

APES and ANGELS

Richard Edward Connell

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APES AND ANGELS

BY
RICHARD EDWARD CONNELL

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DEDICATION

*To Apes playing Angels, and remembering their Halos while forgetting their Tails—
To the Earnest and Purposeful Men and Women, of the world, who have made it what it
is today—
To Kings, Generals, Ecclesiastics, Statesmen—
To Dignitaries generally, not forgetting Wearers of Regalia and Phi Beta Kappa keys—
To All who, taking life heavily and solemnly, thank God they have a sense of Humor—
To Leaders of Movements, Champions of Causes and all Minor Messiahs—
To Those who have found Absolute Truth and know no Doubt—
To Prudent, Thrifty Souls who save up their pleasure in this world so they may enjoy it,
with interest, in the next—
To Men who feel refreshed in the presence of Thoroughbred Horses—
To Patronizers of Humor—
To Artists who think an Important Manner makes Matter Important—
To New-laid Æsthetes who bamboozle other New-laid Æsthetes by saying Nothing in a
New Way—
To Revilers of Public Taste who forget that clarity begins at home—
To Critics whose most lethal epithet is “light,” who deem tears more civilized than
laughter, and the causing of pain a higher art than the giving of pleasure—
To Weepers in Playtime and Dieters at the Banquet of Life—
To all Mental Masochists—
To the Serious Minded—*

*This book of light tragedies is dedicated in warm gratitude for the joy they have
given me.*

RICHARD CONNELL

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February 11, 1924.*

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APES AND ANGELS

A FRIEND OF NAPOLEON

ALL Paris held no happier man than Papa Chibou. He loved his work—that was why. Other men might say—did say, in fact—that for no amount of money would they take his job; no, not for ten thousand francs for a single night. It would turn their hair white and give them permanent goose flesh, they averred. On such men Papa Chibou smiled with pity. What stomach had such zestless ones for adventure? What did they know of romance? Every night of his life Papa Chibou walked with adventure and held the hand of romance.

Every night he conversed intimately with Napoleon; with Marat and his fellow revolutionists; with Carpentier and Cæsar; with Victor Hugo and Lloyd George; with Foch and with Bigarre, the Apache murderer whose unfortunate penchant for making ladies into curry led him to the guillotine; with Louis XVI and with Madame Lablanche, who poisoned eleven husbands and was working to make it an even dozen when the police deterred her; with Marie Antoinette and with sundry early Christian martyrs who lived in sweet resignation in electric-lighted catacombs under the sidewalk of the Boulevard des Capucines in the very heart of Paris. They were all his friends and he had a word and a joke for each of them as, on his nightly rounds, he washed their faces and dusted out their ears, for Papa Chibou was night watchman at the Museum Pratoucy—"The World in Wax. Admission, one franc. Children and soldiers, half price. Nervous ladies enter the Chamber of Horrors at their own risk. One is prayed not to touch the wax figures or to permit dogs to circulate in the establishment."

He had been at the Museum Pratoucy so long that he looked like a wax figure himself. Visitors not infrequently mistook him for one and poked him with inquisitive fingers or canes. He did not undecieve them; he did not budge; Spartanlike he stood stiff under the pokes; he was rather proud of being taken for a citizen of the world of wax, which was, indeed, a much more real world to him than the world of flesh and blood. He had cheeks like the small red wax pippins used in table decorations, round eyes, slightly poppy, and smooth white hair, like a wig. He was a diminutive man and, with his horseshoe mustache of surprising luxuriance, looked like a gnome going to a fancy-dress ball as a small walrus. Children who saw him flitting about the dim passages that led to the catacombs were sure he was a brownie.

His title "Papa" was a purely honorary one, given him because he had worked some twenty-five years at the museum. He was unwed, and slept at the museum in a niche of a room just off the Roman arena where papier-mâché lions and tigers breakfasted on assorted martyrs. At night, as he dusted off the lions and tigers, he rebuked them sternly for their lack of delicacy.

"Ah," he would say, cuffing the ear of the largest lion, which was earnestly trying to devour a grandfather and an infant simultaneously, "sort of a pig that you are! I am ashamed of you, eater of babies. You will go to hell for this, Monsieur Lion, you may

depend upon it. Monsieur Satan will poach you like an egg, I promise you. Ah, you bad one, you species of a camel, you Apache, you profiteer——”

Then Papa Chibou would bend over and very tenderly address the elderly martyr who was lying beneath the lion’s paws and exhibiting signs of distress, and say, “Patience, my brave one. It does not take long to be eaten, and then, consider: The good Lord will take you up to heaven, and there, if you wish, you yourself can eat a lion every day. You are a man of holiness, Phillibert. You will be Saint Phillibert, beyond doubt, and then won’t you laugh at lions!”

