessed with the spirit of crude democracy, of class abolition, of village fellowship, of suburban respectability. The amusements she offers to the outsider are the simple amusements of a bucolic existence. Her pleasure resorts are as unexciting as a church bazaar. Recreation adapted to cosmopolitan taste, aside from thelegoing, is rare. And if, after the theater the unregenerate tourist goes to a café for supper and lingers over the coffee, the waiters, more than likely, will have begun to pile the chairs on the tables at the further end of the room in preparation for the early morning moppers. At almost every point where the innocent stranger attempts to live his normal life of pleasure seeking, he will find himself thwarted by some ordinance, the primary object of which is to force Middle West moralities upon all inhabitants. Puritanism is the inflexible doctrine in Los Angeles.

Time was when a less pallid, a less senile régime held sway. Los Angeles has not always epitomized municipal prudery. In the past she wore vine leaves in her hair. She lured the newcomer with the sorceries of gaiety; she offered racy and satisfying entertainment for the traveling Don Juans. She was blithesomely indecent, imaginative, colorful. But not in the vulgar manner of the Barbary Coast of the old sultry days and nights. She was never blatant and crass, never aggressive and criminal. She wore her strumpet garbs with grace and delicacy. Her debaucheries were rarely without the perfume of romance. Her private dining rooms were not baroque and garish. Her lecheries never obtruded their flaming angles through the drab fabric of her pewholders' lives. Perhaps no city has had so well regulated a demi-monde, so inoffensive and decent a cocktail route as Los Angeles of the old days. She proffered all her indecencies with a grace, a quiet, a naive mien, with an attitude almost Latin in its frankness.

The languorous atmosphere of her restricted district was no doubt due to the Spanish influence of an elder day. Her bagnio houses clustered round the old adobes of Sonoratown within a stone's throw of the Church of Our Lady of the
Angels. Here the sandaled padres in their long embroidered vestments chanted their vespers, while from across the Plaza, in profane competition, drifted the wheedling laughter of fragile señoritas. Los Angeles was never famous for her debaucheries, her vice, her midnight atrocities, as were many other cities of her class. And yet her menu was complete. Her *filles de joie* were dreams of pulchritude, loreleis, houris. Her cocktails were mixed with ineffable technique. Her wines were young but pure. Her cabbies were discreet and content with an honest living. Her police, too, were sagacious and comparatively honest. There were gay resorts at the beaches, seventeen miles distant. She had an excellent race-course, and friendly games of roulette. She maintained resorts to meet every pocketbook.

An honest city, a fascinating and sensible city, was Los Angeles then. But no more! Where, indeed, is the notorious Pearl Morton, with her ferocious bull pup, and the phthisical Violet? The Stone Front and the Antlers' Club are gone. A skyscraper stands on the spot where the _jeunesse dorée_ used to dine on the veranda of the old Belmont Cafe. The most famous restaurants have lost their licenses; and two of the oldest cafes have recently built imposing structures which exude a newer and less romantic culture. New High Street is a row of cheap rooming houses, and east of Alameda are small manufacturing plants. Sonoratown is but a memory. Hypocrisy, like a vast fungus, has spread over the city's surface. Gone are the Eleusinian festivities. Silent is the click of ivory chips, and deserted is Ascot Park. Her one carnival—*La Fiesta*—with its fancy costumes, its gay pageantry, its confetti throwing, died of inanition a decade ago. The lights of the north side are dark; and as the late carriages drive by, the curtains are never drawn. The Phrynes and Aspasias no longer ply their ancient trade. During the early morning hours no frou-frou of silk disturbs the sepulchral silence of the streets. You will look in vain for the flashing eye, the painted cheek, the silken ankle. No yellow-haired Laises haunt the dark doorways of the downtown thoroughfares. The city's lights go out at twelve, and so does the drummer's hope. The taxicab banditti disappear. At 12.15 the streets are almost deserted.

Obviously not a city for nocturnal sybarites, for those hardy immoralists who see no harm in Pilsener after midnight. The current belief in Los Angeles is that there is something inherently and inalienably indecent (or at least undelicate) in that segment of the day between 12 P. M. and 5 A. M. Therefore these five hours constitute a gloomy hiatus, a funereal void, a sad and intolerable interregnum. And there is a good old medieval superstition afloat in Los Angeles that all those things which charm by their grace and beauty are wiles of the devil, and that only those things are decent which are depressing. Hence, the recent illumination and guarding of all public parks lest spooning, that lewd pasttime, become prevalent. Hence, the Quakerish regulation of public dance halls. Hence, the stupid censorship of the theaters by professional moralists, a censorship so incredibly puerile that even Boston—good old Boston, which closed up "The Easiest Way"—will have to take second place. Hence, the silly legal pottering about the proper length of bathing suits at the beaches, the special election to decide whether or not one should be permitted to eat in saloons, and the fiery discussion as to the morality of displaying moving pictures of boxing matches.

Los Angeles is overrun with militant moralists, connoisseurs of sin, experts of biological purity. But let it be said that these chlorotic fellows put up a very good performance. As comedians they are deserving of very respectful consideration. And inasmuch as they are egged on by an exquisitely virtuous press, their grandiloquent sport of moral uplift, with its hot yearning to flay the sinner, goes triumphantly on. The traveling salesman and the joy-hunting tourist, however, too licentious to appreciate the lofty idealism symbolized by the bolted door and the extinguished light, make haste with their business
and his northward to a more lenient and gayer city.

To what is due this frenzy for virtue, this psychic debauch of prudery, this mad wallowing in the excelsior of Puritanism? Is it that the citizens of Los Angeles are nobler than the citizens of any other city of its size in the United States? Not at all. The explanation is a twofold one, and has its roots in the manner and character of growth of the city. In the first place, the inhabitants of Los Angeles are culled largely from the smaller cities of the Middle West—"leading citizens" from Wichita; honorary pallbearers from Emmetsburg; Good Templars from Sedalia; honest spinsters from Grundy Center—all commonplace people, many of them with small competencies made from the sale of farm lands or from the lifelong savings of small mercantile businesses. These good folks brought with them a complete stock of rural beliefs, pieties, superstitions and habits—the Middle West bed hours, the Middle West love of corned beef, church bells, Munsey's Magazine, union suits and missionary societies. They brought also a complacent and intransigent aversion to late dinners, malt liquor, grand opera and hussies. They are a sober and phlegmatic people, with a passion for marching in parades and wearing badges. They are victims of the sonorous platitude; at concerts they applaud the high notes, and they vote for their pastor's choice of candidate.

These yokels are motivated primarily by the village spirit. The Sunday school idea is no small factor in their political and sociological decisions. Having, by virtue of numbers, a large voice in municipal affairs, they govern Los Angeles as they would a village. The spirit of cosmopolitanism has not yet ravished their minds or inflamed their blood. Their bourgeois prejudices are the outposts of their toleration. They have a righteous abhorrence of shapely legs, and proceed to close the theaters, that no one else may bask in the charm of feminine parabolas. All who do not hold their beliefs are sinners. They would prohibit indulgence in those things which they hold to be impure. Their idea of government is a paternal one. They, the moral fathers, would chasten the recalcitrant children who look upon Sunday as a day of recreation, and who see no harm in cigarette smoking and an occasional bottle of wine. They are enraptured with the benign theory that morality is a matter of legal enactment. Los Angeles is colored with Iowan, Missourian and Kansas ideals.

Another reason for the hyper-morality of Los Angeles lies in the rapidity of its growth. The evolution from a town to a city is not merely one of numbers. Far from it, indeed. It is a growth of temperament as well, an educational and mental development. This takes time; the process is a slow and tedious one. It requires a change in point of view; and this is a matter of gradual metamorphosis. The very organisms of one's nature must be altered. The rustic attitude, strengthened by the teachings of generations, must be changed. There has not been sufficient time in the growth of Los Angeles to produce this change. In point of population she is a city (she numbers nearly half a million), but temperamentally she is an overgrown village. She has not yet been able to overcome her rustic narrow-mindedness. There still remain memories of the milk can, the new-mown hay, the Chautauqua lecturers, the plush albums, the hamlet devotions and the weekly baths. And so the petty reforms and sentimental corrective agitations, such as constitute the daily life of a small town, are to be found in Los Angeles, blooming magnificently and shedding benevolent and penetrating perfume.

There are other evidences in Los Angeles of the village spirit. There is her large and inextinguishable army of quidnuncs. Everyone is interested in everyone else. Snooping is the popular pastime, gossiping the popular practice. Privacy is impossible. One may not eat in seclusion: the private dining room—that iniquitous den, that abode of brazen Camilles—is prohibited by law. One may not drink in private;
every saloon keeper is compelled to make his front door of plate glass, the object being, no doubt, to shame the lusher into abstinence. One may not make love in private: the public parks and beaches are patrolled and arc-lighted. One may not even pay a visit in private—provided one's hostess lives in an apartment; for it is illegal for a man and woman (unless married) to be alone in an apartment, no matter where that apartment, under what circumstances or at what time of day it may be occupied. Do not imagine these incredible mandates are abrogated blue laws, composed years ago in an excess of religious emotionalism. Not at all. They are of recent instigation and are enforced daily by an alert police department. Thus is the fair virtue of Los Angeles sustained. Thus do the fantastic moralities of a less civilized day live on and triumph in Southern California.

This village democracy naturally invades the social life of Los Angeles. It was a city of over-night fortunes, of breathless boundings, of mushroom education. Scarcely were the suds dry upon her arms before they were penetrating the recesses of an evening gown. Yesterday the washtub, today the Welte-Mignon; yesterday the overalls and the medicated underwear, today the braided broadcloth and the linen mesh. All this is not without its charm. To the stranger it is fascinating, as the skeleton of a diplodocus is fascinating. At first he stands aloof, but snobbery is a difficult game in Los Angeles. Furthermore, it is a futile one. The subtleties of class distinction do not fret or impress the native. And the stranger is soon weaned from his disdain. Once he has attended a reception and there met a tailor, the owner of a barber shop, a brace of actors, a piano tuner, a palmist and Emma Goldman, the democratic idea begins to get under his hide, and he finds himself at length contentedly boiling in the social melting pot.

Los Angeles is a city in a process of maturing. Its present condition is a temporary one. It possesses all the qualities of budding youth, outgrowing its clothes and endeavoring to swagger. This is evidenced particularly in its culture. Culture in Los Angeles is not indigenous, but rather an elaborate transmutation. At present it is being sedulously and ostentatiously acquired. There are clubs to cover all branches and eras of the arts. The streptococci of learning have invaded the city's social system, and its list of mental improvement organizations defies tabulation. Among them are Shakespeare clubs, Browning clubs, Brahms clubs, Ibsen clubs, dramatic, literary, ethical and hygienic societies of all descriptions. The arms of Los Angeles go snaking round the neck of every second, third and tenth rate author, musician or rabble-rouser who enters the gates. A Little Theater is on the way. There is a drama league; and Briex, Wedekind, Schnitzler, Strindberg, Ibsen, Havelock Ellis and Nietzsche have long since been gulped and stomached.

There is something admirably Spartanlike in this feverish charge upon erudition, this impassioned grappling with esthetics. To be sure, much of the activity is spurious, the result of social impact, the natural desire to get aboard; but it at least has had the virtue of stirring things up. Women in Los Angeles have ceased to be marionettes, mere sedentary females dependent for their livelihood upon graft. They are the leaders of most of the "movements." They vote, storm the curbstone tables to sign petitions of protest against immoral trafficking, attend citizens' meetings, lecture on proposed ordinances and organize political clubs. Many of them hold public offices. Their pictures appear in the daily papers, labeled "leading citizens." Their support is sought by politicians. They bristle with genuine importance. They are a public factor to be reckoned with. Docility is not one of their virtues. Nor are politics and public improvement their only forte. In the literary, artistic and dramatic movements they are the arbiters: the local Sanhedrins of learning are ninety-nine per cent. feminine. And even if they do think Browning the greatest
Victorian, Ibsen a tractarian for women's votes, Nietzsche a crazy misogynist and Charles Rann Kennedy a great dramatist, they are to be indulged; for they are passing through that necessary stage in the quest for culture which inevitably precedes all genuine knowledge. Here again we get a whiff of the spirit of Los Angeles—the aggressive cologne of a village trying to improve itself.

It is inevitable that Los Angeles should offer rare and glowing opportunities for faddists and mountebanks—spiritualists, mediums, astrologists, phrenologists, palmists and all other breeds of esoteric wind-jammers. The city is cursed with an incredible number of these cabalistic scaramouches. Whole buildings are devoted to occult and outlandish orders—mazdaznan clubs, yogi sects, homes of truth, cults of cosmic fluidists, astral planers, Emmanuel movers, Rosicrucians and other booby transcendentalists. These empirics do a thriving and luxurious business. They fill the papers with mystic balderdash. They parade the streets in plush kimonos. They hold "classes" and "circles," and wax fat on the donations of the inflammatory. No other city in the United States possesses so large a number of metaphysical charlatans in proportion to its population. The doctrines of these buddhas appeal to the adolescent intelligence. By the recital of platitudes couched in interstellar terminology, they dangle the tinsel star of erudition before the eyes of the semi-educated. Their symbological teachings represent a short cut to knowledge, a means of attaining infinite wisdom without the necessity of hard study. These doctrines are ingeniously salted with altruistic formulas, thereby offering a soothing substitute for Methodist theology. The Los Angeles mind has been enchanted by this East Indian wind music, and exudes large globules of psychic perspiration in its undaunted and heroic assault upon culture.

But all this flirting with auras is merely one of the dangerous and expensive bits of pioneering through which the rustic intelligence must pass in ascending the ladder of cosmopolitanism. And it is also indicative of the extravagances of youthful cognition that Los Angeles supports a vast army of neuropaths, chiropractics, hydropaths, electrotherapists, mental healers, osteopaths and other romantic scientists. The scoundrelly allopaths—those plotters against human happiness and health—have uphill work in the community. When they attempted to institute a tuberculin test for cattle they were defeated nearly two to one by the "medical freedomists." When the city board of health attempted to put down a recent epidemic of anterior poliomyelitis, again the loud cackling of the psychotherapists and their allied lodges thwarted simple quarantine measures. Vaccination in Los Angeles is looked upon as a murderous graft. And any allopathic attempt at germicide is regarded as a form of fanatical hysteria. The village mind, suspicious of genuine intelligence, is immured in that brumagem sophistication which makes it wary of serums and toxins merely because the pathogenic spirilla are invisible to the naked eye. Even an ordinance to muzzle dogs during the hot weather (passed after several authentic cases of rabies) was greeted with petitions from "humanitarians," automobile parades of protestation and public indignation meetings, and was finally set aside. Mind, in Los Angeles, is considered far more efficacious than therapeutics; and the germ theory is scouted as the maniacal raving of matriculated butchers.

But what of the stomach—that important and underrated organ? What has Los Angeles to offer in the line of physical well-being? Alas! The spirit of provincialism is nowhere better shown than in the city's restaurants and cafés. These eating places are little more than magnified village lunch rooms. The most popular ones are those which serve the largest portions. The gastronomic ideals are simplicity and quantity. Cooking in Los Angeles has none of the essentials of an art. There is no delicacy, no desire to please the eye, no imaginative combinations,
no rare and savory dishes copied from the aristological lore of European kitchens. No item of the bill of fare will cause an Iowan to hesitate and ponder as to its meaning. The pièce is stated in lucid terms—“beef stew,” “sweetbreads,” “calf’s liver,” and the like. These prosaic and eminently understandable utterances are occasionally followed by outlandish ans et las, but these addenda rarely affect the fundamental nature of the dish. You may seek in vain for artistry, for esthetics, for delicacies, for subtleties, for nuances of victualage. The atrocity of the cooked food in one restaurant is only surpassed by the offering of the one down the street. The hedonistic tourist, the occasional Brillat-Savarin, the transient Sala or Vittelius, compromises with the prosaic beefsteak, and hurries on to other cities.

The reason why Los Angeles is devoid of good cooking is due, first, to the character of its inhabitants, and, second, to its lack of any gastronomic heritage. Her provincial taste in foods is like her provincial taste in morals and dress—crude, complacent, unimaginative. Eating and dressing, to the habitual moralist, are physical necessities; and when these necessities begin to ascend into the realms of art, they become indulgence, if not downright indecencies. Fancy and elaborate dishes offend the prude in the same pathopsychological manner that fancy and elaborate dresses offend him. They have a tendency of turning his thoughts from the good, the true and the beautiful to the carnal, the lewd and the earthy. The flesh cannot be mortified with Beamaise sauce, seductively prepared truffles, and coupes St. Jaques. To eat gloriously and riotously is to make a god of one’s belly; and the Wisconsin god has no stomach. The average resident of Los Angeles has an ingrained suspicion of ornamental and extravagant cooking. He prefers the good old dishes and the homely nomenclature. Nor is he sufficiently rakish to order an entrée with which he is unfamiliar. With him, a gastronomic adventure is in the same category as an amorous adventure. His puritanical phagocytes become automatically active the moment a gipsy thought enters his head. Hence the simplicity of the Los Angeles bill of fare, its innocence of any exotic compote or vol-au-vent. The almost bucolic diet forced upon the restauranteur in Los Angeles could be borne were the cooking of superior quality; but here again a noble craft is discouraged by lack of appreciation. It has been found by the café owners that poorly prepared meals are as popular as the combinations of experts; and consequently there are few places in the city where one may obtain meritoriously cooked food.

Los Angeles, however, is not a city whose organisms demand an interesting or even competent café life. Such restaurants as she possesses and such cafés as she tolerates are mere concessions to the immoral tourist who has not yet been ravished by the bacilli of domesticity. With the possible exception of Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore, Los Angeles is the dullest city in the United States from the standpoint of the pleasure-seeking stranger, the out-of-town visitor and the traveling salesman. The spirit of genuine gaiety is lacking. Enjoyment is considered the first step to perdition. Noise is the rumbling of the gates of hell. Music is the sign of immorality, and dancing is indecent. This is largely the attitude of Los Angeles, and committees are continually being formed to discourage each and all of these licentious manifestations. It is small wonder that Los Angeles enjoys the reputation of being the most puritanical and stupidly governed city of the first class in America—a city of little sociability or hospitality, a city devoid of lenience and cosmopolitanism.

The trouble lies in the fact that the people of Los Angeles stay too much at home. In the Middle West, entertainment was rare, and the hearthstone habit became fixed. So the transplanted resident hurries home to his open fireplace and his built-in bookcases, or calls on his neighbors. He possesses a virgin innocence of the theory that there is any other life permissible to respectable and
pious persons. He views the café as a place where one goes with chorus girls or other people’s wives, a rendezvous for the white slavers. Therefore, he has no desire to go to a café after the theater to hear good music and meet friends. Such a proceeding would be to flirt with sin, to set an immoral example for his children. No Babylonish merrymaking for him! No encouragement of youthful skylarking! No leg-shaking and immodest cabarets! “To hum,” quickly and virtuously! St. Louis, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco, New York— these cities are not without their café life, their carnival spirit, their jollity, their youthful pleasurabilities. They are hospitable, in the broad sense, because they offer a good time to the stranger; and they are able to give the good time because their inhabitants have gaiety in their blood. They have not been anesthetized with a monastic morality. They do not suffer from a pathological fear of joy. They have not succumbed to the prim doctrine that pleasure is vice, and that the natural instincts are obscene. But such is the doctrine of Los Angeles—a city where virtue has become virulent.