Phillibert was the name Papa Chibou had given to the venerable martyr; he had bestowed names on all of them. Having consoled Phillibert, he would softly dust the fat wax infant whom the lion was in the act of bolting.

“Courage, my poor little Jacob,” Papa Chibou would say. “It is not every baby that can be eaten by a lion; and in such a good cause too. Don’t cry, little Jacob. And remember: When you get inside Monsieur Lion, kick and kick and kick! That will give him a great sickness of the stomach. Won’t that be fun, little Jacob?”

So he went about his work, chatting with them all, for he was fond of them all, even of Bigarre the Apache and the other grisly inmates of the Chamber of Horrors. He did chide the criminals for their regrettable proclivities in the past and warn them that he would tolerate no such conduct in his museum. It was not his museum of course. Its owner was Monsieur Pratoucy, a long-necked, melancholy marabout of a man who sat at the ticket window and took in the francs. But, though the legal title to the place might be vested in Monsieur Pratoucy, at night Papa Chibou was the undisputed monarch of his little wax kingdom. When the last patron had left and the doors were closed Papa Chibou began to pay calls on his subjects; across the silent halls he called greetings to them:

“Ah, Bigarre, you old rascal, how goes the world? And you, Madame Marie Antoinette, did you enjoy a good day? Good evening, Monsieur Cæsar; aren’t you chilly in that costume of yours? Ah, Monsieur Charlemagne, I trust your health continues to be of the best.”

His closest friend of them all was Napoleon. The others he liked; to Napoleon he was devoted. It was a friendship cemented by the years, for Napoleon had been in the museum as long as Papa Chibou. Other figures might come and go at the behest of a fickle public, but Napoleon held his place, albeit he had been relegated to a dim corner.

He was not much of a Napoleon. He was smaller even than the original Napoleon, and one of his ears had come in contact with a steam radiator and as a result it was gnarled into a lump the size of a hickory nut; it was a perfect example of that phenomenon of the prize ring, the cauliflower ear. He was supposed to be at St. Helena and he stood on a papier-mâché rock, gazing out wistfully over a nonexistent sea. One hand was thrust into the bosom of his long-tailed coat, the other hung at his side. Skin-tight breeches, once white but white no longer, fitted snugly over his plump bump of waxen abdomen. A Napoleonic hat, frayed by years of conscientious brushing by Papa Chibou, was perched above a pensive waxen brow.

Papa Chibou had been attracted to Napoleon from the first. There was something so forlorn about him. Papa Chibou had been forlorn, too, in his first days at the museum.

He had come from Bouloire, in the south of France, to seek his fortune as a grower of asparagus in Paris. He was a simple man of scant schooling and he had fancied that there were asparagus beds along the Paris Boulevards. There were none. So necessity and chance brought him to the Museum Pratoucy to earn his bread and wine, and romance and his friendship for Napoleon kept him there.

The first day Papa Chibou worked at the museum Monsieur Pratoucy took him round to tell him about the figures.

“This,” said the proprietor, “is Toulon, the strangler. This is Mademoiselle Merle, who shot the Russian duke. This is Charlotte Corday, who stabbed Marat in the bathtub; that gory gentleman is Marat.” Then they had come to Napoleon. Monsieur Pratoucy, was passing him by.

“And who is this sad-looking gentleman?” asked Papa Chibou.

“Name of a name! Do you not know?”

“But no, monsieur.”

“But that is Napoleon himself.”

That night, his first in the museum, Papa Chibou went round and said to Napoleon, “Monsieur, I do not know with what crimes you are charged, but I, for one, refuse to think you are guilty of them.”

So began their friendship. Thereafter he dusted Napoleon with especial care and made him his confidant. One night in his twenty-fifth year at the museum Papa Chibou said to Napoleon, “You observed those two lovers who were in here tonight, did you not, my good Napoleon? They thought it was too dark in this corner for us to see, didn’t they? But we saw him take her hand and whisper to her. Did she blush? You were near enough to see. She is pretty, isn’t she, with her bright dark eyes? She is not a French girl; she is an American; one can tell that by the way she doesn’t roll her *r*’s. The young man, he is French; and a fine young fellow he is, or I’m no judge. He is so slender and erect, and he has courage, for he wears the war cross; you noticed that, didn’t you? He is very much in love, that is sure. This is not the first time I have seen them. They have met here before, and they are wise, for is this not a spot most romantic for the meetings of lovers?”

Papa Chibou flicked a speck of dust from Napoleon’s good ear.

“Ah,” he exclaimed, “it must be a thing most delicious to be young and in love. Were you ever in love, Napoleon? No? Ah, what a pity! I know, for I, too, have had no luck in love. Ladies prefer the big, strong men, don’t they? Well, we must help these two young people, Napoleon. We must see that they have the joy we missed. So do not let them know you are watching them if they come here tomorrow night. I will pretend I do not see.”

Each night after the museum had closed, Papa Chibou gossiped with Napoleon about the progress of the love affair between the American girl with the bright dark eyes and the slender, erect young Frenchman.

“All is not going well,” Papa Chibou reported one night, shaking his head. “There are obstacles to their happiness. He has little money, for he is just beginning his career. I heard him tell her so tonight. And she has an aunt who has other plans for her. What a

pity if fate should part them! But you know how unfair fate can be, don't you, Napoleon? If we only had some money we might be able to help him, but I, myself, have no money, and I suppose you, too, were poor, since you look so sad. But attend; tomorrow is a day most important for them. He had asked her if she will marry him, and she has said that she will tell him tomorrow night at nine in this very place. I heard them arrange it all. If she does not come it will mean no. I think we shall see two very happy ones here tomorrow night, eh, Napoleon?"

The next night when the last patron had gone and Papa Chibou had locked the outer door, he came to Napoleon, and tears were in his eyes.

"You saw, my friend?" broke out Papa Chibou. "You observed? You saw his face and how pale it grew? You saw his eyes and how they held a thousand agonies? He waited until I had to tell him three times that the museum was closing. I felt like an executioner, I assure you; and he looked up at me as only a man condemned can look. He went out with heavy feet; he was no longer erect. For she did not come, Napoleon; that girl with the bright dark eyes did not come. Our little comedy of love has become a tragedy, monsieur. She has refused him, that poor, that unhappy young man."

On the following night at closing time Papa Chibou came hurrying to Napoleon; he was a-quiver with excitement.

"She was here!" he cried. "Did you see her? She was here and she kept watching and watching; but, of course, he did not come. I could tell from his stricken face last night that he had no hope. At last I dared to speak to her. I said to her, 'Mademoiselle, a thousand pardons for the very great liberty I am taking, but it is my duty to tell you—he was here last night and he waited till closing time. He was all of a paleness, mademoiselle, and he chewed his fingers in his despair. He loves you, mademoiselle; a cow could see that. He is devoted to you; and he is a fine young fellow, you can take an old man's word for it. Do not break his heart, mademoiselle.' She grasped my sleeve. 'You know him, then?' she asked. 'You know where I can find him?' 'Alas, no,' I said. 'I have only seen him here with you.' 'Poor boy!' she kept saying. 'Poor boy! Oh, what shall I do? I am in dire trouble. I love him, monsieur.' 'But you did not come,' I said. 'I could not,' she replied, and she was weeping. 'I live with an aunt; a rich tiger she is, monsieur, and she wants me to marry a count, a fat leering fellow who smells of attar of roses and garlic. My aunt locked me in my room. And now I have lost the one I love, for he will think I have refused him, and he is so proud he will never ask me again.' 'But surely you could let him know?' I suggested. 'But I do not know where he lives,' she said. 'And in a few days my aunt is taking me off to Rome, where the count is, and oh, dear, oh, dear, oh, dear——' And she wept on my shoulder, Napoleon, that poor little American girl with the bright dark eyes."

Papa Chibou began to brush the Napoleonic hat.

"I tried to comfort her," he said. "I told her that the young man would surely find her, that he would come back and haunt the spot where they had been happy, but I was telling her what I did not believe. 'He may come tonight,' I said, 'or tomorrow.' She waited until it was time to close the museum. You saw her face as she left; did it not touch you in the heart?"

Papa Chibou was downcast when he approached Napoleon the next night.

"She waited again till closing time," he said, "but he did not come. It made me suffer to see her as the hours went by and her hope ebbed away. At last she had to leave, and at the door she said to me, 'If you see him here again, please give him this.' She handed me this card, Napoleon. See, it says, 'I am at the Villa Rosina, Rome. I love you. Nina.' Ah, the poor, poor young man. We must keep a sharp watch for him, you and I."

Papa Chibou and Napoleon did watch at the Museum Pratoucy night after night. One, two, three, four, five nights they watched for him. A week, a month, more months passed, and he did not come. There came instead one day news of so terrible a nature that it left Papa Chibou ill and trembling. The Museum Pratoucy was going to have to close its doors.