Is the real Los Angeleño a pietist, a killjoy, a lawn sprinkler, a lover of rhubarb, a toreador of virtue? Are there no other citizens—no genuine human beings, no honest rascals, no Philippe Bridaus, no Lilly Czepaneks, no Colonel Newcomes? Has the city indeed no urbanity, no culture? To be sure—to be sure. But what I am trying to do is to limn and transmit the personality of the town, to catch its dominant chord at this particular period of transition, to set forth its consuming ideal, to paint it impressionistically as it strikes the visitor today. Los Angeles stands in the unique position of having no representative citizens, no permanent quality of hospitality. Its personality today is not that of yesterday; and tomorrow may issue in an entirely different aspect of genius. At present it epitomizes no stable qualities. It is almost entirely without individuality. There are no traditions to mould its temperament. There is no foundation of culture, religion, habits or tenets. Its history ceased in 1847. At that time a new era began. The Spanish civilization breathed its last, and its influence, too, passed out with the desecration of the Franciscan missions. Only the upholstered Spanish names remain to remind us that Los Angeles indeed has a past. The Americano brought with him his own clothes, foods, habits and liquors. He built on the ruins of Spain, but he might as well have built on a virgin desert for all the effect those ruins had upon him. And today the average citizen of Los Angeles, far from being influenced by a Spanish heritage, knows nothing of California’s history prior to 1890, and more than likely is unable to pronounce the name of his own street. Scratch a native and you’ll find an Iowan.

But, as I have said, there are other inhabitants besides the Middle Westerner. Considered technically and logically, the real citizens are found in those fine old Spanish families which survived the wreck of Spanish rule in California. These families are rare, however. They preserve the social aloofness of an elder day. They never raise their voice in political affairs. Sundays they are found at mass in the Cathedral on Main Street. In the afternoon they drive in the parks. They are glimpsed at the Opera, but rarely at the theaters. They cling to the faiths and customs of their forefathers. They are genuinely hospitable; they possess a degree of Continental culture; and once you have gained admittance to their homes, they lavish on you the whole-hearted courtesies characteristic of the Latin. These, then, may be claimed the true Los Angeles; but this type of the aristocratic Spaniard, with his zealous loyalty to his racial traditions, is rapidly passing. Today barely a score of such families remain in Los Angeles.

On the other hand, the city numbers among its inhabitants a large number of civilized and well-to-do Easterners. These people are conversant with the works of Henry James. They eat their soup silently. They prefer Debussy to the music of George M. Cohan. They do not sign petitions to prohibit pro-

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ductions of “Sapho.” The books in their libraries are cut. They do not roar at the strains of “Dixie.” And during the opera season they attend “Manon” and “Herodiade” in preference to “Il Trovatore” and “Rigoletto.” They have been wooed to Los Angeles by the semi-tropical climate and have built their homes in the suburbs. There is a large number of such citizens. For the most part they are middle-aged, retired from active business life, and have gone West to find a mild and mellow climate in which to spend their declining years.

To these people alone is due the fact that Los Angeles has a long opera season; that it supports two symphony orchestras; that the local artists—a very talented body of men and women—are able to do serious work and find a market for their wares. They make it possible for at least one restaurant in Los Angeles to cook its food properly. To them is due the bookings of the better class attractions at the local theaters. And they have made Los Angeles nationally famous as a discriminating book-buying center. But only in such ways do they influence the community. They are unable to defeat the asinine ordinances which the pious city fathers are forever imposing upon the inhabitants, and the spirit of the town is little altered by their activities. The very nature of these people makes them shrink from the cheap publicity which is necessary to combat the riotous debauches of Puritanism through which the city is continually passing. Their influence is necessarily a subterranean one, but in this intelligent minority lies the hope of the city’s cosmopolitan growth.

And yet—after the worst has been said, much remains which is deserving of praise. Wherein lies the fascination of the Angel City? Why has it become the Mecca of tourists the world over? Is it because it is the best advertised city in the United States? Is it that it offers illimitable opportunities for making money and eating fruit? Hardly that. After all the pamphlets of the real estate agents, the boosters’ clubs, the Board of Trade and the Chamber of Commerce have been read, something remains unspoken—something that uncannily grips the stranger. Despite its suburban pieties, its vice crusades, its domestic ideals, its incessant gossiping, its moral anesthetia, its Oriental religions, its Cagliostros, its leaden midnights, its poor cooking, its garish newness, its lack of hospitality, its tawdry culture, its cruel Sundays and its Iowan traditions—notwithstanding all these handicaps, there is something essentially inspiring in the life of the city. Los Angeles is a modern Ephesus, and as such is a challenge to the virile blood of the nation. Great problems are being worked out there. The city reeks with promise. Life in Los Angeles is real and earnest. There is a continual clash of wit—not the wit of epigram and culture, but the wit of serious endeavor. It is a city of crudities, of experimentation, of reinforced concrete, of gaudy colors, of real estate transactions. It represents the pioneering stage in both commerce and art. It possesses much of the bumptious assurance of the youth suddenly burdened with responsibilities. Its future is not a bustle; all eyes are fixed on tomorrow morning’s sunrise. At present it is more heterogeneous than any other city in America. Its hypocrisies are matched by subcutaneous audacities which shock even the hardened policemen. At present it is far more emotional than logical. The god of Los Angeles is a combination of Calvin and Anthony Comstock—with Comstock predominating.

I am tempted to predict the future of Los Angeles; but such is not my mission in this article. But in so far as the personality of the Los Angeles of today indicates the Los Angeles of tomorrow—just as the youth suggests the man—so may I surmise that which the coming years have in store. This looking forward is inevitable when one considers the character of the city. And so, considering it in its present embryonic condition, one sees a vision of a great metropolis, founded on solid stock—a metropolis wealthy and diverse, commercially powerful and artistically wise.
CHARLES BREWSTER was one of six men to receive this note, identical except for a detail as to time.

MY DEAR CHARLEY:
Do not make an engagement for the night of the twentieth. If you already have one, break it, or cross me off your list. This is a whim of mine.

There is to be a dinner, and you are invited. You are not to intimate to anyone that you are thus favored.

You are to present yourself at the Cheever Club at one particular minute (club time) on the evening of the twentieth.

It will not be necessary for you to go to the regular coatroom. Proceed to the blue room and knock at the door thereof at 6.53 precisely.

Remember the date—the twentieth—and the hour—6.53.

I have already checked you off as having accepted.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN FARRINGTON.

I was one of the other five. I determined to see it through just as Farrington had indicated. I found myself comparing my watch with chronometers. I was inclined to take it for granted that the Cheever Club clocks were with the official time to the tick. However, that "club time" parenthesis of Farrington's recurred to me more than once, and finally, as a matter of precaution, I had my timepiece expertly readjusted.

On the afternoon of the twentieth I found myself in the library facing the largest clock in the club. My watch in hand, I compared the two time markers. They agreed. I looked about, and noticing a servant busy arranging the magazines, quite casually approached him.

In a disinterested sort of way I queried: "That clock right, boy?"

"Yes, sir; I think so, sir."

Imagine my surprise when a club member, sitting near, observed: "Anything the matter with that clock lately? You are the third man this afternoon who has inquired about it."

I mumbled something, and stole out.

I was one of the minute men, and determined to be prompt. I was at the club entrance fifteen minutes before my particular minute.

With studied ease I sauntered into the grill room, which ordinarily at this hour of the evening was deserted. There, tucked away in a dark corner, was Tirrell. His face was hidden behind a newspaper. I recognized him by his hands—plump ones. He probably heard me, but he was conveniently absorbed in the news of the evening.

Being an officer of the club, it was perfectly proper for me to enter the steward's room. This I did in a matter-of-fact way, and ran into Curtin, a member of the House Committee. He flushed, issued made-while-I-waited instructions to the puzzled steward, nodded to me and left.

I pretended to be deeply interested in a brand of cigars which I knew the club did not carry, and while I was discussing the subject with Johnson, the steward, I suggested to him that I should like one of his own cocktails. This was a pronounced compliment to Johnson, and it took him so long to concoct the mixture that I had to drink it with my eye on my watch.

My minute was at hand. I was the 6.54 man, and I proceeded to the blue room.

My knock was immediately answered by a servant. He glanced toward a
clock, pronounced my name and stood aside.

At the far end of the room, his back to the fireplace, stood Charley Brewster. He and I had exchanged greetings, and were maneuvering for an opening, when there came a rap on the door. It was the third man, Tirrell.

"Hello, Al!" said I.

He returned the greeting, and, shaking hands with Brewster, inquired:

"What the devil is it all about, anyway?"

There was no time for discussion, for Curtin now made our number four. Soon there were six. Embarrassment was noticeable until another signal on the door eventuated in the appearance of Farrington himself, our host. We surrounded him. He silenced us with an uplifted hand, smiling as he spoke.

"Just a minute, boys. Do you know," he went on, "there is something lacking here. If there were one more of us—the right one—it would be the dear old Luncheon Club once more."

There was a pause, and a wistful look passed over the faces of two or three. At that instant there was a knock. It was precisely seven o'clock. Frank Berton stood in the doorway. The Luncheon Club was intact for the first time in years.

The stillness was profound, until the newcomer said quietly, "Hello, fellows!" It was the same attractive voice—the same old, frank, good fellow.

Farrington walked toward him slowly, with outstretched hand. The Judge was there before him, however, followed closely by Ned Curtin, and Berton's hands were wrung genuinely. Brewster and Tirrell joined in the welcome. The two others waited in the background long enough to exchange glances, while one of them muttered, "Damned impudence!" and then went through the inevitable form.

Farrington had omitted no detail. Arm linked in that of Berton, he led the way down the corridor to one of the Cheever private dining rooms. Before the little coterie was set the very table around which this identical circle had gathered so often a decade before. Instinctively the guests were no longer such. They came into their own. There were no place cards. The diners slipped into their old-time luncheon seats. There was no guest of honor. It was the old crowd. Minus all the paraphernalia of the formal dinner, without the snowy linen of the conventional function, lacking everything not necessary to the fidelity of it all, the board was the old board, bared as was wont.

Farrington did it all exceedingly well. Catching deftly the instant between the conclusion of bustle and the beginning of confusion, he observed benignly:

"Just a little surprise, boys."

The raillery began. I shall never forget the dinner itself. The courses were epicurean in number, and as versatile as epicurean. No diner fared like his fellow. The gastronomic idiosyncrasies of the individual were featured.

Masters—we called him "Edward" because he liked to be called "Ed"—revelled in shad roe for a fish course. In the old days he dieted at midday on this delicacy throughout its season. He remarked the fact that shad were running only in the South at this time. Farrington lied to him with the information that the roe had been brought North especially for this occasion, and for him alone. At the conclusion of the course, the host retrieved himself by announcing that while Masters's tidbit had been brought North, it had come in tin.

Seven of us drank sauterne psychologically. Hurlburt's sauterne was beer in a stein, and the only person in the room who could have required an explanation was the wine boy.

Brewster found it necessary to smoke cigarettes because he never used them as a luncher.

I—well, Farrington had omitted no detail.

It was inevitable that Frank Berton monopolized the intercourse. He had done it in the long ago, and he did it now. He did it now as he did it then, inoffensively, by virtue of sheer versatility. The chap was fascinating always.

Some restraint may have been felt by
others—there was none of it about Berton. He was the same old Prank. He had a fund of anecdotes. He bubbled experiences. He sparkled. It seemed impossible that for ten years he had been out of our lives.

The dinner proceeded.

I speculated as to the character of the climax which was sure to come. A dinner of the Luncheon Club never lacked a climax. Back there I had been something of a neophyte. In other words, I had not been an original member. A vacancy, caused by death, brought me a membership which I had not had the temerity to hope for.

Tradition had it that after-dinner speeches were barred. This dinner was Farrington's affair, and we all knew that the dénouement would be Farrington-esque, which meant much.

I was curious when the coffee and cigars came on—we all were.

Farrington rose. He had a big voice, and he spoke with a dry drawl that was irresistible.

"The gentlemen," he said, "will be so good as to listen."

He paused, more than half expecting, I imagine, the horse play which generally greeted serious effort at speechmaking before this group. He went on:

"I fancy that you now know why you came in minute relays. It was nothing but a little conceit of mine. I wanted to surprise you."

Once again he stopped. Then, with perfect mimicry of the face and voice of our member of Southern extraction, the Judge, he twanged: "I reckon I did."

He halted instantly the boisterous mirth which broke forth.

None of us knew what to make of his unwonted mien. He was very much in earnest, and we subsided.

"We must not forget that this is a dinner of the old club. That means something, particularly as we are gathered tonight with the circle complete for the first time in over ten years. They have been long years—too long. It ought not to be necessary for me to observe that we are glad of the reunion. That much I shall take for granted. It is not my purpose to depart from our traditions. We do not like set speeches, and you may assure yourselves that you will not be thus afflicted. However, our unwritten law does not preclude the telling of a story. There is a story to be told tonight. Gentlemen, I know of no one—"

—he smiled, as he anticipated the effect of the words he was about to utter—"I know of no better story teller than your host of the evening."

There was a roar of laughter.

"You couldn't be serious long, could you, Jack?" someone called.

"I think I can," retorted Farrington.

"The gentleman to whom I refer is one of whom you are fond."

"Doubted"—"You're misinformed"—"Not I."

Farrington, unheeding, continued. His manner was plainly intolerant of further interruption, although we were yet convinced that Farrington's inevitable coup would border on the ludicrous. It was a way he had.

"Gentlemen, you are about to hear a story. It will be told by a great-hearted, red-blooded man."

Half turning, he bowed profoundly across the table.

"Gentlemen, your host."

Frank Berton stood.

We were stunned. Embarrassed glances shot around the board. The silence was depressing, and it was only relieved when Ned Curtin jumped to his feet.

"All up!" he cried.

Grasping a glass, he proposed: "To Frank Berton! God bless him!"

The toast was drunk.

A flush crimsoned the man's face and passed. Erect, he swept the circle with his eyes, and smiled ever so slightly.

We knew Berton for a good talker. He had an easy conversational way which won his listeners. He might well have been seated with the rest of us, so easily and so intimately did he proceed.

"It seems good to be back with the boys once more. As Jack said, the ten years have been too long. They have been longer for me than for you, I venture."

Time had changed the man. There
were tired lines in his face, and his temples were marked with unmistakable gray.

"I do not want to speak of the dinner and my part in it. I asked Jack to engineer it. I simply wished to get you all together once more and to tell you a story. It is a strange tale, and stranger yet is its subject. I want to tell you about myself. There are some things that you ought to know. I shall not spare myself. I shall be quite as frank in other directions. You will do me the courtesy, I am sure, to listen without interruption to my story."

A tense silence denoted assent.

"It is just ten years ago tonight," he began, "ten years ago that I went away. I did not run—I was driven. During the months prior to my departure, nearly a year of them, my life had been a hell. These ten years have been years of torture. My return differs from my leaving—I am not driven; I come. Now mark well the story."

It was gruesome, the earnestness of the man. There was something steely in him. His eyes darted fixity of purpose, determination, that we had never seen in him in the old days. We were at sea.

His voice was hard, cold, remorseless, as he went on.

"It is not necessary for me to rehearse how I came among you sixteen and more years ago. I came with credentials. You passed upon them, and you made me one of yourselves. For that I was grateful. Thanks to you, I passed five of the happiest years of my life. I give you my gratitude at this time—a deep gratitude.

"There was not one of you, not one," he repeated, "whom I did not love as a friend. I could not enumerate your kindnesses and your good offices in my behalf. I had seven distinct assets in your personal friendships. God knows, I was grateful.

"My life was much the same as yours. There were these differences: You were rational—I was not. You were prudent—I was not. You were far-sighted—I was not. I spent freely—so did you. But"—he fairly snapped the conjunction out—"the time came when I should have stopped. Had you faced my crisis you would have paused. I went on. Why? It does not matter. There is the hard fact.

"I shall not make this a hard luck story. In any analysis the fault was my own. I admit that without reservation. What happened to me, however, is another matter. In my easy going, careless, irresponsible way, if you please, I was consumed with the conviction, born of hope and confidence rather than of common sense, that things would come out all right. As you all know, I assumed a financial load not my own, under terms not consistent with good business. I made a grandstand play when I took it over. The move was emotional rather than spectacular in intention. I came to feel that I was something of a martyr.

"Naturally I turned to my friends, my closest friends. You were they. I wanted money—I ought to have received advice. I got the first. You made it so easy for me that—why try to soften it?—I became an ubiquitous borrower. My straits became more pronounced, and in my desperation I wore down the dollar sympathy of my friends. The inevitable came.

"Sleepless nights, harrowing days, began to tell. The nerve and the nerves snapped. A breakdown became imminent. I sought to stay it. I needed stimulation. That's what I called it then. Now I would use another word. It was all very futile.

"The crash came. With it went business and home. And even then it was but the conclusion of the melodrama. The tragedy remained to be played."

The faces of Berton's auditors were strained. The pungency of his short sentences distressed them. Berton reached for a glass. Farrington nervously handed Brewster a cigar. He lighted it, and let it go out. We were waiting on Berton.

"I am afraid I shall be bitter in what I am about to say," he said. "I wanted to do the right thing. I canvassed myself. I dismantled my home. I gave up my clubs. I put the proceeds where
they belonged—at the disposal of my creditors—not through the courts, thank God! It would have been easy, fellows"—he measured the words—"it would have been easy, very, very easy to have had recourse to the relief provided by the law of the land. Repudiate? I repudiate?" he thundered. "You did not know me."

We shriveled.

"I had been an ass! The encouraging part of it all was that I knew it. I fought a battle. I arrayed myself against myself, my own worst enemy. The terms? Damn it, boys—the terms were capitulation! I had lost! I surrendered!"

Farrington was on his feet now. He seemed placid, but I doubt if he was.

"Frank," he said, "we understand all right. Do—"

Berton turned like a flash. Farrington sank into his chair.

"Yes, I surrendered," the man went on. "I felt then, and—" Berton’s face hardened as he uttered the words—"I felt then, and I feel now, that I might have been helped by my friends. Very likely I did not deserve help. Undoubtedly I had worn out those whom I regarded as friends. I am willing, as a matter of fact, to let that end of the thing drop. There are certain things, however, that I shall not forget—I will not forget."

He took a sip of water. Just then one of the diners made as if to rise. Berton replaced his glass and walked to the door, locked it and, placing the key in his waistcoat pocket, he returned to the table. He resumed.

"You will pardon the unconventionality, but—"

There was no mistaking his demeanor. He paused but a moment.

"You will not have forgotten that night at the house of the good old Judge, when you sat in conference over my case, while I, but a street away, was prostrated under the care of physicians. You will remember how you canvassed the situation, whether it would be better for me to receive more financial help at your hands, or that I should be brought to my senses by the crash which must come without such assistance."

"Gentlemen," he went on deliberately, "I am not inclined now to question the wisdom of your decision at that time, although it hurt then and it hurts now that you were unwilling to step into the breach. Some of you, thank God, were good enough later to express regret, and I know that those of you who did, meant it and felt it. However, I repeat that I do not care to discuss further that feature.

"What was done to me later, however—" He choked and straightened. I shall never forget the righteous wrath of the man.

"What was done to me later," he repeated, "is to be discussed here and now."

He bristled as he stormed out: "I have been waiting for this hour. The years have been full of questions. I have come for the answers." You were within your rights, every man of you, to refuse the further money. Can all of you say as much with reference to your conduct after that night?"

The satire and irony were cutting and corroding.

"Must I answer myself?"

The silence was profound.

Berton swept the table with searching eyes. Warm regard, regret, utter contempt, were in the fleeting flashes.

"As you wish," he said, lowering his voice.

"Two of you remained true, because you loved me. Five of you wantonly allowed me to pass on and out of your lives. Two betrayed me."