"It is no use," said Monsieur Pratoucy, when he dealt this blow to Papa Chibou. "I cannot go on. Already I owe much, and my creditors are clamoring. People will no longer pay a franc to see a few old dummies when they can see an army of red Indians, Arabs, brigands and dukes in the moving pictures. Monday the Museum Pratoucy closes its doors forever."

"But, Monsieur Pratoucy," exclaimed Papa Chibou, aghast, "what about the people here? What will become of Marie Antoinette, and the martyrs and Napoleon?"

"Oh," said the proprietor, "I'll be able to realize a little on them perhaps. On Tuesday they will be sold at auction. Someone may buy them to melt up."

"To melt up, monsieur?" Papa Chibou faltered.

"But certainly. What else are they good for?"

"But surely monsieur will want to keep them; a few of them anyhow?"

"Keep them? Aunt of the devil, but that is a droll idea! Why should anyone want to keep shabby old wax dummies?"

"I thought," murmured Papa Chibou, "that you might keep just one—Napoleon, for example—as a remembrance——"

"Uncle of Satan, but you have odd notions! To keep a souvenir of one's bankruptcy!"

Papa Chibou went away to his little hole in the wall. He sat on his cot and fingered his mustache for an hour; the news had left him dizzy, had made a cold vacuum under his belt buckle. From under his cot, at last, he took a wooden box, unlocked three separate locks and extracted a sock. From the sock he took his fortune, his hoard of big copper ten-centime pieces, tips he had saved for years. He counted them over five times most carefully; but no matter how he counted them he could not make the total come to more than two hundred and twenty-one francs.

That night he did not tell Napoleon the news. He did not tell any of them. Indeed he acted even more cheerful than usual as he went from one figure to another. He complimented Madame Lablanche, the lady of the poisoned spouses, on how well she was looking. He even had a kindly word to say to the lion that was eating the two martyrs.

"After all, Monsieur Lion," he said, "I suppose it is as proper for you to eat martyrs as it is for me to eat bananas. Probably bananas do not enjoy being eaten any more than martyrs do. In the past I have said harsh things to you, Monsieur Lion; I am sorry I said them, now. After all, it is hardly your fault that you eat people. You were born with an appetite for martyrs, just as I was born poor." And he gently tweaked the lion's papier-mâché ear.

When he came to Napoleon, Papa Chibou brushed him with unusual care and thoroughness. With a moistened cloth he polished the imperial nose, and he took pains to be gentle with the cauliflower ear. He told Napoleon the latest joke he had heard at the cabmen's café where he ate his breakfast of onion soup, and, as the joke was mildly improper, nudged Napoleon in the ribs, and winked at him.

"We are men of the world, eh, old friend?" said Papa Chibou. "We are philosophers, is that not so?" Then he added, "We take what life sends us, and sometimes it sends hardnesses."

He wanted to talk more with Napoleon, but somehow he couldn't; abruptly, in the midst of a joke, Papa Chibou broke off and hurried down into the depths of the Chamber of Horrors and stood there for a very long time staring at an unfortunate native of Siam being trodden on by an elephant.

It was not until the morning of the auction sale that Papa Chibou told Napoleon. Then, while the crowd was gathering, he slipped up to Napoleon in his corner and laid his hand on Napoleon's arm.

"One of the hardnesses of life has come to us, old friend," he said. "They are going to try to take you away. But, courage! Papa Chibou does not desert his friends. Listen!" And Papa Chibou patted his pocket, which gave forth a jingling sound.

The bidding began. Close to the auctioneer's desk stood a man, a wizened, rodent-eyed man with a diamond ring and dirty fingers. Papa Chibou's heart went down like an express elevator when he saw him, for he knew that the rodent-eyed man was Mogen, the junk king of Paris. The auctioneer, in a voice slightly encumbered by adenoids, began to sell the various items in a hurried, perfunctory manner.

"Item 3 is Julius Cæsar, toga and sandals thrown in. How much am I offered? One hundred and fifty francs? Dirt cheap for a Roman emperor, that is. Who'll make it two hundred? Thank you, Monsieur Mogen. The noblest Roman of them all is going at two hundred francs. Are you all through at two hundred? Going, going, gone! Julius Cæsar is sold to Monsieur Mogen."

Papa Chibou patted Cæsar's back sympathetically.

"You are worth more, my good Julius," he said in a whisper. "Goodby."

He was encouraged. If a comparatively new Cæsar brought only two hundred, surely an old Napoleon would bring no more.

The sale progressed rapidly. Monsieur Mogen bought the entire Chamber of Horrors. He bought Marie Antoinette, and the martyrs and lions. Papa Chibou, standing near Napoleon, withstood the strain of waiting by chewing his mustache.