Not a muscle moved in Berton’s face. Farrington and the Judge gazed sorrowfully in his direction. Three of the men turned away. Two hung their heads.

Berton resumed. "I shall not be long now." He turned first toward Farrington and then to the Judge, raising a glass at the same time.

"I drink to the sturdiness of real friendship!" He lowered his glass and his eyes.

"That I should have been made an outcast from the circle of my friends has grieved me these long years. All of
you in the good old days had received at my hands a hospitality as warm as I could make it. Your feet had stretched under my mahogany as mine had rested under yours. But”—he measured his words—"but when hospitality was no longer mine to give, when all had gone, when I was dashed upon the rocks, all of you—save two—cut loose from the wreck.”

Here Berton’s utterance was choked. A great sob escaped, and tears coursed down his face.

There was an instant’s hesitation. His head was tossed back, his shoulders straightened, his jaws snapped together.

“And yet, I might forget that, but”—once more he thundered—“I do not forget the rest. You were craven enough, some of you”—his loathing was ineffable—"you were craven enough to visit your cowardice upon her whom you all knew and loved as Helen Berton, my wife!

“You even permitted your wives to abandon the woman who had made them all that they were socially. You scurried from the ship you thought was sinking.”

Through hard, set teeth, he snapped, "It was dastardly!"

Here Berton filled to the brim his glass with wine. He raised it high. His eyes shone. He turned first to Farrington and then toward the Judge.

“Those of you who have stood by in the years that have gone have often had the honor of drinking with me the toast I am about to drink. By your leave, I drink alone upon this occasion.

“To Helen Berton, my heartbroken wife!”

He drained the glass and dashed it to the floor.

Berton flipped his handkerchief from his pocket. As he did so, the Judge arose uncertainly. His eyes were moist as he looked across the table toward Berton. He was about to speak, when Berton lifted a hand and waved the Judge to his chair.

“I have not finished,” he said.

The faces of his hearers were drawn as he went on.

“In the years that have gone, the turning in the lane has come. I have succeeded in life, if the acquisition of money is success. Ten years ago two men betrayed me.”

He paused, and his eyes flamed with challenge.

“I shall never tell what they did, or how they did it. But tonight the balances are drawn. Tonight the books are to be closed.

“These men,” he went on deliberately—“these men were partners in business. They are partners now. They are hopelessly involved in their obligations. The extension upon which they have confidently counted is no longer available.”

As Berton pronounced these words, the faces of two of the diners blanched. With staring eyes and drooping jaws each turned toward the other.

The speaker proceeded.

“Here are their notes!”

He withdrew from his pocket a packet of documents.

“They are mine,” he said. “I have made it my business to buy them.”

We were staggered.

Berton struck a match, and touched the flame to the papers. As the last charred fragment dropped from his fingers, he took from his waistcoat pocket the key, and moving toward the door, he unlocked it and threw it open wide.

“Gentlemen, good night!” he said.

“Do you object to your wife belonging to that New Thought cult?”

“Object? Why, man, it’s the first peace I’ve had for eighteen years; she ‘goes into the silence’ regularly now!”
CROCODILE EGGS
By Mary Olds

WE aren't notably intellectual—our set in Charmian—we're just frankly human. To be sure, there is Mrs. Dayton, who writes—quite serious her novels are, too—and Hugh Blythe, who pursues sociology with all the earnest zest normally conserved for a stiff love set or a final rubber—but those two are the only ones that I can think of just now. Of course the rest of us do discuss weighty problems at times—whether women should really be allowed to descend to be man's equal or not, and such subjects. But the only thing that always "gets all of us at once," as Nancy Norton puts it, is folks—our own folks—which includes the largest part of Charmian.

Just about true, too—and if one were diagramming our composite conversations, capital "A" would denote the Graemes and little "a" Lola. No, not that way, either—rather big "A" Lola and little "a" the rest of the Graemes. Not but that the Graemes, all of them, are charming and interesting—they are; but Lola is just irrepressibly unexpected—and her family aren't. Mr. Graeme is a quiet, scholarly, absent-minded person, whose sideburns give him the effect of a personage. She, on the other hand, is large and very handsome in a statuesque, blonde way—and absolutely flawless conventionally, in everything she wears or says or does. Young Marjorie isn't "out" yet, so the limelight hasn't been turned her way much—but she's promising, very promising. Corkingly good-looking, you know, with diabolically dancy eyes—and the day she took the Canoebrook fence with Basil Kent—Mercy! I never mentioned Basil Kent, with our saving fraction of brains.

Well, he's such a very serious and important person that none of us featherweights really know him at all. He's only been here a few years, and he's a lawyer, a politician, a reformer and heaven only knows what else, who works twenty-four hours out of the twenty-four. Literally, because he just uses sleep and play and exercise as aids to more work. But I want to tell you about Lola.

Lola is tall, too, like her mother, and her eyes are the same deep set slaty gray as her father's—but right there all resemblance to her family ends. She is invariably uncorrect as to clothes—she went to Mrs. Tremont Fletcher's one night in a tailored suit and a linen shirt-waist. "Got home too late from iris hunting to change," she nonchalantly informed Mrs. Fletcher, and that august lady, whose lorgnette has withered more than one shy bud, listened with perfect amiability to Lola's ensuing rhapsody over the gorgeous effect of the purple and bronzes and reds of iris heaped in a black coal scuttle before her studio fireplace.

That was characteristic, too. Irises in a coal scuttle are entirely fitting in Lola's studio. Her beautiful grand piano is the only thing in the place that you would ever find in anyone else's studio. Lola has traveled a lot since she came into her own money four or five years ago, and every trip has meant added junk to her pile; yet, in Lola's hands, elephants' tusks and Pompeian bronzes and inlaid teakwood seem to assume a subtle relationship. Then along with all these rare treasures, from the first of January till the thirty-first of December, her apartment blooms.
with the most fascinating wild things. Her spin out to the swamps for iris that day of the Fletcher dinner was nothing out of the common. Even in the whitest winter she scours the woods daily to keep her rooms full. She has a whole apartment, you know—one whole wing of the big old Graeme mansion. She has a bedroom about thirty by thirty that contains as its sole piece of furniture a mammoth white iron bed built particularly for Lola's particular idea of comfort—and with the walls literally covered, except for rafts of window space, with baby pictures. She has every kind, from Raphael to Rose O'Neill, and they are all under glass if you please, set into the wall.

Talk about hospitals being germ-proof—I'd like to see the germ that would dare stick his head in that bedroom of Lola's! Then go out into her blue and black and silver dining room and look at her old tapestry on the wall. She dug it up out of the cellar of some old German castle, and it is so near falling to pieces that she couldn't even have it cleaned. "To be logical is to be bored immer und evig"—says Lola. She has even a kitchen with a fine old fireplace and a kettle on a crane for looks—and a complete electric outfit for use. It's a delightful place, and just Lola from one end to the other. Mrs. Graeme thought the whole idea the apex of folly even for Lola, but it was preferable to her taking an apartment in town. Mrs. Graeme sees no need for solitude for anyone, even a genius—for she has to admit Lola's genius. The girl has been mad about music always, and lately the publishers have begun to agree with her teachers. That fact and her independent fortune make her mother a bit more tolerant of her whims than she might otherwise be, I reckon.

But there was one fancy of Lola's that nothing could make her tolerate. Indeed, she set down both feet very firmly on the subject, and also, on that one question, Mr. Graeme came out of his chronic brown study to second his wife. The particular fancy was Roger—Roger Trescott. For three years now Lola had motored and golfed and danced with Roger almost to the exclusion of all the other men, but though Roger haunts the studio—he's just as likely to be found breakfasting there as dining—and though Lola wears his famous scarab—the only ring her slim brown fingers ever did wear—and with all of us expecting a climax every day—so far none had come. We speculated at length. Perhaps she wouldn't oppose her father's so seldom expressed wishes; perhaps it was her music; perhaps she was just naturally built on platonic lines. Altogether our sympathies chiefly went out to Roger.

Roger is so thoroughly nice, you know—thirty or so, and so good-looking in a clean-cut, pleasant way—good family, a fair income of his own—really most eligible in every way but one. Mrs. Graeme always ended every discussion of him with conclusive emphasis: "No man in such a business can be right smart."

She would have excused it as a hobby. From the very nature of a hobby, one may dismount when one will—but a business! And it does seem to require a stretch of imagination to conceive of a man's hunting crocodile eggs as a business.

As to where he found his market, we never inquired—we don't talk business in Charmian. But we did not know that every year Roger disappeared into the Florida swamps—for crocodile eggs. Did you ever know the creatures laid eggs? We didn't till Roger took to hunting them. That was another source of displeasure to Mrs. Graeme—she hated to feel ignorant of anything.

Well, things had just drifted along in this fashion till the night of the last cotillion. Lola didn't come with Roger. Then some of the boys said Roger had been playing the wheel down at Mike Regan's for three nights straight. Roger! And under Lola's regime he won't even play cent-a-point! What was about to happen? Then it happened.

Eloise gave the annual Mittens Club dinner. We girls have that dinner religiously every year sans the men, and take great pride in wearing our most gorgeous apparel—just to prove we
don’t dress for the creatures. Lola came in a ravishing dull red brocade cut square and very low, with her stunning old silver carved chain and—a floppy garden hat. She had just got the hat and wanted us to see it.

She was in a radiant mood, enthusing over a rare bit of Japanese cloisonné she had just added to her collection, and she kept us in perfect gales with a dozen new stories, strummed over bits of her last study for us—and then, just as we were thinking of departing, she suddenly whirled about on the piano bench and startled us all with:

“Girls, Roger and I are going to elope on the eighteenth.”

We decided afterward she must have told us for her family’s sake, trusting they would hear about it beforehand and thus have the shock softened when it really happened. She didn’t give us time to gasp as she continued:

“We quarreled about it, you know, but Roger’s really right—four years is entirely too long for an engagement—and the poor boy’s becoming desperate. And mother and dad—being mother and dad—never will feel any differently about crocodile eggs. Naturally they can’t see any joy in prowling through those heavenly swamps. Just think of the iris! If dad knew his a b c’s in business, he would appreciate the money end—Roger’s having the monopoly of supply for eight countries and all.

“Anyhow, we’ve discussed it for the last time. I told Roger last night that I would start on the eighteenth—on the eight fifteen train. Come down and see us off.”

She smiled her radiant smile around the whole circle, and departed. Eloise was the only one who had sense enough left to run after her and thank her for telling us and wish them good luck.

Twelve of us were there that night, and Lola hadn’t even mentioned whether she had informed her family or expected us to keep it a dead secret or what. She probably knew we couldn’t, and didn’t care—more likely still, as I said before, really hoped the family would hear and avoid the final shock.

Mrs. Graeme did hear, but if it was a shock, she was far too perfectly self-controlled to show it. It was Mrs. Tremont Fletcher herself who cast the bolt. Let me see—it was on the twelfth, I believe. All the older set were playing auction up in Mrs. Tremont Fletcher’s huge sun parlor. Mrs. Graeme had just taken her place opposite her hostess when that lady inquired—a little edge of disapproval in her cool voice: “Cornelia, what does your daughter mean, I would like to know, by announcing that she and Roger are going to elope on the eighteenth?” Mrs. Archie Wynne, who was at the same table, said Mrs. Graeme never wavered an eyelash, just hesitated a barely perceptible second; then, smiling her slow smile,

“Why, my dear Mrs. Fletcher,” she said, “aren’t you used to Lola yet? That’s just a joke. They are to be married in the church, of course. But it is to be a very quiet affair—Lola doesn’t even believe in wedding presents, you know. We’ve just held the invitations over so you would all realize it was not a function.”

Everybody in the room heard her, and at least every mother in the room knew the details of Lola’s own announcement—so we were a bit puzzled. Late the next afternoon, though, sure enough, all our invitations came by special delivery. The same afternoon Archie Wynne motored down from the country club with Lola, and joked her a little about having to come down to a regular wedding after all—and he said Lola opened her big eyes at him and looked perfectly blank as she answered: “Why, not at all—my plans are not altered in the least.”

Then Eloise was having a gown fitted at Mme Dubois’s, and she said she found all Madame’s girls and Madame herself working like mad on a white satin creation, with the whole big box of Mrs. Graeme’s famous old rose point on the table.

Marjorie told us about it afterward—how she had to break the news to Lola about the invitations and all, and how furious Lola was when she saw that when her mother had finally realized
that at last Lola had made up her mind for good she had given in to save her own pride when she wouldn't do it at all for Lola's happiness—that she had forced Lola into a place where just common respect for the church and her friends as well as the family made a conventional marriage seem inevitable. Marjorie said she was really almost frightened at the way she stormed about. But her most violent objection seemed to be that she needed every minute between then and the eighteenth to work on her music and get it off to the publishers. But, anyway, she didn't want a church wedding, and neither did Roger. Her indignation grew greater and greater every time she thought of her mother and the fact that her daughter's happiness was not as potent an influence as fear of Mrs. Fletcher's disapproval. But Lola is devotedly fond of our old rector, nice old Father Danvers, and just as her anger would boil hotter she would break down with: "But poor, dear old Father Danvers! We couldn't let folks laugh at him; and they certainly would if he had a wedding without any bride or groom."

And then Marjorie had her real inspiration—and undemonstrative Lola flung her arms about her young sister and kissed her several times. Then they called in Roger and began to plan in earnest.

The result of their deliberations Marjorie carried to Mrs. Graeme.

If Lola need not be bothered with her fittings (Marjorie would have them—they are practically the same as to size) and if the subject need not be mentioned at all until the eighteenth, and if no one but Marjorie need go near Lola on that day until she took her place in the church—they would save the family pride and let the ceremony go through. And with that Mrs. Graeme had to be content.

Of course, after Lola's rebuffing Archie in the way she did, we kept our comments religiously to ourselves—and no one ever did talk personalities with Roger. So when the night of the wedding arrived we were all fairly on the tenterhooks of curiosity. Some of us were discussing it all that very morning out at the clubhouse, and Hugh Blythe commented in that dry, statistical voice of his: "Well, if Lola says she is going to elope—she'll elope. I, for one, am going to the eight fifteen train tonight."

We really didn't know what to expect. Eloise lunched at our house that day and threw us into gales of mirth with her description of her encounter with Lola that morning down in front of Purington's. Lola was standing undecidedly at the door when Eloise had appeared, and Lola simply grabbed her, clutched at her like the proverbial drowning man at the straw, and without giving her time to say anything at all, had commissioned her to "Go right in there and send a dozen petticoats up to the house—eight linen and four silk. I entirely forgot 'em and I've simply got to see Mr. Mac"—and away she flew, leaving poor Eloise to 'phone up to Marjorie and find out about colors and patterns. Mr. MacIntyre is Lola's publisher.

You may be sure every invitee was present in good time that night, and when we saw the altar and chancel all banked with iris, we settled into our seats with a real sigh of relief—though a tiny bit of disappointment, too. The iris seemed Lola's acknowledgment and submission to convention and authority. We looked about for Hugh, but he wasn't there.

The familiar opening chords of "Lohengrin" sounded, and there was then the usual rustle and craning of necks as the bride came in at the back on her father's arm. The shimmery creamy satin of her gown was exquisite, as was the rare old lace of her veil that, held with a beautiful band of pearls, fell over her face in the front as well as down to the hem of her train. While we were watching her slow progress down the aisle, the groom entered quietly from the choir room at the side and stood alone there before Father Danvers—his back to the audience. "Bashful old Roger," whispered one of the men—then the impressive ring service began and we all grew still. We had to take Lola's replies for granted, they were so
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low, and Roger's voice sounded a bit strained and unnatural. Doubtless they were both rather sore about the whole affair.

But when the groom had kissed the bride, and with her veil thrown back they turned and came back up the aisle together—then we had the biggest sensation Lola had ever given us. It wasn't Lola at all—it was young Marjorie; and the man was Basil Kent.

Well, there never was a more surprised-looking man than Mr. Graeme. Archie, who stood next him, said he really braced himself to catch the old gentleman, but he didn't faint after all. Archie also vowed he heard Marjorie say something to her mother in a stage whisper when she passed her—something that sounded like: "Brace up, mother—and remember you knew all about it."

And, sure enough, when Mrs. Tremont Fletcher sailed down the aisle—a question mark in one eye and a whole volley of disapproving exclamation points in the other—Mrs. Graeme was her usual bland self. She smiled cheerily upon our social autocrat as she announced:

"I know, Mrs. Fletcher, we really shouldn't startle people this way, but it is just the penalty one has to pay for genius in the family. You know Lola's idiosyncrasies—and her obstinacy. There simply was nothing else to do when Roger had to start sooner than he expected this morning—on his regular business trip, you know—there was nothing we could do but let Lola go; and we thought it a lot better to let Madge be married without an announcement than to have you all come and not have any wedding at all."

And at that same minute, while we were showering Marjorie with Lola's rice—Hugh Blythe appeared in his car.

"Lola left good-byes for you," he announced, "and said to tell you they would send you all crocodile eggs for souvenirs in place of wedding cake."

GRAY HOURS

By Mrs. John Schwartz

I wandered long in Memory's silent halls tonight,
    But found, instead of friendship flowers,
A shattered vase and scattered bloom;
All dusted gray with ashes of forgetfulness reposed
    The fragile hourglass: blind Silence at her loom.

I wandered with reluctant feet to where stark Yesterday
    Clasped to her frozen lips the violets of
Our plighted troth. Dear God! With shuddering sobs
I knelt within her fragrant bower, and moaned gray hours away.

Lack of imagination is like lack of means; it's one of the few good excuses for virtue.
THE OUTCAST
By Arthur Stringer

ALONE it crept like a wind-blown leaf
Where the astral barriers ran,
Where broken it watched and wept with grief,
This thing once known as Man.

Then questioned the Giver of Life: “Why weep
Where my barrier lights are set?
Why not in the Garden of Slumber sleep—
In the Valley of Dreams forget?”

That lost soul watched thro’ the hyaline
Where a world paled down the light.
“No Valley of Dreams can now be mine;
As I sinned in my weakness, smite!”

“Yet I ask of Thee this one last gift:
But Her, whom I once loved well;
Then cast us out where Thy dead things drift,
Though it be to the wastes of Hell!”

“’Tis strange,” said He whom the wastes enthrone
On the heights that His star chains span,
As a soul passed down to the gray Unknown,
“But these are the ways of Man!”

B RIDE GROOM—You told me your father’s present would be a cheque for four figures.
BRIDE—Well, isn’t $23.23 four figures?

T HE reason that the average man is unable to “put himself in your place” is that he feels altogether too big to fill it.

O BSESSION is nine points of the bore.
LOLEA'S LOVE SONG

By Dwight Logan Loughborough

BLUEPOINT held the daintily bound volume in a great dirty hand and read aloud from it with a sneer on his handsome face. Generally he sneered. Seldom he smiled. Among all of us in the South Seas he was considered a woman hater. No particular reason had ever been offered. We supposed, because he never talked of women, never noticed them, never listened to tales of them, that he was born a hater of women—and because he generally sneered and so seldom smiled.

"Who is she that waits, vivid as a rose, tremulous, eager for joy? Who is waiting where clematis curtains vibrate gently in the dark? One who enfolds for the first time a newly won privilege and pain, putting aside virginity, tasting a new magnitude; Ready to surrender all for love's sake, that he may rejoice."

Bluepoint paused curiously. Holding the book at arm's length, he read aloud the title and the name of its author. Turning slowly toward where I lay in a hammock on the poop, he said quietly:

"Some of this stuff may be said by the critics to be lurid—but seldom your critic knows much about real life. Therefore he doesn't know Truth when she comes, in robes of shimmering white, and bares her heart to him."