The sale was very nearly over and Monsieur Mogen had bought every item, when, with a yawn, the auctioneer droned: "Now, ladies and gentlemen, we come to Item 573,

a collection of odds and ends, mostly damaged goods, to be sold in one lot. The lot includes one stuffed owl that seems to have molted a bit; one Spanish shawl, torn; the head of an Apache who has been guillotined, body missing; a small wax camel, no humps; and an old wax figure of Napoleon, with one ear damaged. What am I offered for the lot?"

Papa Chibou's heart stood still. He laid a reassuring hand on Napoleon's shoulder.

"The fool," he whispered in Napoleon's good ear, "to put you in the same class as a camel, no humps, and an owl. But never mind. It is lucky for us, perhaps."

"How much for this assortment?" asked the auctioneer.

"One hundred francs," said Mogen, the junk king.

"One hundred and fifty," said Papa Chibou, trying to be calm. He had never spent so vast a sum all at once in his life.

Mogen fingered the material in Napoleon's coat.

"Two hundred," said the junk king.

"Are you all through at two hundred?" queried the auctioneer.

"Two hundred and twenty-one," called Papa Chibou. His voice was a husky squeak.

Mogen from his rodent eyes glared at Papa Chibou with annoyance and contempt. He raised his dirtiest finger—the one with the diamond ring on it—toward the auctioneer.

"Monsieur Mogen bids two hundred and twenty-five," droned the auctioneer. "Do I hear two hundred and fifty?"

Papa Chibou hated the world. The auctioneer cast a look in his direction.

"Two hundred and twenty-five is bid," the auctioneer repeated. "Are you all through at two hundred and twenty-five? Going, going—sold to Monsieur Mogen for two hundred and twenty-five francs."

Stunned, Papa Chibou heard Mogen say casually, "I'll send round my carts for this stuff in the morning."

This stuff!

Dully and with an aching breast Papa Chibou went to his room down by the Roman arena. He packed his few clothes into a box. Last of all he slowly took from his cap the brass badge he had worn for so many years; it bore the words "Chief Watchman." He had been proud of that title, even if it was slightly inaccurate; he had been not only the chief but the only watchman. Now he was nothing. It was hours before he summoned up the energy to take his box round to the room he had rented high up under the roof of a tenement in a near-by alley. He knew he should start to look for another job at once, but he could not force himself to do so that day. Instead, he stole back to the deserted museum and sat down on a bench by the side of Napoleon. Silently he sat there all night; but he did not sleep; he was thinking, and the thought that kept pecking at his brain was to him a shocking one. At last, as day began to edge its pale way through the dusty windows of the museum, Papa Chibou stood up with the air of a man who has been through a mental struggle and has made up his mind.

“Napoleon,” he said, “we have been friends for a quarter of a century and now we are to be separated because a stranger had four francs more than I had. That may be lawful, my old friend, but it is not justice. You and I, we are not going to be parted.”

Paris was not yet awake when Papa Chibou stole with infinite caution into the narrow street beside the museum. Along this street toward the tenement where he had taken a room crept Papa Chibou. Sometimes he had to pause for breath, for in his arms he was carrying Napoleon.

Two policemen came to arrest Papa Chibou that very afternoon. Mogen had missed Napoleon, and he was a shrewd man. There was not the slightest doubt of Papa Chibou’s guilt. There stood Napoleon in the corner of his room, gazing pensively out over the housetops. The police bundled the overwhelmed and confused Papa Chibou into the police patrol, and with him, as damning evidence, Napoleon.

In his cell in the city prison Papa Chibou sat with his spirit caved in. To him jails and judges and justice were terrible and mysterious affairs. He wondered if he would be guillotined; perhaps not, since his long life had been one of blameless conduct; but the least he could expect, he reasoned, was a long sentence to hard labor on Devil’s Island, and guillotining had certain advantages over that. Perhaps it would be better to be guillotined, he told himself, now that Napoleon was sure to be melted up.

The keeper who brought him his meal of stew was a pessimist of jocular tendencies.

“A pretty pickle,” said the keeper; “and at your age too. You must be a very wicked old man to go about stealing dummies. What will be safe now? One may expect to find the Eiffel Tower missing any morning. Dummy stealing! What a career! We have had a man in here who stole a trolley car, and one who made off with the anchor of a steamship, and even one who pilfered a hippopotamus from a zoo, but never one who stole a dummy—and an old one-eared dummy, at that! It is an affair extraordinary!”

“And what did they do to the gentleman who stole the hippopotamus?” inquired Papa Chibou tremulously.

The keeper scratched his head to indicate thought.

“I think,” he said, “that they boiled him alive. Either that or they transported him for life to Morocco; I don’t recall exactly.”