I never had heard Bluepoint talk in this vein. I wondered whether the heat had affected his mind. He continued reading, his feet spread wide apart, one hand on his hip:

"She knows naught but to give, and to spend for him she loves; She would share his joy—she would become his glory."

Bluepoint walked to the taffrail and stood looking out over the placid sheen of the ocean. Then slowly he came back to where I lay watching him and wondering what manner of man he was.

"And she'll go to hell for him, too," he interpolated, tensely.

The book he held in his hands was one I had found on board after a young newspaper chap from 'Frisco, who had come up from Apia with us to Honolulu as supercargo, had gone ashore. If I remember, the title of the volume, a book of poems, was "Songs of the Woman Spirit." A woman's love songs. I had glanced hurriedly through the book and thrown it on the deck, disgusted.

Bluepoint went on reading:

"Man loves the bodies of all sweet women, And he that is born of the spirit loves the soul of one; But the woman loves the souls of all men and admits one right of flesh and blood. And she who yields her lips falsely, finds no joy. To man all women are accessible and one holy; To woman all men are sacred and one accessible. For him she loves she will descend gladly into the valley where the death mists hang And drag thence the beginnings of another life."

Bluepoint laid the book on a deck chair and clasped his hands tightly behind his back. He lifted up his great shoulders and threw back his blond head. For several minutes he stood rocking, from heels to toes, from toes to heels, his chin pointing to the spanker gaff.

"Double distilled rot!" I growled, and lit my pipe.

Bluepoint made no reply. He just stood there, rocking, rocking, rocking.
From heels to toes, from toes to heels, his chin pointing to the spanker gaff. A giant Norseman, returned from Valhalla.

After a while he turned again to me, this time with a snarl, and shook a burly fist at me.

“You don’t know any more about women than a dog knows about a Beethoven sonata!” he boomed.

I said nothing. It was too hot to argue.

I had lain in the hammock aft during most of my afternoon watch. The wheel had been tied down, and the Kanaka wheelman lay asleep on the deck under a bit of tarpaulin stretched from the mizzenmast. We had left Barber’s Point astern four days before, bound for Kobe, and yet here we were not a fathom’s length more than one hundred and forty knots from the Esplanade wharf at Honolulu.

Nearly all that day we had lain helplessly rolling in the offing, about five miles from the west coast of Kauai, under a sun as conducive to good nature as the odor of garlic and boiling cabbage in an overheated Harlem flat.

Bluepoint had spent a couple of hours forward swearing at the Kanaka crew in five languages. Then he had come aft and began bullying me in three. It was then he had picked up that infernal book, “Songs of the Woman Spirit.”

Bluepoint was a daredevil, and a restless nomad of the South Seas. Incidentally he had been one of the greatest guards that ever tore a hole in a football team’s line of defense. He had studied for the law. He had ended by becoming a rover of the deep. I picked him up on the beach on Penape. The first time I saw him he was lying asleep on the sand. An empty gin bottle lay beside him.

“Blueprint” wasn’t his name. We never inquire men’s names in Oceania. I learned his name one day quite by accident. There wasn’t a better navigator on the Pacific than Blueprint. Nor a better sailor. Nor a truer friend.

Always taciturn he was, and always in imminent danger from the devils that hiss at one out of a bottle of gin or absinthe. Green devils, with coal black eyes and fiery, forked tongues.

After he had rocked and rocked, in that peculiar way of his, for several minutes more, he sat down on a deck chair at my elbow.

“A woman’s a woman the world around,” he said softly, as if he were speaking to himself, thinking aloud.

“She’s the same, whether she be a New York society queen or a half-naked savage queen of the jungles of Kauai.”

“Trite!” I ejaculated.

Blueprint scowled.

“What’s the log?” I asked, and yawned.

“Damn the log!”

“That sky looks queer. I’ll bet we’re going to—”

“And love is all there is to a woman,” Bluepoint interrupted, clasping his hands behind his head and looking out of half-closed eyes through long, curly lashes.

“Well, let it go at that.” My pipe had gone out and I couldn’t find another match.

“Why is it that men and women seem to love so differently?” Bluepoint seemed now entirely oblivious of my presence.

“Search me. Have you a match?” I might just as well have addressed myself to the mizzen shrouds. I rolled out of the hammock and walked over to the taffrail and pulled in the log. Bluepoint rolled a cigarette, lit it leisurely without offering me a match or a light, and sprawled full length on the deck, his arms spread out like the wings of a soaring gull, the cigarette between his lips.

I went below for a match, cogitating on the different ways in which heat and absinthe affect men’s brains. I told Svenson, the second mate. He laughed and lumbered forward. He had sailed under Bluepoint, off and on, for several years.

Two hours later we were to the north of Niihau, and skimming along at a good ten-knot clip. Out there in the open sea Aëolus could go on all the rampages he wanted to. Our good ship would put a thumb to her nostrils and wiggle her fingers at him, howl and roar as he might.

The threatened blow did not materialize, however, and at one bell, after Svenson had gone on watch, the skipper and
I sat down on the lee side of the chart house for a quiet smoke.

"Ever stopped off on Kauai?" Bluepoint asked after a long silence. He got out of his chair and rose to a mean altitude of six feet three. With his hands on the rail he stood for several minutes looking aft, to where the mountains of that island lifted themselves darkly out of the sea in the murk of the dying day.


"I did—once," he said at length. "It was about seven years ago.

There came to us from the fo'castle the plaintive notes of a hula song. The sneer vanished and there came to the sensitive lips of the skipper a drooping, and into the blue eyes of him a look of unspeakable sadness. To starboard lay the little "bird island" on which are laid many of the scenes of the song dramas sung by the Kanakas of the Sandwich Islands. Doubtless it had recalled the fantastic song. Bluepoint sat with bowed head as the weird chant continued. His chin sank deep into his expansive chest and his hands twitched. His lips quivered as though he were in pain.

"These Kanakas and their gods and their hulas are disgusting!" I lit my pipe when the song was done, and sniffed my disgust of the simple-minded folk of the midsea islands. I was new in these waters. "Their infernal hulas are nothing but the riotous ebullitions of their old time kings and the amorous posturings of their voluptuaries!"

I had settled the entire question of the hula. I leaned back in my deck chair and smoked. Bluepoint looked at me and sneered. I saw the sneer, and resentment was hot within me. Then he smiled—and I smoked on. The last thing one may forget about Bluepoint is that smile of his.

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in Kingdom Come, and doesn't, he is not in the least surprised?

"I remember that at the time of the 'quake in 'Frisco I was in the old Russ House in Montgomery Street. I was thrown out of bed and slammed against the wall on the far side of the room. Most of the ceiling fell in. It was the end of the world!

"But when I got down on the street and found that it wasn't the end of the world, I was not in the least surprised.

"And so, that afternoon the hurricane struck me, when I found myself on the beach with the most beautiful girl I ever have seen bending over me and looking at me out of big, lustrous brown eyes, I wasn't a bit surprised.

"At first I didn't know whether I had died and had awakened in some sort of heaven, or was yet to find I was in some strange kind of hell.

"'Am I dead?' I asked in English. She didn't seem to understand. Then I spoke in the Hawaiian tongue.

"'Oh, no,' she answered me, 'and I pray the good goddess Haumea you may never die.' She knelt down on both her knees and brushed my hair out of my eyes and chafed my hands, which were clammy as those of a dead man.

"I'll never forget the voice of her—so sweet and divinely musical. God, what a voice she had!

"I managed to pick myself up after a while. I hadn't been much hurt—a piece of a flying timber had struck me over the right temple, but that was all.

"I looked down at that beautiful girl in a kind of awe. Her eyes were dark and humid, and full of forbidden fire—like the depths of juster hid in a San Joaquin poppy. She was clad only in a kapapau, a funny short skirt which came scarce to her knees, with her long wavy hair gushing in rivulets of quivering ebony down her dark rose-misted neck, and falling across her beautiful breasts.

"The girl's lips seemed to pout at me like two gorgeous rosebuds, the color of blood rubies.

"I stared at her. Then she hung her head. What we call the sex instinct is a strange thing. With her two shapely bare arms she covered her breasts and turned away from me.

"'Whither now?' I asked.

"'To the halau,' she answered, and her voice thrilled me with a strange delight.

"'Ah, then you are a hula dancer!' I was astonished. I previously had thought of the hula as you think of it now.

"'I am consecrated to Hula, most beautiful of men,' she answered and started up the steep incline sweeping back from the white sand of the beach. I followed close at her heels.

"'Who think you that I am?' I asked her, amused.

"'You are Lani, a prince of high heaven,' and she stopped in the narrow path, turned abruptly, and, kneeling, kissed my feet. I laughed.

"Then I stooped and caught one of her hands and lifted her to her feet. We stood there in the gray of the day, with the tropical rain in our faces and the brine of the sea in our nostrils, and looked long into one another's eyes. The skies were dark and lowering; we were swept with the scud of the ocean, tossed high by the fierce tempest which raged out yonder toward Niihau—and there raged within me a tempest a hundredfold more fierce as I gazed on this virgin of the mountain fastnesses of Kauai, standing before me with her dark, glossy hair swishing across my cheeks, and her deep lustrous eyes looking into mine, so frankly.

"'Ah, my beautiful bloom of lehua,' I said to her, 'thy flower yields nectar which I, a god, have sought far.'

"I clasped her, strenuously resisting, in my arms. Nor did she yield after I had crushed her closer and kissed her upon her rosebud lips.

"Then I knew what it means to love—as men think of love all too often in this world of distorted thought—to their own sorrow and the bitter curse of the women they prate of loving!

"She was a primitive creature, a human female animal, a savage of the wilds, yes; but she was the one woman for me. And I said in my heart I loved her.
"I could not explain to you in a thousand years the psychology of the consciousness that came to me. Psychology, after all, is but the science of a mind, which is not a mind but a mirror, in which we see reflected the inverted and hideously distorted images of what really exist."

Bluepoint sat quietly smoking for a moment, reflecting presumably upon the great mystery of reality, of what is and what only seems to be. He threw his cigarette over the rail and, turning to me, quietly resumed his narrative.

"I had seen her, less than thirty minutes before, for the first time in my life—and yet there I was willing to barter my soul to possess her. I was willing to spend an eternity in hell for the privilege of having her for my own for a single hour!

"Shipwrecked, miles from any habitation of white men, I made violent love to that girl. She repulsed my every advance—not because my advances were objectionable, but because she was a hula novice.

"The hula is to the Hawaiian a sacred religious service," Bluepoint explained, "in which poetry, music, pantomime and the dance lend themselves at once under the forms of dramatic art, to the refreshment and purification of men's minds. It gives itself to the celebration of those mythical times when gods and goddesses moved on earth as men and women, and men and women were as gods and goddesses. Its warp is spun from the ancient Polynesian mythology, into strong cords which hold together the present and the past. And the hula—as are the people—is hedged about by strict tabus.

"They will tell you in Honolulu that the day of tabu is past. But they don't know what they are talking about. And often tabu spells a banquet of horrors at which the guests drink to the dregs from bowls brimming with blood lust.

"The performers of the hula are prepared by mystical rites and ceremonies for the service upon which they are to enter. At the head of every company of dancers is the kumu-hula, a sort of high priest. Months, and sometimes years, of tedious effort on the part of the novices are spent before the ai-lolo rite, which means the pupil's graduation into the ranks of semi-priesthood. Then comes uniki, or the first public performance.

"The awful grasp of the law of tabu, the most repressive force I ever have known, holds fast the novices from the moment of their entrance to the halau and consecration before the kuahu, or altar.

"During the period of preparation there is no marrying or giving in marriage, and no word of love is permitted to be spoken under penalty of being cast hence to the mercy of Ku-hai, the shark god.

"To violate any of the many tabus is to bring down the wrath of the goddess Laka, to whom the hula dancers offer prayers and sacrifices, and to whom they look as the ancestral goddess of the institution.

"This girl with whom I believed myself so strangely in love was bound by the laws of tabu. She could not speak of love, nor accept a single one of my caresses; nor dare she listen, even, to my pleas.

"Believing me to be Lani, a prince of high heaven, come to earth for some reason of my own, she could not understand why I should not know this.

"After a while she led me to the halau, which had been constructed between the thighs of a mountain, which I am sure to this day no white man except myself ever has explored. It was a beautiful spot—fairly reeking with mystery and wild romance. The region for miles around was one of tangled woods, oozy, perilous steeps, seemingly fathomless bogs, narrow ridges of mountain bones and overhanging cliffs which fell away into dark abysses. It was a region that would appeal to every primal instinct of
the universal instinct, love.

"As we approached the halau the girl turned to me and asked if, before I left high heaven, I had remembered to learn 'mele-kahea,' a password which would admit me to the halau. There exists among all hula practitioners a sort of freemasonry, and these passwords are needed to gain entrance.

"I was up against it for a moment. Then I recalled something I had heard a Kanaka crooning one afternoon as he stood at the wheel aboard the yawl. He thought I was asleep, I suppose. I remembered the words because they struck my fancy, somehow.

"I laughed at the girl and told her we always had mele-kahea— we gods of high heaven. And I smiled at her a bit indulgently. I caught her hand in both my own and held it to my breast as I stood outside the entrance to the halau, looking into her eyes, upturned radiantly to mine, and sang:

"Long, long have I tarried with love
   In the uplands of Kohola-lele,
   The wildwood above Kapapala.
To enter, permit me to enter, I pray;
Refuse me not recognition. I am he,
A traveler offering meed of praise;
   Just a voice.
Oh, what I suffer out here!
Rain, storm, cold and wet.
O sweetheart of mine,
Let me come in to you!

"I didn't know whether this was mele-kahea or what the merry blazes it was. But I took a chance. Then, as I finished the song, I kissed the rosebud lips again, lingeringly. I looked into her eyes and— read her secret.

"It is easy to read any woman's heart secret. And it is just the same whether she be a Kanaka dancer, or a blased society woman of New York. A woman must love the man she must love. And a woman's a woman when love comes to her—and that’s an end of it.

"Presently there came from within the mele-kono—the song of welcome—which ended with the words:

   There is a home within for you— vacant; enter, we pray. Enter and be at peace.

"I looked at the girl closely, kissed her again and asked if a home in her heart was vacant for the entrance of my love. She uttered the one word: 'Tabu.'

"I curbed my feelings as best I could. There would come another day—and just then I was dealing with a lot of fanatical Kanakas.

"They took me in among those novices and dancers and made me one of them. I had been found on the shore with no sail in sight. I literally had dropped from the clouds!

"By listening and watching I learned all about tabu—more than I wanted to learn.

"Not another word of love did I speak to Lolea—that was her name—for four months. Nor did I plan to escape. I had determined to win the girl and take her with me when I went—if ever I went out from between the thighs of that mountain. And I am frank to confess I didn’t care a great deal whether I ever did.

"Lolea’s mother, I learned, was a Kanaka and Portuguese half-caste. Her father was a Portuguese sailor. An old Kanaka woman, who had raised the girl as her own daughter, told me Lolea had been left on Kauai when the ship on which her father sailed as a mate was wrecked in the Kamukahi Channel. The survivors told the old woman the girl was born on Oahu. She did not remember her parents, both of whom were lost, and had grown up there among the most primitive of the Sandwich Island natives.

"As awful as was tabu, however, it couldn’t still the voice of love that was singing ever in my heart—and hers. I had read her secret in her eyes that first day. And now she made no effort to conceal it from me. Once I sat beside her in the moonlight just outside the halau and held her hand as the company sang a weird chant to Luna. So enraptured were they by their plaintive melody that they did not notice us. When a cloud hid the face of the moon for a moment, I kissed the girl’s cheek. She leaned toward me, and for an instant I laid my hand on her bare shoulder.

"At last came the night before the rites of ai-lolo. Toward morning, after a night of prayer and dancing, we started
down the mountain path to the ocean. We followed one behind the other, running through the silver moonlight in silence, like so many phantom beings on our way to a phantom sea.

"I was following behind Lolea. When we had come to the beach she plunged in, and the opalescent waters—sparkling like myriads of celestial jewels as the phosphorus played—closed about her as a mantle of purity—to protect the scarlet flaming lehua that man would despoil but for the tabu.

"I can swim as well as any Kanaka—and that is saying much. After taking a few long overhand strokes I came alongside my savage queen.

"I don't know what possessed me, but without thought of the consequences I turned on my side, facing Lolea, and kissed her.

"She didn't cry out—or try to get away. She returned my kiss, passionately. We waded out through the surf and sat down in the warm white sand, glistening in the moonlight. I held her close in my arms and told her of my all-consuming love. She said no word, only sighed—and kissed me again.

"The others came around a little projecting hill and found us sitting there, our arms about each other. Her head was on my shoulder.

"I need not tell you what followed.

"The hula-kumu came. He called for a message from Laka, who thus had been outraged by a prince of high heaven and a beautiful novice. The message came; at least the hula-kumu said it did. One of us would be flung to the shark god Ku-hai. We ourselves should determine which it would be. Nothing less than this would appease the wrath of Laka, the outraged goddess.

"As we stood there side by side, facing those lunatics who had discovered us, waiting for the kumu to come and receive a message from Laka, I had told Lolea the truth. I had scoffed at her superstitious religion. I had defied her mythological gods, and I had defied her people. I was an American citizen—of the race to which the missionaries in Oahu for the most part belong. We had great fighting ships that would come and destroy Kauai.

"She only stared at me. I felt, somehow, my deception had broken her heart.

"The next day there was no ai-lolo. Instead were all of the party muffled—except the prince of high heaven and the novice who had dared to love—and, led by old Mr. Kumu, were taken to a cove about three miles away, which was frequented by man eating sharks.

"Before I started out I strapped around my right leg a long sheath knife I always carried at sea. The weapon had been hidden in a tree trunk at one side of the halau since the day I discarded my duck trousers for the native garb of a novice. I somehow figured it might be well to keep the natives from knowing I possessed a long-bladed stabber.

"Clad again in my gauze undershirt and duck trousers, I started out, following just behind the kumu. On either side of me trudged a male dancer, carrying an ugly-looking spear. Behind me were several more armed men. Behind them came the women of the company, and Lolea. She walked between two male dancers, each armed as were my guards.

"Through the thick foliage, quite away from the beaten paths, we made our way at times with extreme difficulty, stopping occasionally to break through the underbrush and heavy vines.

"The company crooned a mele to the shark god and one to Laka as we went along. Once I heard a woman sob. It was not Lolea.

"As we were passing out of the halau I got a glimpse of Lolea, standing with bared head thrown back. Her eyes were opened wide. Every bit of color seemed to have left her face. She wore only a kapapau. About her left arm was a bracelet of reeds, intertwined with scarlet lehua, the emblem of virginity.

"I tried to attract her attention. But she stood motionless the while. Then I saw her breathe deeply and lift her hands to heaven. My guards hurried me onward.

"We stood on the beach and waited for a sight of one of the hideous things
which made life in the South Seas a burden. And one came—a big bull shark.

"My guards held their spears menacingly against my back. I looked to where Lolea was standing. She was watching the shark with fascinated eyes. She stood transfixed. There was a strange light in her dark eyes—a light I shall remember as long as I live. No martyr of the days when Christians were burned at the stake ever looked as she looked—so filled with holy fire! But Lolea's was the holy fire of a wonderful love for a man, not a religion.

"I had determined to plunge into the surf, when the shark came near, and take a chance with my sheath knife. I had seen the Visayans turn the trick in Iloilo Straits, and I figured I could do what any dirty Malay can do. Then, I thought, I could convince Mr. Kumu that Laka had been avenged. It's doing any Kanaka a good turn to kill a bull shark.

"I was standing in the water watching the maneuvers of the wallowing devil as it slowly approached the shore, seeming to sniff human flesh—a delicious repast. Then Lolea, holding her arms above her head in an attitude of savage prayer, began chanting a mele-hoipoipo—a song of love. I had never heard it before. Nor have I ever heard it since. It must have been an improvisation. There was no sign of fear on the girl's rapt face, no sign of regret.

"The company stood motionless. The shark cavorted, nearer and nearer to the beach. It splashed this way and that, turning occasionally on its back.

"I can see the girl now, as she stood there singing.

"Before I could realize what it all had meant—before I comprehended what she intended doing—Lolea sprang out into the surf.

"Ugh! I sprang after her and swam with all my strength to reach her side before the shark should turn on its back and stick up its nasty belly and open its jaws.

"I— I— I saw the girl's beautiful body cut almost in two by the shark's teeth. The waters about me became crimson with her blood. The sight sickened me, and yet it maddened me. I pulled up a leg of my trousers, whipped out my knife and drove it to the hilt into the shark's throat. I struck again and again. I was in an unspeakable frenzy. I laughed and I cried; I shouted and I moaned. And all the time I kept plunging my knife into the shark. My fury was demoniacal. I was bereft of reason, of all thought of fear.

"The shark lunged toward me, I remember. I dived under the nasty thing. And again I plunged my knife into its thick neck. It careened and opened its jaws for me. I dived again, and, emerging from the blood red foam, I hacked and slashed with my dripping blade.

"I don't know how long the fight lasted. After a while half a dozen male novices swam out and dragged me away from the gutted carcass, into which I still was plunging my sheath knife. When I came to my senses I was back in the halau, and the kumu was chanting a mele of pardon.

"Laka had been avenged!"

As he finished the narrative Bluepoint rose and pushed back the deck chair in which he had been sitting.

"Somehow I feel," he said as he straightened his long legs, "that whatever of dross there was in the love I bore Lolea was washed away in that crimson flood. Since that day I never have looked at another woman.

"No, as Lolea sang, love is not wild desire. It is something quite different. But all too often men, whether in the South Seas or in New York City, fail to find this out until it is too late.

"And the women furnish food for the sharks!"

CONCEIT is degenerate individualism.
ON BAIL*

By George Middleton

CHARACTERS

JOHN LINSAY
MARY (his wife)
FRANK (his son)

PLACE: The Linsays' flat.

TIME: The present.

SCENE—A living room, furnished comfortably with the legacies of better times, but betraying present forced economies. Through the window near the door at the left, which opens on the stairway, the tops of buildings are seen. Another door is in the center at the back, opening into a still smaller bedroom. A cheap mantel handsomely draped, above a fireplace with the usual asbestos log, is at the right. A telephone rests on a small table at one side. In the center is a large table by which MRS. LINSAY, a gray-haired, delicate woman, dressed in a gingham wrapper, is seated sewing.

The outer bell is heard four times in rapid succession. Her face brightens as she recognizes her son's ring. She pushes the bell button in the farther room, returns to her work and waits.

After a pause FRANK enters. He is in his late twenties, raw-boned and muscular, with a short sandy mustache and fairly refined features. There is nothing about him which would attract attention, though his mobile face is not without a certain indication of sensitiveness. He is neatly dressed.

FRANK (going to her and embracing her anxiously)

Little mother!

MRS. LINSAY

My boy! (They kiss.) You're all out of breath climbing those stairs. They're too much for me.

FRANK (looking at her puzzled)

How are you, dear? Your hands are cold.

MRS. LINSAY (speaking simply throughout)

They've been cold for years. It's getting so hard for me to use them.

And there's so much more sewing and patching to do. How are Alice and the baby?

FRANK

All right. Alice'll soon be herself again.

MRS. LINSAY

When did you get back?

FRANK

I came this morning. I made Alice the excuse with the company. I still had some work to do on my trip.

MRS. LINSAY (pausing at her work)

Then why did you come?

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THE SMART SET

**FRANK**
You don't know?

**MRS. LINSAY**
What?

**FRANK**
He hasn't told you?

**MRS. LINSAY**
Your father?

**FRANK**
Yes; where is he?

**MRS. LINSAY**
In his room resting. He's going out soon. What is it?

**FRANK**
You've no need to keep it from me, mother; I know. I saw it in the papers. He's out on bail.

**MRS. LINSAY**
Arrested?

**FRANK**
Yes. (Mrs. Linsay closes her eyes without seeming to betray any emotion.) Mother, doesn't anything move you nowadays?

**MRS. LINSAY**
I don't know. But that can't be true, Frank.

**FRANK** (offering her a clipping which he takes from his cardcase)
Look.

**MRS. LINSAY**
My eyes are tired.

**FRANK** (reading)
"Frank Linsay, who was arrested in a raid at the Dearborn Social Club last Saturday, will be arraigned at the Madison Court tomorrow on the charge of gambling. Linsay is at present out on bail."

**MRS. LINSAY**
Again!

**FRANK**
Hasn't he told you?

**MRS. LINSAY**
He didn't want to worry me, I guess.

**FRANK**
Yet he lied to us.

**MRS. LINSAY**
Yes; he always will to save us pain.

**FRANK** (bitterly)
And he promised—promised a year ago—to give it all up.

**MRS. LINSAY**
He said he had. That's where he's been nights.

**FRANK**
Telling us he had a night clerkship—an honest place, at a hotel—with a salary. And I thought I'd never have to face it again.

**MRS. LINSAY**
We'll always have to face it.

**FRANK**
What can we do? We've done everything before—helped him each time. And now—now—mother, I'll tell him what I think of him!

**MRS. LINSAY**
He knows.

**FRANK**
To drag us into this again when we thought he— Can't people stop things? (He goes to the door at the back and calls harshly) Father! Father! I want to see you.

**MRS. LINSAY** (to herself)
Again.

(There is a slight pause, then JOHN LINSAY enters. He is a man of about sixty. He, too, is calm in manner, as though without rebellion at anything. Frank faces him and Linsay understands at once.)

**LINSAY**
So you've seen it in the papers, Frank?

**FRANK**
Yes.

**LINSAY** (walking slowly to Mrs. Linsay and seating himself beside her in silence while Frank watches)
I'm sorry, Mary. I tried to keep it from you.

**MRS. LINSAY** (taking his hand)
I know, dear.
FRANK
Yet you did it again after you promised us both you'd quit!

LINSAY (simply)
Yes, I did it again.

FRANK (hardly controlling himself)
You ought to be ashamed of yourself to—

MRS. LINSAY (seeing the slow look her husband gives FRANK)
Don't, Frank.

FRANK
But you lied to us, and now we're in this mess again.

LINSAY (quietly)
I'm sorry to give you so much trouble.

FRANK
It isn't only me; it's mother and—

LINSAY
Poor Mary! Yes, but I couldn't do anything else.

FRANK
For a year you've made us believe mother was living on honest money.

LINSAY
What difference does that make so long as she lives? At least I've helped her; that's more than you've—

MRS. LINSAY
Hush, dear; don't let's quarrel. It hurts my head so.

FRANK (persistently)
But why did you do it again?

LINSAY (speaking without emotion)
I did give it up as I promised, and tried to get a place somewhere. I went all over. Everybody knew me, and those who didn't soon found out. They had bet with me and knew I was honest; they had trusted me with their money on no security but my word—yet they wouldn't trust me to work in their places of business. They'd come to mine, though. Nobody would have me. I knew your mother had nothing, and that you had Alice and the baby with only a little saved. I couldn't bear not giving her as I always had. One day a chance came. (FRANK smiles sarcastically.)
Oh, you never minded when I won; there's no crime in that! It's losing that's the crime. If I'd lost that time, I couldn't have made good, either—the first time I ever did such a low thing. I'd have "welched," and where would my reputation have been—my reputation, that has always been as good as capital? Well, I won and mother shared it. I put enough aside to pay her each week like a salary, and I didn't dare tell her the truth. I kept on because I thought I might get back where I was and stop. I always made money. Nobody would have me; what else could I do?

MRS. LINSAY (murmuring)
What else?

FRANK (referring to the clipping)
And this?

LINSAY
I was informed on. Somebody tried to cheat me and I wouldn't stand for it. But I paid it when he threatened to get even. I thought of you both. But he didn't keep still. They've got all the evidence they need. I saw the District Attorney; he used to "play" with me before he had to enforce the law. You know him, Frank; he asked after you. He was very decent. Since it was the first offense they could convict on, he's agreed to let me off if I plead guilty, with a fine.

FRANK
How much?

LINSAY
A thousand dollars.

FRANK
A thousand dollars! Have you got it?

LINSAY
I told you I'd paid the man who "squealed." It took all I had.

FRANK
But who's to pay it?

LINSAY (looking at him slowly)
You ask me that?

FRANK
It must be paid, mustn't it?
LINSAY
I suppose so. I must go down there in a little while.

FRANK
Too bad; if you’d only stopped as you promised!

LINSAY
Yes. But I didn’t. (There is a silence, and it is seen that Mrs. Linsay is struggling with a problem.) I—I tried to get you on the ‘phone, Frank.

FRANK
Alice said—(Understanding suddenly)
You wanted me to—

LINSAY
Whom else can I turn to? I thought you might give me another chance. I’ll be more careful next time. I’ve always made money—

FRANK
Always made money! (He laughs bitterly.) Then why—why are you penniless now?

LINSAY (quietly)
Things “broke” wrong, that’s all; they do sometimes. But they always change. With a little capital I know I can—

FRANK (sarcastically)
Begin again? And you want me to help you to begin again?

LINSAY (with a momentary flash of eagerness)
I tell you, I can make money. Once when you were little it happened just like this. Your mother had a little saved. She gave it to me and I made money—didn’t I, dear? (Mrs. Linsay still sits gazing intently before her.)

FRANK (eyeing him incredulously)
And you don’t feel ashamed to ask me?

LINSAY (showing for the first time he is hurt by Frank’s manner)
Ashamed to ask you—my son? (Hopelessly) You see, Mary, he’s just as I said.

FRANK
How can you ask me?

LINSAY (controlling himself with difficulty)
How can I ask you? Do you think I like it—when you didn’t offer it? (Bitterly) Do you think I would if I didn’t feel I had a right to ask it?

FRANK
Right!

LINSAY
Yes, right. Look at yourself and look at me. I’m old and I’ve shed my feathers; but they made a pretty good pillow for you. I’m a back number; you’re a gentleman. You go where I couldn’t put my head. But you are my son! Who gave you food and clothes till you left? Who gave you your education, paid your doctor’s bills and saw that your teeth had gold in them? The one you are now ashamed of—I gave them to you. And did I ever hesitate or throw it up to you when I had it? Did you ever refuse it? You knew where it came from, and you took it—

LINSAY (quietly)
I give it to you. Do you believe that sort of talk can reach me after these years? Don’t you realize I’ve paid, too, for everything you gave me—paid for it with more feeling than you ever could put into your gifts? Was it easy for me to be your son?

FRANK
Frank!

LINSAY (bitterly)
Then why did you stay and take?

FRANK
That was the only way I could pay. You can’t understand. I knew how you loved me and cared for me. I knew all you gave me, and I had only one means of paying: by remembering I was your son and staying with you. (Linsay smiles sarcastically.) Had I left when I first found out about you, as I thought of doing, you would have had my in-
gratitude to face. That, at least, I spared you.

LINSAY

Till now.

FRANK (more tenderly)

Father, don’t let’s cut each other like this. Only I’ve suffered, too, with the shame of it all, and I tried—I tried so hard to keep straight myself so you wouldn’t regret what you’d both given me. But I couldn’t help hating everything your life stood for, and the education you gave me made me a life apart from you.

LINSAY (bowing his head)

I told you, Mary, we’d educated him beyond us.

FRANK (quickly)

No, it wasn’t that. But I saw that if you’d only placed all your energies into something worth while, you’d have something to show for your life.

MRS. LINSAY

We—we have you, Frank.

FRANK (moved)

Yes, that’s the way I tried to figure it out, and I stayed. Besides, I loved you both. (Going to LINSAY tenderly) Father, before I married I came to you and told you I would help you and mother if you’d give it up. You did, I thought, and I helped, didn’t I, with what little I was making? Then when I saw you were on your feet again, as I believed, I took what life brought. But I didn’t marry Alice till—till I thought you and mother wouldn’t have to worry. I never suspected you were lying to me.

LINSAY (reluctantly, after a pause)

That’s the other reason I went back to the old life: I—I saw I was standing in the way of your marrying.

FRANK

I didn’t know that, dad. I’m sorry—sorry if I spoke unkindly. But how can I help you now? I’ve only a little saved up—hardly enough to pay that fine. There’s Alice—and the baby. Where does my duty lie? How much further claim have you on me because of what you gave me, because I’m your son? (There is a pause.) And what will you do afterward? If you couldn’t get a position before, who’s to give you more money if you lose? How can you go on? Don’t you see what you’re asking me?

(LINSAY seems to realize for the first time what it means. There is quite a pause as he gathers himself together with an air of acceptance. He finally goes to FRANK and puts his hand on his shoulder as though trying to speak, but cannot. He stands thus in silence for some time until he gains courage for a resolve. He slowly picks his hat from a chair and comes to MRS. LINSAY, who throughout this has sat tense as though also struggling with some problem yet unsolved.)

LINSAY

Mary, I’ve put you through so much, but you’ve stuck by. We’ve had nobody but each other, have we? The world you’d like to have lived in wouldn’t take you with me; I wouldn’t take you into mine. So we’ve been alone. It seems to me—now that I think of it—you’ve made most of the sacrifices. I guess it’s my turn now. Sacrifice doesn’t seem such a clear thing when one comes to think it over; it’s so mixed with other people. But I’ve figured it out in my head this moment, and I see how I can save you both for a while. (Slowly) You can look after her, Frank?

FRANK (not understanding)

Yes, but—

MRS. LINSAY

What do you mean?

LINSAY (leaning over and kissing her)

Mary—dear Mary—

MRS. LINSAY

John!

LINSAY (with determination, to FRANK)

I ought never to have said what I did. I am proud of you. I don’t think there’ll be much talk about me; so you needn’t fear the publicity. Besides, people who are worth knowing won’t blame you. But your mother will be more alone now, and—(Controlling himself)
MRS. LINSAY (beginning to understand his intention)

John!

FRANK

Father!

LINSAY

A thousand dollars. It will be less if I save them the expense of a trial. They let you work it off at a dollar a day, I believe. And with good behavior—

FRANK

You’re not going to—

LINSAY (putting on his hat as he opens the door and turns)

Take care of her, Frank.

(Before they can speak he closes the door again quickly and goes out. Frank seems stunned, but after a few seconds of silent compression Mrs. Linsay staggers to her feet and with an effort crosses to the door.)

MRS. LINSAY

John—John—not prison! What would I do, John? (She opens the door and calls) John! John!

(There is a pause; she comes back, closing the door, and standing by the window, holds her hands out impotently as though trying to urge him back.)

FRANK (breaking down)

Mother—mother, I’ll give it to him. You’ve been reproaching me, too, for refusing.

MRS. LINSAY (embracing him fiercely)

Reproach you! No, no. You’ve been my pride—that you’ve grown away from this. It’s I—I—who am to blame; I sat there willing to let him go when I could have saved him!

FRANK

You!

MRS. LINSAY

Yes, yes; money is all he needs. I wouldn’t let him take yours. You have Alice, and—I was saving it—saving it in case I should be left alone. And now that I am alone, what good will it do when I know it would have kept him with me if only I’d given it? And it was his—his, anyway; he made it, gave it to me freely to spend. But I saved every penny I could, like a miser. Even the last year something in my heart told me he was lying to me. I didn’t dare ask him. I didn’t want to know the truth. So I saved, for I feared something like this would happen again. I didn’t let him know this time I was saving—I feared he’d take it all from me as he did before and before that. I wanted to protect myself. I didn’t want to have to ask anybody for money. So I saved it, and now—now it could have saved him; and I sat there and didn’t give it to him—didn’t give it to him!

FRANK (soothingly)

Dear mother, it’s not too late. I can phone the District Attorney.

MRS. LINSAY (eagerly)

Quick, do! (As Frank is about to take down the receiver she stops him.) Wait! Wait! A thousand dollars, Frank! (Slowly) Do you think—we might get a lawyer? That he might have a chance to get off without paying so much?

FRANK

Father said the evidence—

MRS. LINSAY

But a lawyer wouldn’t cost a thousand dollars, and he might get off entirely.

FRANK

I’m afraid not. Besides, if he stood trial and was convicted—(He turns again to the telephone.)

MRS. LINSAY

Wait. Let’s think if there isn’t any other way. A thousand dollars! I can hardly spare it. (As though ashamed of herself, she comes close to him.) Oh, Frank, Frank, I love money so! I hate to part with it. It’s like blood money. I’ve seen its power, seen it change people, seen it change me. Yes, I hadn’t any at the start when I married him; my people were poor. I didn’t know his business at first; he didn’t want me to know. But I loved him and he gave me everything, and I liked pretty things. Then I found out where the money came from. I was horrified. I saw it like everybody else. It was terrible. I begged him to give it up; but just then he won a lot of money, and he gave
me furs and diamonds I had never had, and I wore them, and he promised when we had enough to live on he would stop and— Don't you see, I didn't have the courage to make him stop! I was bribed! I ought to have worked with my hands so he would have given it up and started again with only a bare living if need be. Now I can't—now I'm not strong enough.

FRANK (trying to calm her) Mother!

MRS. LINSAY (clutching herself) I've never been able to say it. Let me speak to you this once. We never have. I want you to see I'm not bad, only a weak wife who's loved him, stuck by him and sacrificed everything—except that I didn't make him stop when we were young. Then he had lost it all, too, and I had to give it all back; but he said he'd win it all back and he did. We could have got along; you and Alice do. That's been my life—you know it—never knowing what the day would bring. I couldn't stand the fear of being penniless, so I saved to protect myself. And I grew to fear I might have to go to work. Look at me now, Frank; I'm worn out. It's money that has sucked me dry. I saw its power. (With a cry) Frank! After all my saving I've got to give it all back to pay a fine!

FRANK How you've suffered!

MRS. LINSAY (hysterically) All to pay a fine! To give my blood money back to the courts! What will they do with my few dollars? Why won't they let me keep it? It would mean so little to them; I need it more.

FRANK (thoughtfully) I suppose society is taking it back because dad gave nothing to society for it.

MRS. LINSAY And I was saving it to give it back!

FRANK (tenderly) But you'll have him again.

MRS. LINSAY Yes, and he's so tired; he looks so worn. He must have suffered, too. He's been so good to us.

FRANK Dear, at least we know that.

MRS. LINSAY I have nobody but him. (Frank makes a motion of appeal.) No; you're married. Alice has all the claim on you. He and I have only each other.

FRANK (going to the telephone) Hello! 5789 Main. District Attorney's office.

MRS. LINSAY (murmuring as he awaits the connection) I've got to buy him back—that's what it is—got to buy him back so he can be with me.

FRANK Hello! This is Frank Linsay. I wish to speak to the Judge.

MRS. LINSAY It would be so cold for him away from the sunlight. He'd be like my hands—all over.

FRANK Hello! Judge . . . Yes, father said he saw you. He's coming down. There's been a misunderstanding, and I want to fix it so I can send a cheque to pay that fine. He doesn't know . . . Yes; but could you postpone it till tomorrow and have the bail extended? . . . (Relieved) Thanks. Just tell him mother is waiting for him to come back home, will you? (MRS. LINSAY gives a sob as she has been leaning near him. FRANK can hardly contain himself as the District Attorney has apparently heard the sob also.) Oh, that's just mother! Yes, I'll tell her it's all right. Thanks. Good-bye.