Papa Chibou’s brow grew damp.

“It was a trial most comical, I can assure you,” went on the keeper. “The judges were Messieurs Bertouf, Goblin and Perouse—very amusing fellows, all three of them. They had fun with the prisoner; how I laughed. Judge Bertouf said, in sentencing him, ‘We must be severe with you, pilferer of hippopotamuses. We must make of you an example. This business of hippopotamus pilfering is getting all too common in Paris.’ They are witty fellows, those judges.”

Papa Chibou grew a shade paler.

“The Terrible Trio?” he asked.

“The Terrible Trio,” replied the keeper cheerfully.

“Will they be my judges?” asked Papa Chibou.

“Most assuredly,” promised the keeper and strolled away humming happily and rattling his big keys.

Papa Chibou knew then that there was no hope for him. Even into the Museum Pratoucy the reputation of those three judges had penetrated, and it was a sinister reputation indeed. They were three ancient, grim men who had fairly earned their title, The Terrible Trio, by the severity of their sentences; evildoers blanched at their names, and this was a matter of pride to them.

Shortly the keeper came back; he was grinning.

“You have the devil’s own luck, old-timer,” he said to Papa Chibou. “First you have to be tried by The Terrible Trio, and then you get assigned to you as lawyer none other than Monsieur Georges Dufayel.”

“And this Monsieur Dufayel, is he then not a good lawyer?” questioned Papa Chibou miserably.

The keeper snickered.

“He has not won a case for months,” he answered, as if it were the most amusing thing imaginable. “It is really better than a circus to hear him muddling up his client’s affairs in court. His mind is not on the case at all. Heaven knows where it is. When he rises to plead before the judges he has no fire, no passion. He mumbles and stutters. It is a saying about the courts that one is as good as convicted who has the ill luck to draw Monsieur Georges Dufayel as his advocate. Still, if one is too poor to pay for a lawyer, one must take what he can get. That’s philosophy, eh, old-timer?”

Papa Chibou groaned.

“Oh, wait till tomorrow,” said the keeper gaily. “Then you’ll have a real reason to groan.”

“But surely I can see this Monsieur Dufayel.”

“Oh, what’s the use? You stole the dummy, didn’t you? It will be there in court to appear against you. How entertaining! Witness for the prosecution: Monsieur Napoleon. You are plainly as guilty as Cain, old-timer, and the judges will boil your cabbage for you very quickly and neatly, I can promise you that. Well, see you tomorrow. Sleep well.”

Papa Chibou did not sleep well. He did not sleep at all, in fact, and when they marched him into the inclosure where sat the other nondescript offenders against the law he was shaken and utterly wretched. He was overawed by the great court room and the thick atmosphere of seriousness that hung over it.

He did pluck up enough courage to ask a guard, “Where is my lawyer, Monsieur Dufayel?”

“Oh, he’s late, as usual,” replied the guard. And then, for he was a waggish fellow, he added, “If you’re lucky he won’t come at all.”

Papa Chibou sank down on the prisoner’s bench and raised his eyes to the tribunal opposite. His very marrow was chilled by the sight of The Terrible Trio. The chief judge, Bertouf, was a vast puff of a man, who swelled out of his judicial chair like a poisonous fungus. His black robe was familiar with spilled brandy, and his dirty

judicial bib was askew. His face was bibulous and brutal, and he had the wattles of a turkey gobbler. Judge Goblin, on his right, looked to have mummified; he was at least a hundred years old and had wrinkled parchment skin and red-rimmed eyes that glittered like the eyes of a cobra. Judge Perouse was one vast jungle of tangled grizzled whisker, from the midst of which projected a cockatoo's beak of a nose; he looked at Papa Chibou and licked his lips with a long pink tongue. Papa Chibou all but fainted; he felt no bigger than a bean, and less important; as for his judges, they seemed enormous monsters.

The first case was called, a young swaggering fellow who had stolen an orange from a push-cart.

"Ah, Monsieur Thief," rumbled Judge Bertouf with a scowl, "you are jaunty now. Will you be so jaunty a year from today when you are released from prison? I rather think not. Next case."

Papa Chibou's heart pumped with difficulty. A year for an orange—and he had stolen a man! His eyes roved round the room and he saw two guards carrying in something which they stood before the judges. It was Napoleon.

A guard tapped Papa Chibou on the shoulder. "You're next," he said.

"But my lawyer, Monsieur Dufayel——" began Papa Chibou.

"You're in hard luck," said the guard, "for here he comes."

Papa Chibou in a daze found himself in the prisoner's dock. He saw coming toward him a pale young man. Papa Chibou recognized him at once. It was the slender, erect young man of the museum. He was not very erect now; he was listless. He did not recognize Papa Chibou; he barely glanced at him.