(He hangs up the receiver, sitting very quiet. Then MRS. LINSAY masters herself, and after a short silence rises and goes over to the chair by her sewing, which she picks up. She tries to work, but cannot seem to see the stitches as she wipes her eyes. FRANK rises and comes to her; he takes her hand and sits beside her. Together in silence they stare before them in wonder at the future.)

CURTAIN.
GIPSY BLOOD
By Martha Haskell Clark

Oh, one crept out from a cellar's maw that gloomed 'neath the castle keep,
And one stole forth through the castle gate, where the warders leaned asleep;
And one was clad in a tattered cloak that gaped at each scanty fold,
And one fared forth in a mantle rare, that glimmered with threads of gold:
Beggar and prince, and brother-bound, by the urge of an old desire,
With the wanderlust in their fevered blood, like the trail of a grass-blown fire.
And the heart of one was the heart of each, as into the night they strode—
Oh, meddle not with the gipsy blood that turns to the Open Road!

Nay, meddle not with the gipsy blood when it rises to seek its own,
For the blade must spring and the ear be reaped where the kernel of corn is sown!

Oh, one fareth many a brackened mile, with the hill winds by his side,
And one stepped forth from a tavern's arch that gave on the seaward tide;
And one was clad in a peasant's smock, daubed dark with the peatland soil,
And one stepped down in a grimy garb that spoke of the City's toil.
Stern and silent and brother-bound, with the salt spray on their lips,
With the soul and the gipsy heart of each, in the hold of the trampler ships:
While over their heads the wild gray gulls, buffeted, high and free—
Oh, meddle not with the gipsy blood that seeks for the Open Sea!

Nay, meddle not with the gipsy blood that seeks for the sunlit wave,
For the Sea must claim in its manhood hour the life that the seawinds gave;
So meddle not with the gipsy blood that wakens to seek its own,
For the blade must spring and the ear be reaped where the kernel of corn is sown!

The depth of a woman's eyes is frequently the height of a man's ambition.

Jumping at conclusions is about the only mental exercise some people take.
JE connais un pays dont les habitants sont toujours vêtus. Auprès de la femme en travail, le prêtre et le magistrat attendent et, dès que l'enfant paraît, se saisissant de lui, ils l'enferment tout entier, mains et visage compris, dans un tissu élastique qui dessine les courbes du corps et qui grandira avec lui. Peut-être, malgré son élasticité, la toile résiste, s'opposant à la croissance, car les hommes de ce pays restent singulièrement petits.

L'étrange vêtement a des ouvertures qui correspondent aux yeux, aux narines, à la bouche. Mais il se replie un peu, collé sur le rebord des pertuis naturels et nulle part on n'aperçoit la peau, cette indécence. Même, il est collé sur les paupières. Les cils, réunis par cet artifice, à peu près comme sont réunis les doigts des oiseaux qui nagent, donnent au regard je ne sais quelle expression de sottise et de bassesse.

Pendant la croissance de l'enfant, ou même plus tard, à cause de l'usure ou de quelque accident, il arrive que le vêtement craque. Celui qui est victime d'un tel malheur réussit souvent à le dissimuler et à y remédier en secret. Dans le cas contraire, il reçoit cinquante coups de fouet, puis il s'agenouille et, parmi des cérémonies et des prières, les prêtres et les magistrats collent sur la déchirure deux lambeaux superposés d'étoffe pudique.

Je passai dans ce pays à une époque où des hommes hostiles m'avaient dépourvu de mon manteau. Je marchais innocent et nu parmi ce peuple religieux. Les femmes et les jeunes gens s'assemblèrent bientôt autour de moi. Le troupeau nombreux me suivait, louant la couleur de mon vêtement et sa finesse souple. Mais, après un peu de temps, des prêtres accoururent qui accusaient cette foule par des cris accompagnés de gestes qui maudissent. Puis des gens d'armes la dispersèrent à coups de béton.

Et, s'étant saisis de moi, ils me conduisirent devant le magistrat suprême. Là, un accusateur se leva, qui dit:

— Cet homme est coupable de ne point porter le vêtement que la cité ordonne et d'introduire un costume extravagant. Il est coupable de corrompre, par ce moyen, les femmes et les jeunes gens. Peine: la mort.

— Qu'as-tu à opposer pour ta défense? interrogea le juge.

Je répondis naïvement:

— Je suis étranger et j'ignore vos lois. Pourtant je suis certain de ne point porter des vêtements qu'elles condamnent, puisque je suis nu comme l'enfant qui sort du ventre de sa mère.

Or, ces hommes affirmaient qu'ils aimançaient l'urbanité, les finesse de l'esprit et les ingénieuses surprises de la parole. Ils se regardèrent donc en souriant des lèvres et des yeux. Et le juge proclama:

— Voici un étranger d'une intelligence trop aimablement paradoxale pour que j'aie le courage de le condamner.

L'assistance approuva. Et l'accusateur déclara:

— Je suis plus que tous admirateur de la grâce et du sel qu'on met dans les discours. C'est pourquoi je retire mon accusation contre cet homme. Il y a d'ailleurs un sens profond et un enseignement utile dans sa boutade. La connaissance des lois forme autour du citoyen un vêtement qui le réchauffe et une armure qui le protège. De sorte que cet homme, ignorant de nos lois, les
seules naturelles et raisonnables, est, en effet, nu et pauvre comme un nouveau né.

On applaudit beaucoup le petit homme dont le regard sous les cils unis brillait comme l’eau agitée sous les pattes d’un canard. Je sentis que le désir de ces applaudissements avait contribué à mon salut et j’échangeai avec mon défenseur imprévu de longues félicitations.

Le juge me demanda si mon projet était de m’établir dans le pays ou seulement de le traverser. Je voulus savoir, avant de répondre, quel traitement j’éprouverais dans les deux cas. On loua ma prudence et on m’expliqua que, si je devais rester dans la contrée, on m’arracherait d’abord mon vêtement contre nature, après quoi on m’habillerait comme tout le monde. Mais, si je ne faisais que traverser, on supposerait que les habits paradoxaux dont j’étais couvert étaient légaux et nobles dans ma cité et on se contenterait, pour le temps de mon passage, d’en couvrir l’impiété locale sous une longue tunique semblable à celle dont on se défend, en hiver, contre le froid.

Tous les assistants m’entourèrent, exaltant leur pays, la plus douce des patries, et faisant pour m’y retenir des efforts qui certes me flattaient. Néanmoins je préférai protéger, par un prompt départ, l’intégrité de ce qu’ils appelaient mon paradoxal vêtement.

LES CORBEAUX
Par Philéas Lebesgue

PAREILS à d’énormes fruits noirs,
Au sommet des pommiers sans feuilles,
Les corbeaux s’assemblent, le soir,
Et pensivement se recueillent.

Sont-ils noirs de tout l’incendie
Dont fume, là-bas, l’horizon?
De la solitude agrandie
Ont-ils concentré le poison?

Comme battus d’une bourrasque,
Les voici tombés tout à coup.
La nuit sournoise met son masque:
Il y a des corbeaux partout.

IL faut vivre chaque jour comme si c’était le premier—et puis nous endormir comme des dieux ivres.
ACTORS WHO SHALL BE NAMELESS

By George Jean Nathan

NEWSPAPER advertisements and the allied gratuitous reading notices, billboards, street car lithographs, circulars, drug store display cards, pass-cajole reporters and homoousian uncouth publicity devices, massaged and cultivated by salaried press agents, have succeeded in working the present day theatrical public into a condition where it thinks of Ophelia primarily as that actress who wears La Spirite corsets and who advises the wholesale eating of pickled pigs' feet as a certain aid to health and beauty; of Marc Antony as that actor who smokes Lucky Strike tobacco, who recommends Herpicide and who was named as co-respondent in Mazie Mooze's divorce case; and of Paula Tanqueray as that actress who is the wife of Sir Charles Surface, who has nine babies, who always uses a Prophylactic toothbrush and who was observed dancing the Tango up at Reisenweber's last Wednesday evening with, oh, you know—that character in the Pinero play who has that fine house on Long Island, who always drinks six glasses of hot water before breakfast and who drives a mauve six-cylinder Mercedes.

I do not believe I exaggerate the general situation unduly, even if my verbal mechanism resolves itself into puckish form. The nugacious over-advertising and contraband personal exploitation of mummers has gone no small way toward putting the present prevalent squint, the deleterious strabism, in the auditorium imaginative powers of the native theatergoing herd. The herd, consequently, when in attendance upon some such play as, for example, "The High Road," no longer views the playwright's tale of Mary Page, of Mary's liaison with the artist Wilson, of her subsequent marriage to Governor Barnes and of her fight for happiness against the proofs of her wrongdoing insinuated into her household by the newspaper owner Maddock. What the herd now views, as the play unfolds, is rather Mrs. Fiske living in Charles Waldron's apartments, her marriage several years later to Frederick Perry and her struggle to save her own and her husband's name when Arthur Byron comes in and confronts her with her past. This bland state of affairs, no matter whether the play in point be good or bad, patently assists in stifling the complete effectiveness of the playwright's ware.

Of course, the himalayan predilection of mummers for gaudy publicity and the gratifying of that predilection by myopic managers are not alone responsible for the scotomy and assishness of our audiences. Our audiences in considerable measure have a passionate fondness for hocuspocusing themselves. They love to appear conversant with the details of the world of the theater; they adore being in the know; they burn with the desire to hobnob with the people of the play world in magazine pictures, in the underwear ads., in the cozy interview of the Sunday paper, or, at closer range, in the fleshfish restaurants of nighttime Broadway and the tea rooms of some of our most inclusive hotels. As a result, "Billie Burke sat at the table next to me at the Plaza yesterday afternoon" carries ten times more weight and interest in a local theatrical conversation than "I saw Pinero's 'Mind-the-Paint Girl' last night."

As a second result, each successive role that a mummer seeks to portray be-
comes, in the eyes of the herd, less and less a characterization and more and more the mummer. It matters not whether the roles be similar or of spacious divergence. The roles fade as the actor in them becomes more widely, more intimately, known. The audience cannot see the forest because of the trees; it cannot grasp the entity of the role because the dinned-in name and personality label of the mummer are in the way. And the large pity of it all is that, through the lip-wisdom of promiscuous star-boosting and featuring-given producers, our audiences, have been led to take their keenest interest in the personalities of many of the least talented actors, the least worthy performers, in the business. The Tyrone Powers, the Brandon Tynans, the Florence Reeds are advertised (when they are advertised at all) in the pettiest eight-point, while the billboards are inflamed with capitals and the massage cream endorsements are vehement in lithographed visages and the Sunday dramatic sections are riotous in anecdote and the subway Fitsnug Skirt signs are declamatory in the figures of Mr. Well Fitting Clothes, Miss Cutey Nice-shape and the rest of the so-regarded salient individualisms of the native theater.

Last year Mr. Henry Miller took into his company a young actress of considerable talent. He assigned her to play in the piece he was then about to present the role of a girl innocent in the ways of the world, wholesome, simple, pure. The young actress achieved a critical success and, better still, a popular success. When the play was about to be shelved for the summer, the young actress, having found a one-act play to her liking, planned to act it in the vaudeville halls during her several months of otherwise idleness. Mr. Miller, as acute an observer of the theater and its devious tides as can be summoned to mind, saw that the role the young actress would portray was that of a female crook—and put down his foot with an italicized bang. "It is better for you not to play such a part, even for a short while," he told the girl. "If you do, next season when the people who saw you in vaudeville see you in 'The Rainbow,' they'll say to themselves: 'Huh! Why, that girl isn't as innocent as she pretends; she picked pockets and cracked a safe last time we saw her. Innocent? Not on your Sarony!'" Mr. Miller, who—even if he wisely refrains from saying it for publication—probably realizes that our native theatrical audiences are as dunder-blocked and gowky as an American jury's decision on a case of insanity argued out by two opposing sets of paid and suborned alienists, was not far wrong in his deduction. You smile. But you are an exception. You always are.

As a first aid to the barnyard imagination of local playhouse patrons, as first aid to the present decrepit status and impudicity of native acting on the American stage, as first aid to public interest gone wrong, as first aid to playwrights, I make this plea: Anonymity for actors. Let our actors go nameless to their tasks. Let our actors cease to be incandescent lights and pictured endorsers of the Swoboda system and Grape Nuts, and let them become roles, characters etched into plays, figures in moving narratives, elements for the assisting of drama on its saintly course. Let our buskined gentry cease to have the irlabels disseminated in newspaper linotype via interviews on "The Decline of Pomeranians in Toledo, Ohio," via knock-kneed epigrams and repartee of which they have made a self-exploiting cult, via their perfectly unimportant opinions on very nearly all subjects—and let them occupy such misspent time in thinking about that foreign and seemingly irrelevant thing called acting. Let there be but one column on the first page of the program the usher hands us, and let that column contain only the names of the characters in the play. Let press agents pressagent plays and let them let the mummers rest. And then, in time, good will be the tonic on the local imagination; good will be the tonic on the local drama; good will be the tonic on the local actor. In the anonymity of the actor—complete or, if that be impossible, in part—reposes no puny logic, no
soulful pumpernickel, no witling philosophy. Such anonymity will succor drama. And such anonymity, while it will not hurt a worthy player to the slightest extent, will spare our stage the current plague of dress shield and perfumery guarantors who pass muster with the local bumbalilfs, dachshunds and other orchestra chair slouches as capable public performers. Look you what anonymity has done for the moving pictures!

I now take the liberty, ladies and gents, of introducing some more or less celebrated fragmentary testimony that would seem in a measure to help out the case I have here been trying.

C. Coquelin—"The actor may mark with his imprint the parts that he interprets; but this imprint must be so well confounded with the reality of the personage (or character) as not to be realized by the spectator without reflection and comparison."

Edmond de Goncourt—"To express oneself perpetually in the manner of the personage whom one must represent, to have always his own character, his own tone and manner, is ridiculous. The art of a great actor is to make people forget even his name when he is on the stage. Some players have the conceit to think that when the author has finished the play he has done only half of the work and that the players must do the rest."

Jules Lemaitre—"The trade of the actor does not give him the disposition to be philosophical or to have contempt for vanity."

Gordon Craig—"There is only one actor who has the soul of the dramatic poet and who can ever serve as a true and loyal interpreter of the poet. This is the marionette. He has the two great virtues: silence and obedience."

Anatole France—"I have twice seen the marionettes of the Rue Vivienne and have taken great pleasure in them. I am infinitely pleased for them to replace living actors. If I must fully express my feeling, the actors spoil the play for me. I mean the good actors. I would put up with the others! But it is the good actors that I positively cannot stand. Their talent is too great; it covers everything. There is nothing but them. Their personality effaces the work which they represent. They are too prominent. I would not have an actor prominent save when he has genius."

Nietzsche—"A name indebtedly associated with a personality, when known, causes the work of that person to become diluted with the personal, the most personal element, and the aim of the work is frustrated."

Before marching into a critical survey of Eugene Walter's latest product, "Fine Feathers," it is to be perceived from the newspaper criticisms of the piece and from the attitude of its audiences that considerable difficulty has been encountered both by the professional and amateur spectators in disassociating the actor from his role and the role from its actor—and to the hurt of the play. Such widely published names and figures and personalities as Rose Coghlan, Robert Edeson, Max Pigman and Wilton Lackaye, each invested with its ineradicable public impressions of other days, other parts, personal mannerisms, methods of brushing the hair, clothing the body and so on, have projected Rose Coghlan, Robert Edeson, Max Pigman and Wilton Lackaye into the audiences' eye and mind in place of Mrs. Collins, Bob Reynolds, Dick Meade and John Brand, the playwright's characters in which they should be lost to sight.

With the first three performers this holds particularly true, Mr. Lackaye being a sufficient artist to diminish the audience's personal knowledge and picture of the personal Mr. Lackaye so as is normally possible. But even in Mr. Lackaye's case, how an anonymity covering the period of his professional career might have helped! Would not a public's memory of various solid achievements, of characters, be more economically valuable, more deeply correlated with the best interests of drama, of the art of acting and of the actor himself than memory divided between the work and the man, the creation and the instrument?

Would not Mr. Lackaye himself—an intelligent man—prefer to nestle in the mind of the American theater public as the Gouroc of "Paul Kauvar," the Don Stephano of "Featherbrain," the Robert Le Diable of "Allan Dare," the Noirville of "Roger La Honte," the Jefferson Stockton of "Aristocracy," the Sven-gali of "Trilby," the Reb Shemuel of "The Children of the Ghetto," the Curtis Jadwin of "The Pit," the Jean Valjean of "Les Miserables" instead of being known chiefly to that mind as "Wilton Lackaye, that actor who cracks such witty jokes, who always has interviews in the papers telling what's wrong with the managers, who looks so well in a cut-away coat and whose pictures you can
tell at a glance on account of his aristocratic black mustache”?

Imagination is a tremendously wonderful thing, but imagination cannot battle against lanating years of press stories, years of labeled photographs, years of a name elevated over scores of roles. It may cope with the roles, because each role reveals, or rather should reveal, a separate and distinct human being; but it cannot engage successfully with a single human being in the many roles. The imagination that, at this late day, is still able to disassociate the recollections, reflections and ideas suggested by the name Robert Edeson from the part the actor happens at the moment to be playing would be sufficiently puissant to master even the "atmosphere" in one of Cecil De Mille’s productions.

“Fine Feathers” comes as a blow to those of us who, against bloody foes and bloodier arguments, have put forth Eugene Walter—on the strength of his "Easiest Way"—as the most worthy of modern American playmakers, appreciating even as we did the general similarity of that chef d’œuvre and Pinero’s “Iris,” as well as the merely transient caliber of “Paid In Pull” (only partly original with Mr. Walter), the undiluted theatricality and infirmity of “The Wolf” and the unholy mien of such higgledy-piggledy huddlepots as “Just a Wife,” the dramatization of “The Trail of the Lonesome Pine” and “Sergeant James.”

But in our blind prejudice we made answer that by alectryomancy (divination by a cock picking up grains) we had detected more vitality, more firm skill, more authenticity of theme and characterization, more sheer art and more world drama in “The Easiest Way” than in any one or all of its native contenders. “The Witching Hour” was good theatrical fun, we admitted—it was edited with a capacious adroitness; it took into the realm of the stage a topic until then held to be far afield of the footlights. But “The Witching Hour,” we protested, was suave fake; a pretentious, if diverting, transposition to the boards of one of the fifty-cent handbooks on hypnotism and the like by Edward H. Eldridge and others; just as its author’s “Mere Man” might find all its weighty observations on astrology in a fifty-cent booklet on that topic by M. M. Macgregor. In the same fifty-cent catalogue may be found booklets on such topics as “Dancing,” “Dreams,” “Punctuation,” “Biblical Quotations,” “Proverbs,” “Etiquette,” “Letter Writing,” “Conversation,” “The Debater’s Treasury,” “Ventriloquism” and “Graphology.” And “The Witching Hour” was conceded to be its author’s best effort. A man is to be judged not by the volume of his work, but by the quality of his best work.

“The Great Divide,” another contender, was, we argued, a beautifully written commonplace, and “a battle between the old Puritan and the pragmatical consciences,” as some saw fit to regard it, only in the generosity of extravagant symbol-reading souls. Excellent bald melodramas were entered in the lists— “Secret Service” for one; too, pleasant, inconsequent little fripperies of the Fitch making; too, crass theatrical wares of “The Man of the Hour” brand; too, such a sterling literary exhibit as “The Scarecrow”—but assuredly there was no adversary to be found amongst these to match swords in the main issue, the issue that had for its end the determination of, relatively, what was the most significant, the most consequent, drama written by an American. And so, its contenders few and breathless, “The Easiest Way” was heralded by us as the worthiest of all the dramas of home manufacture and its creator, Walter, the worthiest of all the home dramatists.