"You stole something," said the young lawyer, and his voice was toneless. "The stolen goods were found in your room. I think we might better plead guilty and get it over with."

"Yes, monsieur," said Papa Chibou, for he had let go all his hold on hope. "But attend a moment. I have something—a message for you."

Papa Chibou fumbled through his pockets and at last found the card of the American girl with the bright dark eyes. He handed it to Georges Dufayel.

"She left it with me to give to you," said Papa Chibou. "I was chief watchman at the Museum Pratoucy, you know. She came there night after night, to wait for you."

The young man gripped the sides of the card with both hands; his face, his eyes, everything about him seemed suddenly charged with new life.

"Ten thousand million devils!" he cried. "And I doubted her! I owe you much, monsieur. I owe you everything." He wrung Papa Chibou's hand.

Judge Bertouf gave an impatient judicial grunt.

"We are ready to hear your case, Advocate Dufayel," said the judge, "if you have one."

The court attendants sniggered.

"A little moment, monsieur the judge," said the lawyer. He turned to Papa Chibou. "Quick," he shot out, "tell me about the crime you are charged with. What did you steal?"

"Him," replied Papa Chibou, pointing.

"That dummy of Napoleon?"

Papa Chibou nodded.

"But why?"

Papa Chibou shrugged his shoulders.

"Monsieur could not understand."

"But you must tell me!" said the lawyer urgently. "I must make a plea for you. These savages will be severe enough, in any event; but I may be able to do something. Quick; why did you steal this Napoleon?"

"I was his friend," said Papa Chibou. "The museum failed. They were going to sell Napoleon for junk, Monsieur Dufayel. He was my friend. I could not desert him."

The eyes of the young advocate had caught fire; they were lit with a flash. He brought his fist down on the table.

"Enough!" he cried.

Then he rose in his place and addressed the court. His voice was low, vibrant and passionate; the judges, in spite of themselves, leaned forward to listen to him.

"May it please the honorable judges of this court of France," he began, "my client is guilty. Yes, I repeat in a voice of thunder, for all France to hear, for the enemies of France to hear, for the whole wide world to hear, he is guilty. He did steal this figure of Napoleon, the lawful property of another. I do not deny it. This old man, Jerome Chibou, is guilty, and I for one am proud of his guilt."

Judge Bertouf grunted.

"If your client is guilty, Advocate Dufayel," he said, "that settles it. Despite your pride in his guilt, which is a peculiar notion, I confess, I am going to sentence him to ____,"

"But wait, your honor!" Dufayel's voice was compelling. "You must, you shall hear me! Before you pass sentence on this old man, let me ask you a question."

"Well?"

"Are you a Frenchman, Judge Bertouf?"

"But certainly."

"And you love France?"

"Monsieur has not the effrontery to suggest otherwise?"

"No. I was sure of it. That is why you will listen to me."

"I listen."

"I repeat then: Jerome Chibou is guilty. In the law's eyes he is a criminal. But in the eyes of France and those who love her his guilt is a glorious guilt; his guilt is more honorable than innocence itself."

The three judges looked at one another blankly; Papa Chibou regarded his lawyer with wide eyes; Georges Dufayel spoke on.

“These are times of turmoil and change in our country, messieurs the judges. Proud traditions which were once the birthright of every Frenchman have been allowed to decay. Enemies beset us within and without. Youth grows careless of that honor which is the soul of a nation. Youth forgets the priceless heritage of the ages, the great names that once brought glory to France in the past, when Frenchmen were Frenchmen. There are some in France who may have forgotten the respect due a nation’s great”—here Advocate Dufayel looked very hard at the judges—“but there are a few patriots left who have not forgotten. And there sits one of them.

“This poor old man has deep within him a glowing devotion to France. You may say that he is a simple unlettered peasant. You may say that he is a thief. But I say, and true Frenchmen will say with me, that he is a patriot, messieurs the judges. He loves Napoleon. He loves him for what he did for France. He loves him because in Napoleon burned that spirit which has made France great. There was a time, messieurs the judges, when your fathers and mine dared share that love for a great leader. Need I remind you of the career of Napoleon? I know I need not. Need I tell you of his victories? I know I need not.”

Nevertheless Advocate Dufayel did tell them of the career of Napoleon. With a wealth of detail and many gestures he traced the rise of Napoleon; he lingered over his battles; for an hour and ten minutes he spoke eloquently of Napoleon and his part in the history of France.