Now—“Fine Feathers.” Tawdry melodramatics, a soufflé of numerous ingredients of past performances, a yelling, a ranting, a Harry Clay Blaney bacchanal. Here and there a flash of the old Walter; but there and here nothing but Henri Bernstein and Owen Davis with the suicide-in-the-dark species of finale that even the House of Munsey numbers among its “don’ts” to its army of fictioneers. If the play had been produced unsigned I should have registered the
The most satisfactory performance is that given by a Miss Lolita Robertson—an anonymity, by the way. Of the non-anonymities, Mr. Lackaye is far the best. In view of my extreme prejudice in Mr. Walter's favor, I should like nothing better than to handle this last work of his with blind consideration and sympathy. One thing restrains me—Fritz Nietzsche, the old rascal! "Sympathy," he whispers, "has a peculiar impudence for its companion. For, wishing to help at all costs, sympathy is in no perplexity either as to the means of assistance or as to the nature and cause of the disease, and goes on courageously administering all its quack medicines to restore the health and reputation of the patient." And sympathy and consideration for Mr. Walter at this crisis might keep the one dramatist in America in whom past circumstances seem to warrant confidence from creating in probably the near future a drama that shall take rank with "The Easiest Way."

Incidentally, were my opinion requested on what stands today the second best drama of American make, I should nominate the play called "Kindling," credited to Charles Kenyon, although subsequent developments would seem to indicate that its inspiration and creation rested to a very considerable extent with other heads and other hands.

In his copious and masterly critical documents, Shaw tells of a German novel in which a crowd of medieval warriors, fired by the eloquence of Peter the Hermit, burns with a Christian longing to rush to the Holy Land and charge in serried ranks on the Paynim hosts—all except one man, who is obviously not impressed. Indignant at his coldness, they demand what he means by it. "I've been there," is his sufficient explanation.

Permitting Shaw, in this crafty manner, to write my introduction for me and thus cunningly investing my own writing with a quality of brilliance that otherwise it would not contain, let me remark that this is just the way I felt when I received an invitation from the Liebler Company to attend Louis N. Parker's pageant play “JOSPEH AND HIS BRETHREN,” made from the Biblical narrative. "I'd been there"—"there" in this instance meaning both (once) the Bible and (twice) the Century Theater, to say nothing of (several times) Louis N. Parker; and my blood wasn't fired half so much as at—well—the anticipation of a Ziegfeld chorus.

And yet here proved to be one of the finest achievements of George C. Tyler; and yet here proved to be the best job to the whole Parker credit; and yet here proved to be, to this mind, the most interesting Biblical spectacle thrown across the proscenium arch. In four acts and thirteen stunning scenes, we have rehearsed before us the famous fiction of Joseph, replete in cautiously nursed drama, tastefully seasoned and colored and, in its major roles, exceedingly well acted. The performances of Mr. Brandon Tynan, as Joseph, and Miss Pauline Frederick, as Zuleika, are superlatively good; the performances of Messrs. James O'Neill, Frank Losee, Howard Kyle only a couple of shades less so.

With the demoniac fatuity characteristic of an homely public, Mr. Parker has been taken to task in several quarters for his temerity in introducing into his stage story certain elements foreign to the Old Testament. Why, pray? Inasmuch as so large a part of the Old Testament is nothing but crystal-pure fiction, why may not Mr. Parker or any other writer for the theater supplement the tome with his imagination (if he has any) and make elaborations and excisions in any direction that shall best serve proscenium purposes?

Mr. Klauber of the Times remarks: "The greatest license has been taken in the introduction of an alien figure at the Egyptian court, one Zuleika, a magnificent creature all flame and passion, whose being is inflamed at the first sight of Joseph * * * and who takes him as a slave into Egypt, there to tempt him." License? Not at all! For my part, I hold that Mr. Parker has improved the original fiction quite a deal. Zuleika is an enchanting, entrancing, pranksome
figure; the portion of the Old Testament into which Mr. Parker has introduced her by the divine and holy right of imagination is the better off, the more interesting and plausible, for her added presence.

The only flaw in the plausibility (at least in the acted version) comes to the mind of the casual observer when circumstances of the play’s casting compel Joseph to resist the temptation of Pauline Frederick. If you have ever laid eyes on Miss Pauline you will comprehend, you will understand. To give this temptation scene the necessary atmosphere of feasibility, the character of Zuleika should have been entrusted to somebody like Kate Elinore or Lina Abarbanell. But as to the trivial “licenses” taken by the playwright, how can the objectors thereto reconcile their anti-agathistic indignation with the wholesale fiction and license of the Old Testament itself?

It is claimed that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, yet any moderately intelligent bogtrotter has long ago learned that cities not in existence at the time Moses lived and money not coined until long after his death are mentioned in the work attributed to him, that the work is full of anachronistic laws concerning weaving, agriculture, cities of refuge, etc., laws assuredly inapplicable and extraneous to the era of Moses, and that, in brief, Moses certainly could have had no more to do with the writing of the book than, say, Mr. Parker. And what of the book of Joshua, replete in misdates of many kinds, bursting with mistakes and contradictions and licenses? Or the extreme license of the twenty-fifth chapter of First Samuel, with its account of Samuel’s death, and then the twenty-seventh, with its record of the raising of Samuel by the Witch of Endor? Or the mention of the Captivity in the Psalms— an occurrence five centuries after David’s demise? Or the glaring fictions concerning the genesis of the books of Job, Ecclesiastes and Isaiah? Or its supreme fictions concerning astronomy, geology, the flatness of the earth with its four corners, the solidity of the sky, the creation only a few years previous of the characters called Adam and Eve, morality, philosophy and the spirituality of carnage? License on Mr. Parker’s or any other playwright’s part? Bosh and nonsense! Garlands to any writer who can succeed in making the Old Testament more convincing; garlands to any fictioneer who improves upon fiction!

“To become young when one is old is only a way of becoming old,” says Edouard Pailleron. In this we descry the thesis germ of “YEARS OF DISCRETION,” by Frederick and Panny Locke Hatton. A temuous and stretched-out little piece, in its leading strain generally symptomatic of “The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary” and of the plaintive episode of the painted old maid in “The Passing of the Third Floor Back”; written with considerable grace and given theatrical being at the finished and practised hands of Mr. Belasco. The play has been characterized on the program as a comedy. In view of the analytical gospel that intrinsically the piece is plainly and purely farce, now and again touching its skirts on ticklish ground, one observes in the conception of this stratagem an acuminate, ingenious and profitable little personal coup d’état. By publishing the piece as a comedy, the sagacious producer achieved the following improvisatorial thought process in the deductive minds of the newspaper dramatic heralds:

“This piece is a comedy—doesn’t the program say so?—but if it were played as straight comedy certain episodes in it would be vulgar and highly objectionable, such episodes, for instance, as the silk-stockinged, false-haired, rouge-smeared, cocktail-guzzling old woman plying her trumped-up psychophysical lures against a quorum of men while her son implores her to come back home and be just his mother again. To circumvent such an unpleasant impression, the WIZARD has cleverly coached these episodes in the spirit of farce, thus diminishing their unsavory air.”

And it was just farce in the first place! From all of which one may derive the facts that “hors d’oeuvres” sounds much more dignified and elegant and expen-
sive than simple olives, pickled onions, sardines and cold slaw; that society wears dinner jackets while the middle class wears Tuxedos; that the Rocky Mountains are situated in Massachusetts; and that $2 + 2 = 5$.

Seldom before has Mr. Belasco's talent for rounding out a theatrical entertainment from slender and nondescript material been made more vividly evident than in the present case. By the employment of scenic investiture of a high and mighty order, by the decorating of numerous manuscript lulls with fertile and illuminative bits of byplay, and through the verbalization of the dialogue by a corps of efficient actors intelligently trained, he has succeeded in creating in the heads of his audiences the impression that "Yea of Discretion" is made of swift, smart, skin-pricking, indestructibly electric stuff. I honestly believe that Mr. Belasco could even take a play by James Montgomery and stage it to the latter's liking. Indeed—to go still further—I really believe he could take a play by Caillavet and De Flers and put it on in such a way that it would interest the public. And the theatrical producing art can't go much further than that.

Mr. Belasco is successful because, in the physical habilitation of dramatic manuscripts, he is shrewd enough to improve upon life and nature. We talk about Belasco "realism." Belasco is really realer than realism. Instead of holding the mirror up to nature, he holds nature up to the mirror. (Wilde said there are always some critics who quote this hackneyed passage about art holding the mirror up to nature, forgetting that the unfortunate aphorism is deliberately said by Hamlet in order to convince the bystanders of his absolute insanity in all art matters.) Belasco appreciates with Wilde that "what art really reveals and should reveal to us is Nature's lack of design, her curious crudities, her extraordinary monotony, her absolutely unfinished condition; that Nature has good intentions but, as Aristotle once said, she cannot carry them out." The public admires Belasco because he is an insurgent, because mere everyday realism, the realism of today, world realism, is not his goal; because he appreciates that dramatic literature, scenic architecture and lighting always anticipate life and nature. "For what is nature? Nature is no great mother who has borne us. She is our creation. It is in our brain that she quickens to life. Things are because we see them, and what we see and how we see it depends on the arts that have influenced us."

Art flavored the snow of nature with vanilla and decorated it with chopped almonds and we had biscuit tortoni. Art took nature's crude orange, a fruit full of appendicitis, removed the danger and gave us the finished navel orange. Art, through the agency of Burbank, has given us flowers Nature never even dreamed of being able to create by her own hand. Belasco, through the agency of art, has given us realism so realisticaly real that Nature's realism seems artificial and puny in comparison. Belasco's warm purple Palm Beach moonlight in "Nobody's Widow," his flowers in the garden of "Years of Discretion," his California sun of "The Girl of the Golden West"—to name but a few of his achievements—surpass Nature's efforts at their best. One may almost any time see a mere Shubert or a mere Klaw and Erlanger sunset or moonlit night free of charge by looking out of the window. That's why people go to the Belasco theater!

We have been speaking of Oscar Wilde. Frederick Lonsdale's comedy, "The Woman of Xi," is a feeble imitation of him. The heroine's name is "Vi," the hero's "Gerald." We have, also, such unisonous Wildean figures as old Lord Wynlea, Lord Emsworth, Lady Emsworth, the Honorable Mrs. Bayle, etcetera. Every few moments one of these calls another a "jolly ahss." According to the Wilde rule, furthermore, Mr. Lonsdale regards a bedroom principally as a place for a lady to hide in. There is an abundance of what the proletariat calls "clever dialogue." This consists of epigrams. Very awful epigrams at that—for example, "It is much easier to get out of a house than to get in." Inasmuch as even the veriest
dunce may think up good epigrams and get a reputation for cleverness by foisting them upon the environing ears, I see no reason why Mr. Lonsdale should have failed so signally at so childish a task. Just to prove that anyone provided with a pencil can rattle off pretty fair epigrams as fast as his hand can travel across the paper, I will hold the watch on myself and extemporaneously scribble a half-dozen or so in less than sixty seconds' time:

The brightest star of night loses its luster with the coming of dawn.

When a woman lies to you, to accomplish your ends best, pretend you believe her. It will not be hard work because you will anyway.

For her who hath sinned there shall still remain the perfume of one flower—the perfume of the rosemary of a memory.

Snobbishness is frequently nothing more despicable than not recognizing persons one does not like.

Incense? A hypnotic sense-stealing, judgment-shaking substance burned in churches and fashionable bawdy houses.

Democracy—that form of government which convinces its subjects that a monarchical form would be vastly more propitious.

What kindergartenish labor! What surface “cleverness,” what mockery of wit! Even some of our young American playwrights are apt at it.

“**The Spy**,“ an Anglicization of Henri Kistemaeckers’s “La Flambee,” which a year or so back brought the sons of Gaul to their feet with salvos of hysterical endorsement.

There are exactly three unfailing ways in which the enthusiasm of French audiences may be evoked. First, by the display of an undressed shapely chorus girl in “art nouveau” poses; second, by having a husband find a lover in his wife’s bedchamber and by having the lover call the husband severely to task for having dared enter his wife’s room at that time of night; and third, by appealing to the audiences’ patriotism. The latter device usually takes the form of one intrepid Frenchman cleaning out a regiment of German soldiers, or of catching a Teutonic spy in the act of trying to steal the plans of some important fortifications.

“La Flambee” belongs to the last grouping. To imagine the quality of this play it is necessary only to imagine what “**Held by the Enemy**” would have been had it been conceived by Henri Bernstein and written especially as a vehicle for Madame Simone and Robert Warwick. The leading plot figures are a lieutenant-colonel and his wife, for the time being estranged from him. The lieutenant-colonel is in the toils of a money lender. Here in five lines, is the aspect of the “big scene” in the wife’s boudoir shortly after midnight:

**The Wife:**

“My God, Pierre, you are so pale! What have you done?”

**The Lieutenant-Colonel:**

“The money lender was a spy who sought to get me to give him the plans of the fort.”

**The Wife:**

“A spy? What did you do?”

**The Lieutenant-Colonel:**

“I killed him!”

**The Wife:**

“You did right!”

The exhibit, in short, is a “set piece” of tricolored fireworks. Viewed as drama, it is neither pertinent nor consequent. The best performance is to the credit of Miss Edith Wynne Matthison in the role of the wife. In the “big scene” it is her tact and discretion alone that succeed in keeping an American audience from jumping to its feet and cheering for the Germans.

“**Peg o’ My Heart**”—preadamite tissue paper disclosing Laurette Taylor, the most accomplished comedienne before us today.

“**The Poor Little Rich Girl**,“ by Eleanor Gates. The best piece of work of its species to the credit of an American pen; a study in facts and delirious fancies invested with rare imagination, a fertile inventiveness and a scrawling cunning worthy of a Barrie, a Maeterlinck or a Strindberg. Large praise, I realize, but praise freely given and thrown in the faces of our literary and dramatic importation-kowtowing snobs. Devoid of all opaque pseudo-symbolism, devoid of any and all straining for irrelevant poetic effects, here is an exhibit that gives such a thing as “**A Good Little Devil**” the air of a withered milkweed.
OBVIOUSLY, this is Hauptmann's year. Not only does he enjoy the vast prestige which goes with the award of the Nobel prize—and the princely emolument thereto appertaining—but he has also slowly attained, in a far more seemly and genuine sense, to the position of undisputed first favorite of the German people.

Fifteen years ago, or ten years, or even five years, he had still to share that pre-eminence with a rival, Hermann Sudermann. All civilized Germans were agreed that Hauptmann and Sudermann were the greatest living dramatists of their country, and the majority of them were willing to substitute "men of letters" for "dramatists," but further than that there was no amicable lying down together. Sudermann had his partisans and Hauptmann had his partisans, and the more they raged and pleaded and adduced evidence the more they seemed to drift apart. But of late, as I have said, the fortunes of that war have been increasingly with Hauptmann. Such hostile critics as Karl Heinemann, Heinrich Bult Haupt and our own Dr. Otto Heller have been borne down by the sheer weight of growing numbers, and so the dominant note in the German criticism of the moment is that sounded by Friedrich Kummer, who sees Hauptmann as "the sturdiest and most fully developed talent" of his generation, and ranks him as the equal, in the protean sweep and virility of his genius, of Ibsen and Strindberg. In brief, these triumphant German enthusiasts, practically unanimous at last, seem determined to beatify and even to canonize their hero, and no doubt they will not rest content until they have bracketed him with Shakespeare and Goethe, just as the advocates of Brahms have bracketed that honest music master with Bach and Beethoven.

At this distance, we may well hold aloof from such excesses of admiration, and particularly from that decrying of Sudermann which accompanies them, but meanwhile we may admit safely that Hauptmann is a master dramatist of a very high order, and perhaps the greatest now living in the world. If he had no outstanding merit save his astonishing versatility, it alone would be sufficient to make him notable, for it has not only led him to make experiments in various widely separated fields, always with considerable success, but it has also inspired him to explore and mark off pastures of his own.

His very first play, "Before Sunrise," was something new in the world—the first true drama of naturalism, the thing that Zola had tried to write and failed—and it made a splash whose waves are still plainly visible, particularly in the plays of Wedekind, Gorki and Brieux. That was in 1889. Four years later, in 1893, he wrote "The Beaver Coat," another striking novelty—the first full length drama of unmorality. The old drama had inculcated the time-worn platitudes, and the new drama of Ibsen and company had roared against them. But here was a play dealing wholly with morals which yet had no visible moral—the first authentic "slice of life" ever seen on the stage—innocent, artless and meaningless morally, but enormously human and entertaining. And then, having thus proved his capacity for inventing new forms, Hauptmann turned to various older forms, and
performed prodigies in nearly all of them.

He wrote a poetical play, "The Sunken Bell," that set a new standard for German dramatic verse. He wrote a symbolical play, "And Pippa Dances," that made the murkiest of Ibsen seem crystal clear. He wrote "The Assumption of Hannele," perhaps the best miracle play ever written. He attempted a stately historical pageant in "Florian Geyer," and failed by no more than an inch. He challenged Strindberg as a vivisectionist of tottering personality in "Michael Kramer." He reduced that same enterprise to delicious absurdity in "Colleague Crampton." He gave dramatic form to an ancient German legend in "Poor Heinrich." He wrote bitter and unforgettable tragedies of the poor: "The Weavers" and "Rosa Bemd." He experimented with rollicking Elizabethan farce in "Schluck and Jau," and added the acid of satire. He returned to the mood of stark naturalism in "Teamster Henschel" and to that of cynical un morale in "The Red Cock." He wrote variations upon themes from Ibsen's "Rosmersholm" in "Lonely Lives." He sneered at the family in "The Festival of Peace," as Ibsen had sneered at it in "A Doll's House" and "Ghosts." And finally, as if to pile up proofs of his versatility beyond all cavil, he wrote three or four novels and half a dozen short stories. You must go back to Goethe, in sober truth, before you will find a scrivener with more hands.

And now at last, in the year of his triumph at home, this assiduous and unfailingy interesting Silesian makes his bow in an adequate English translation. Heretofore it has been difficult for the reader with no German to get any understanding of him, for but eight of his plays have been available in English, and of these but four have been in general circulation. I doubt that any American public library, saving perhaps the Library of Congress, could have shown all eight a year ago.

What is more, even the reader familiar with German has been baffled by the dialects of the peasant plays—dialects so outlandish that, in the case of "The Weavers," Hauptmann had to publish a translation into High German for his own countrymen. But the difficulties thus apparent in the task of translation have been very bravely tackled, and, in large part, successfully overcome, by Ludwig Lewisohn, an almost ideal man for the enterprise, for he was born in Germany and came to manhood in the United States, and has spent a good part of his maturity teaching the German language. In his first volume of "The Dramatic Works of Gerhart Hauptmann" (Huebsch) he gives us four plays—"Before Dawn," "The Weavers," "The Beaver Coat" and "The Conflagration" (The Red Cock)—and all of them are in dialect. In the case of "The Weavers," Mr. Lewisohn has borrowed the familiar translation of Mary Morison, but his versions of the other plays are his own, and it must be said for them that they show unflagging patience and ingenuity.

Not, of course, that they are wholly satisfying. As a matter of fact, the work of turning German dialects into equivalent English dialects not only bristles with difficulties, but even with actual impossibilities. Here and there, indeed, the translator must boldly throw exactness to the winds and descend from translation to paraphrase. Mr. Lewisohn, in such places, has made excellent use of that loose and picturesque English which is in common use throughout the United States, and which is fast developing into a separate American language. Its chief marks are its reduction of the tenses to three and its changes in the inflection of verbs and pronouns, so that "I should have seen," for example, becomes "I ought to saw," and "she and I," in the nominative case, becomes "me and her." Mr. Lewisohn is not quite as familiar with this American dialect as he might be, but that fault is not wholly his own, for it yet lacks a grammarian, though its grammar, as I hope to show some day, is already rigid, scientific and easily deducible. So far as he goes, however, he goes in the right direction.

But why does he corrupt this excellent American with Briticisms? Why does he spell "wagon" with two "g's" and turn "jail" into "gaol"? Why, above all,
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does he transmute marks into shillings? Doesn't every sane reader know that these plays are about Germans, and that Germans use marks and not shillings? Would he also transmute sauerkraut into soured cabbage—or chou vinaigrette? Or a kommerns into a stag party? Or the Münchener Hofbräuhaus into the Munich Court Brewery House?

Nevertheless, we may well pardon him for his occasional follies in consideration of his copious and benign perspiration over a flabbergasting job. Let it be hoped that he will carry it to completion, and that its fruit will be a better understanding of Hauptmann in this fair land. Nineteen years ago, when the dramatist came among us to help prepare an English performance of his “Hannele” in New York, in Charles Henry Meltzer's fine translation, the moral snouters and theological hoodlums of the town appealed to the authorities to stop the play. And why? On the ground that it was blasphemous! The greatest of modern miracle plays denounced as blasphemous! What is worse, the politician who was then Mayor of New York lent a hospitable, if somewhat flapping ear to the clamor, and the first performance was actually delayed. But when the curtain finally went up, of course, it was quickly seen that the play was entirely reverent and extremely beautiful, and so the campaign of libel and balderdash went for naught. Since then “The Sunk-en Bell” and one or two other Hauptmann plays have been given in this country, but our osseocapital managers are still blind to the merits of such pieces as “The Beaver Coat,” “Rosa Bernd,” “Teamster Henschel,” “Before Dawn,” and “Michael Kramer.” Perhaps Mr. Lewisohn's labors will open the way. At any rate, let us so frame our hopes.

I have no space here to enter upon a discussion of Hauptmann's dramatic method, more than to say that he clings to naturalism even in the company of heroes and archangels—that he is as hard set against the soliloquy as the Ibsen of the plays after “A Doll’s House,” that he is as exact in his stage directions as Shaw, that he is as innocent of dirty prudery as Wedekind or Brieux, and that there is not the slightest hint of conventional heroics or of the “well made” play in any of his work. In this last particular he differs much from Sudermann, who has borrowed willingly from Sardou, as in “Magda,” for instance. That is one reason, and perhaps the main one, why “Magda” has conquered every civilized stage, whereas the Hauptmann plays are still but little known outside of Germany.

As a novelist, indeed, Hauptmann has narrowly escaped complete failure. His “The Fool in Christ,” which I reviewed a few months ago, was big in plan but wobbly in execution; his “Atlantis,” just published (Huebsch), is bad in both departments. It is the story of a young German physician who throws up his career to follow a Swedish dancer to this country. The manner of his ensnaring is at odds with the intelligence Hauptmann ascribes to him, and the manner of his rescue is at odds with his ensnaring. In brief, the story is psychologically incredible, and were it not for some entertaining episodes aboard ship, culminating in a rather theatrical shipwreck, it would be almost unreadable. Put it beside Sudermann’s “The Song of Songs,” or, better still, beside any of the stories in the volume called “The Indian Lily,” and you will see how far apart the two men stand as writers of prose fiction, and how vast is Sudermann’s superiority. Hauptmann, I freely admit, is probably the better dramatist, but I must dissent hungrily from the current German doctrine that he has left Sudermann far behind him as a literary artist.

Another great Continental who begins to enjoy, like Hauptmann, the affecting honor of American recognition, is August Strindberg, the Swede. He was a famous man in Scandinavia so long ago as 1878, and the more serious German theaters have been presenting his dramas since the middle eighties, but he had to die to cross the Atlantic. Now we make
up, characteristically enough, for lost
time. No less than four American pub-
lishers announce Strindberg plays in con-
siderable number and variety, and three
very competent translators, Warner
Oland, Edwin Björkman and Velma
Swanston Howard, labor diligently upon
even further translations. Before long,
perhaps, these busy missionaries will
catch up to Emil Schering, the German,
whose edition of Strindberg already runs
to thirty-seven volumes and seems to be
still far from the end. It is likely that
the dramatist left a ton or more of un-
published manuscript. Several striking
one-acters, unknown to his biographers,
have been printed in the German maga-
zines since his death last May—and play
writing by no means monopolized his
time during his later years, for he also
wrote an enormous number of essays,
criticisms, political broadsides, social
satires, theological tracts, short stories,
poems, impressions of travel, chapters of
reminiscence and new introductions to
his earlier books. The man was incredi-
bly industrious, even in his recreations:
he found leisure, despite all his writing
and stage managing, to master chemis-
try, to bounce around among three or
four antagonistic religions, and to woo,
win, marry and divorce three wives.

The latest contributions to the Eng-
lish canon of his works are "LUCKY
PEHR" and "EASTER," both translated
by Mrs. Howard (Stewart-Kidd). Of
the two, the former is the more interest-
ing, for it shows Strindberg in the pe-
riod of transition which connected his
early poetical manner with his later sav-
agery. In plan and execution, as well as
in the name of its hero, the piece leans
heavily upon Ibsen's "Peer Gynt," which
preceded it by about fifteen years.

Young Pehr, like his namesake, is a
yokel who runs away from home to see
the world, and like Peer again, he tastes
the bitterness of pleasure and the gall of
power, and like Peer yet again, he comes
back at last to the home and sweetheart
of his youth. The two plays, indeed,
run almost exactly parallel courses.
Both alternate between an incisive real-
ism and an extravagant fantasy, both are
filled with ridicule of Scandinavian moon-
ing and booming, and both close upon
the note of elemental sentiment.

It is curious to see Strindberg, the
woman hater par excellence, growing
mushy over young love, and putting it
high above the Nietzschean virtues and
glories of his subsequent adoration. But
even so, there are signs of the change
that was going on within him—a touch
of acid satire here, a flask of cynicism
there. When he began "LUCKY PEHR,
he was still married happily to his first
wife, Baroness Wrangel, but before it
came to the stage they were at logger-
heads; and once this idyllic comedy was
safely behind him, he launched into his
famous book of short stories, "Mar-
riage" (1884), and into his more famous
play, "The Father" (1887), two of the
most appalling attacks upon women ever
written in the world. "EASTER," which
belongs to his period of dalliance with
Swedenborgianism and other forms of
mysticism, is much less interesting than
"LUCKY PEHR," but Mrs. Howard has
helped it out by adding to it a number of
characteristic Strindbergian sketches and
short stories, some of them no more than
a few pages in length. Her translations,
judging by Schering's German versions,
seem to be reasonably accurate, but now
and then they are damaged by a stilted
clumsiness of phrase.

Various other books of plays have been
awaiting notice for months, among them
two bearing the name of Arnold Bennett.
For one of them, "THE HONEYMOON"
(Doran), Bennett alone is responsible,
while with the other, "MILESTONES"
(Doran), he was helped by Edward Knob-
lauch, author of "The Faun" and "Kis-
met." The learned Nathan has already
told you all that you want to know about
the plots and personages of these dramas;
suffice it to say that "THE HONEYMOON"
is even more delightful to read than to see, whereas "MILESTONES" shows a
distressing gauntness of rib under the
hard, white light of the study. "RUTH-
ERFORD AND SON," by Githa Sowerby
(Doran), rises far above both. It is
an extraordinarily searching and mov-
ing study of a crumbling family, with
brother ranged against sister, and father
against son. Old John Rutherford, grim,
saturnine and tyrannical, is the most lifelike browbeater and money worshiper that we have had since John Anthony, in John Galsworthy’s “Strife.” The play is not a dull tract; it preaches nothing and gets nowhere. But you will go far before you will find anything more thoroughly dramatic, in the best sense of the word. The clash of character has a fury almost tragic; the management of situation is straightforward and striking; the tension of suspense is unrelied to the very last. Altogether, a first play revealing an unmistakable talent for the dramatic craft. We must have more from this Miss Sowerby.

“The Heralds of the Dawn,” by William Watson (Lane), has a number of passages of fluent, sonorous blank verse, but as a stage play it is weak and tedious. Far better stuff is in “The Middle Class,” an attempt at a serious American social drama, by Dr. J. Rosett (Phoenix Press). Dr. Rosett’s protagonist is one Dr. Bensal, a laboratory pathologist who finds himself elevated, by some joke of politics, into the important administrative post of Health Commissioner. Here he tries to put into practice the exact and unsentimental methods of the scientist. That is to say, he endeavors to stamp out disease in the community he is sworn to protect by first seeking out and removing its sources and causes. But this diligence quickly brings upon him the wrath of the whole population. When he orders the demolition of loathsome tenements, not only landlords reach for his scalp, but also tenants. And when he starts a campaign of confiscation against tainted foods, he is made aware by hard experience, of this capital fact, that the gaver would miss his glow. Made aware of this, Dr. Bensal throws up his hands.

The play, of course, is full of echoes of Ibsen’s “An Enemy to the People”—how often our more serious dramatists are caught borrowing from old Henrik!—but it is far from a mere paraphrase. On the contrary, Dr. Rosett has put a lot of original observation into it, and not a little clear and destructive reasoning. You feel that he has thought the thing out patiently and painfully, that he has got very close to one of the fundamental shams of our civilization. What is more, you feel that he is a dramatist as well as a sociologist, that he can think in terms of emotion, that he has a keen eye for the little differences which go to the making of character. The Dr. Bensal that he offers is not the stuffed dummy of the usual propagandist play, but a fellow obviously human, with weakness in him as well as strength. And most of the other persons of the play are also near to reality—particularly Dr. Beacon, the “unethical” doctor, and his delightful wife, and the shrewd and sophisticated Adams, camerlingo of organized charity. The managers will never produce this play: it is too far removed from the windy nonsense of our theaters. But all the same, it is pleasant to note that such attempts at a genuine drama are being made in this land of piffle.

In “The Hamlet Problem and Its Solution” (Stewart-Kidd), Emerson Venable argues that “Hamlet” is not a picture of a weak man corroded and corrupted by misfortunes, but a picture of a strong man lifted to greater strength thereby. In other words, he sees the play as a study in moral stamina. Hamlet does not hesitate to kill his stepfather because the act is beyond his courage, but because it is beneath his dignity. A plausible theory, and one which seems to be well supported by Mr. Venable’s quotations, but as for me, I am more interested in the agreeable scandal of Frank Harris’s “The Women of Shakespeare” (Kennerley). Here, as in Mr. Harris’s earlier volume, “The Man Shakespeare,” an effort is made to connect the facts of the poet’s life with the
characters and transactions of his plays, and to me, at least, it is an effort that carries considerable conviction.

That Shakespeare wrote himself into his dramas must be plain without argument: it is something that has been done by all poets at all times and everywhere. Then why not go through those dramas with Harris and hunt for light? Why not assume, when Shakespeare makes Lear or Hamlet rave about feminine frailty, entirely without intelligible bearing upon the current action, that the poet is relieving his mind about Mary Fitton, the maid of honor who played him so false? And why not admit freely, when he grows pessimistic over marriage, that he is probably thinking of his deserted wife, Ann Hathaway, who seduced him, made him marry her and then drove him from home by her scolding? Such assumptions, it seems to me, are much less difficult to accept than the transcendental assumptions of the Shakespeareomaniacs. It is easier to believe that Shakespeare was a human being, with all a human being's weaknesses, than to believe that he was an archangel.

Which brings us to the novels—and to a rather sorry lot of them, alas, alas! Mary Johnston's "Cease Firing" (Houghton-Mifflin) is reasonably less chaotic than "The Long Roll," her first attempt at a Civil War epic, but it is still no model of form. The action leaps from Vicksburg to Gettysburg, to Atlanta, to Appomattox; the thin thread of banal romance obfuscates it more than it holds it together; the thing is far less a novel than a series of detached pen pictures of war. Some of those pen pictures—the siege of Vicksburg and the retreat from Gettysburg, in particular—are extraordinarily vivid, but they lose a lot by being made appendages to long-winded and aimless fiction.

Worse still is Leonard Merrick's "One Man's View" (Kennerley), a sentimental story about a man who divorces his wife and then marries her. I have more than once called attention to the damage Mr. Merrick is suffering by the republication of such jejune balderdash—the product, it would seem, of his prentice days. In recent years he has written many capital short stories and at least one sound novel, but when he was young he was very, very young. Another reprint of an early novel is "The Fortunes of the Landrays," by the late Vaughn Kester (Bobbs-Merrill), but here there is less to complain of, for in it appears ample evidence of that feeling for oddity in character which was later to make "The Prodigal Judge" a distinguished piece of work.

Over "The Inner Flame," by Clara Louise Burnham (Houghton-Mifflin), and "Mary Pechell," by Mrs. Bello Lowndes (Scribner), and "The Vailants of Virginia," by Hallie Erminie Rives (Bobbs-Merrill), and "Joyful Heatherry," by Payne Erskine (Little-Brown), I pass without long lingering; they are written with no little grace and address, but they do not get much below the surface. Better stuff is in "The Drift," by Marguerite Mooers Marshall (Appleton), a duel between a married man and the lady who is eager to be his second wife. He seems willing enough at the start, but when Wife No. 1 presents him with an heir, he begins to find excuses for being faithful to her. Then the other woman commits suicide. Conventional enough in plan, but there are excellent touches in the picture of the romantic, poetizing, over-confiding woman.

Still better is "The Royal Road," by Alfred Ollivant (Doubleday-Page), the story of the life, labors, love and death of Teddy Hankey, a Cockney. You must go far before you find a more poignant tragedy of the poor. Teddy is an honest, well-meaning fellow, industrious, skillful and even a bit thrifty, but his whole life is a bitter struggle against great odds, and his end is misery and the chance mercies of the charitable. The book is more than a mere tale: it is a furious arraignment of civilization. But while he rages, Mr. Ollivant also confesses his lack of a remedy. The problem, after all, is probably insolvable. Civilization is a hopeless muddle. Life is not only cruel, but also wholly meaningless. There is no such thing as a moral order of the world.
SOMETHING PERSONAL
By Willard Huntington Wright

I believe that this is a day of enlightenment on the part of magazine readers. Men and women have grown tired of the effeminacy and falsities of current fiction, essays and poetry. A widespread critical awakening has come, and with it a demand for better literary material. Formalism has gone by the board. The demand for pious uplift, for stultification, and for the fictional avoidance of the facts of life, has diminished. The reader of today demands truth. He is not shocked by the statement of a thesis with which he does not happen to agree. He wants stimulation in the best sense of the word—a stimulation which creates discussion, even disagreement.

For years prudery has thwarted the average publisher, and he has found himself forced to print such matter as would not offend the prejudices and superstitions of his public.

But the reading public has changed. All over this country, people are beginning to think for themselves, to formulate theories, to inquire into actualities. The wool-tidy fiction of yesterday, with its reticence, its superficial moralities and its unreal characters, is no longer found acceptable by the better class of readers. Consequently, the general editorial attitude has been modified, or rather, let us say, liberalized; and the best writers today are not concerning themselves with their former task of proving platitudes. They have gone into the highways and byways of life itself and drawn their characters from real people—people who are human, who possess weaknesses, who err—people who are not mere painted manikins. The themes, too, with which the best of the modern fictionists deal are not concerned merely with abnormal pieties. A health and vigor is becoming manifest, and with it a demand for stories which deal with life truthfully and frankly.

A magazine which would succeed with the better class of readers, and which is after quality subscriptions and not mere quantity, must stand for truth in its delineation of the drama of human life. It must be a protest against the artificial coloring indulged in by the average magazine editor. It must take a square stand against some of the holiest conventions of the “family periodical” publishing world. Its stories must not strive to point any bourgeois moral; virtue need not necessarily triumph over vice, for in the majority of cases we know it does not; there must not necessarily be a happy ending, for the great moving stories of life most often end in disaster; and, last and greatest, the language need not be emasculated in the fear of offending the over-nice: if the story is worth telling, it should be told in the language that the telling demands. The body and spirit of a story must be regarded, rather than the dress in which it is clothed.

By this I do not mean that either salacity or crudity are to be countenanced. The reaction against the pornographic in literature is as violent as the reaction against the inane and the colorless. No editor can hope to succeed for long by dishing out perfumed immoralities. The change has been entirely from the false to the real, from the platitudinous to the truthful, from the saccharine to the saline.
The intelligent reader of today is not seeking to have his point of view verified in the things he reads, but is after the other fellow's viewpoint as well, and provided that the point is set forth with sincerity, he is neither irritated nor shocked.

I do not believe in throwing sops to the unintelligent reader or of altering the facts of life for the purpose of tallowing his prejudices and superstitions. The prime purpose of literary art is to afford solid entertainment in the genuine sense of the word. There are few subjects which do not offer themselves to artistic and cleanly treatment.

The average editor, fearful of offending the narrow-minded reader, has not only thwarted and stultified talent, but also has kept the best of the modern literary output from those capable of appreciating it. The hackneyed, the trivial, the false and the bloodless in letters must go. Novels, short stories, essays and poetry must reflect the life around us. They may be as lively and as stimulating as they can—but they must be sincere.

Merit should be the one qualification of a magazine's acceptance of a manuscript.

In this country, a deplorable effeminacy has crept into our literature. The rigidities of puritanism have thwarted our best story writers. The essayist, too, has found himself driven into a timid reticence when he has attempted to deal with the real problems of life. And the poet, that most maligned of all imaginative literary artists, has had his wings clipped and his passions curbed by the hyper-virtuous editor.

It is undoubtedly true that such artificial restraints have long held down honest and spontaneous expression in the writers of today. It is not altogether true that America is incapable of producing literature such as is being brought from overseas every season. I believe that only an outlet is needed to prove that American writers are capable of meeting European writers on an equal footing. For long it has been asserted that America has no satirists, that her poetry is tame and inconsequential, and that her essayists are mere preachers. But these are assertions which I believe can be disproved. However, they can be disproved only by a magazine fearless and independent enough to publish the best literary material available; a magazine free from the stringent and false conventionalities—a magazine not dominated by the fear of offending the uncivilized reader.

It is no easy feat to edit a magazine whose individuality will place it immediately out of competition with other magazines. Yet this is what the editors of The Smart Set are, and have been, working for; and I believe we have succeeded in producing a magazine which no other publication can take the place of. If you are dissatisfied with the bashful and retiring policies of the more hidebound magazines, you will find in The Smart Set the kind of things you are looking for.

The April Number

The April number of The Smart Set will be unusually meaty and diverting. Open it at any page and you will find something worthy of your attention. This number will contain one of the best complete novelettes the magazine has ever published, "When the Devil Ruled," by Marion Polk Angellotti. Henry L. Mencken has written few articles as good as the one we will publish in April. It is called "The Beeriad," and no lover of the noble brews of Munich can afford to miss it. It will be in addition to Mr. Mencken's literary department. The stories for that issue have been carefully and conscientiously selected, and represent in every instance the highest expression of their particular type. There will be an illuminating essay on "The Morals of Paris" by William R. Hereford. George Jean Nathan will contribute a remarkable one-act play entitled "The Eternal Mystery." Owen Hatteras will reopen his satirical department, "Pertinent and Impertinent"; and many specimens of the very best poetry that is being written today will appear. The April number is one of The Smart Set's very best.
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