“You may have forgotten,” he concluded, “and others may have forgotten, but this old man sitting here a prisoner—he did not forget. When mercenary scoundrels wanted to throw on the junk heap this effigy of one of France’s greatest sons, who was it that saved him? Was it you, messieurs the judges? Was it I? Alas, no. It was a poor old man who loved Napoleon more than he loved himself. Consider, messieurs the judges; they were going to throw on the junk heap Napoleon—France’s Napoleon—our Napoleon. Who would save him? Then up rose this man, this Jerome Chibou, whom you would brand as a thief, and he cried aloud for France and for the whole world to hear, ‘Stop! Desecrators of Napoleon, stop! There still lives one Frenchman who loves the memories of his native land; there is still one patriot left. I, I, Jerome Chibou, will save Napoleon!’ And he did save him, messieurs the judges.”

Advocate Dufayel mopped his brow, and leveling an accusing finger at The Terrible Trio he said, “You may send Jerome Chibou to jail. But when you do, remember this: You are sending to jail the spirit of France. You may find Jerome Chibou guilty. But when you do, remember this: You are condemning a man for love of country, for love of France. Wherever true hearts beat in French bosoms, messieurs the judges, there will the crime of Jerome Chibou be understood, and there will the name of Jerome Chibou be honored. Put him in prison, messieurs the judges. Load his poor, feeble, old body with chains. And a nation will tear down the prison walls, break his chains, and pay homage to the man who loved Napoleon and France so much that he was willing to sacrifice himself on the altar of patriotism.”

Advocate Dufayel sat down; Papa Chibou raised his eyes to the judges' bench. Judge Perouse was ostentatiously blowing his beak of a nose. Judge Goblin, who wore a Sedan ribbon in his buttonhole, was sniffing into his inkwell. And Chief Judge Bertouf was openly blubbering.

"Jerome Chibou, stand up." It was Chief Judge Bertouf who spoke, and his voice was thick with emotion.

Papa Chibou, quaking, stood up. A hand like a hand of pink bananas was thrust down at him.

"Jerome Chibou," said Chief Judge Bertouf, "I find you guilty. Your crime is patriotism in the first degree. I sentence you to freedom. Let me have the honor of shaking the hand of a true Frenchman."

"And I," said Judge Goblin, thrusting out a hand as dry as autumn leaves.

"And I also," said Judge Perouse, reaching out a hairy hand.

"And, furthermore," said Chief Judge Bertouf, "you shall continue to protect the Napoleon you saved. I subscribe a hundred francs to buy him for you."

"And I," said Judge Goblin.

"And I also," said Judge Perouse.

As they left the court room, Advocate Dufayel, Papa Chibou and Napoleon, Papa Chibou turned to his lawyer.

"I can never repay monsieur," he began.

"Nonsense!" said the lawyer.

"And would Monsieur Dufayel mind telling me again the last name of Napoleon?"

"Why, Bonaparte, of course. Surely you knew——"

"Alas, no, Monsieur Dufayel. I am a man the most ignorant. I did not know that my friend had done such great things."

"You didn't? Then what in the name of heaven did you think Napoleon was?"

"A sort of murderer," said Papa Chibou humbly.

Out beyond the walls of Paris in a garden stands the villa of Georges Dufayel, who has become, everyone says, the most eloquent and successful young lawyer in the Paris courts. He lives there with his wife, who has bright dark eyes. To get to his house one must pass a tiny gatehouse, where lives a small old man with a prodigious walrus mustache. Visitors who peer into the gatehouse as they pass sometimes get a shock, for standing in one corner of its only room they see another small man, in uniform and a big hat. He never moves, but stands there by the window all day, one hand in the bosom of his coat, the other at his side, while his eyes look out over the garden. He is waiting for Papa Chibou to come home after his work among the asparagus beds to tell him the jokes and the news of the day.

A REPUTATION

SMOKE and talk filled the dining-room of the Heterogeneous Club, one of those small, intimate clubs of reasonably liberal professional men and women one finds here and there in New York City. Alone, in his accustomed corner, Saunders Rook alternately sipped black coffee and fingered a wan mustache. He was on the fringe of an animated group, in it without being of it, and on this, as on other evenings, was taking an inconspicuous, nodding part in the conversation, sometimes going so far as to say "Not really?" to which the speaker would reply perfunctorily, "Yes, really," and go on as before.

Nobody knew much about Saunders Rook, and he aroused little, if any, curiosity. It was assumed by the other members, on what grounds no one could say, that he was an artist of some kind; perhaps he wrote music criticism for one of the more pallid of the weeklies; maybe he contributed notes on birds to an ornithological review; again, it might be that he was an architect, specializing in designing ornamental drinking-fountains; perhaps he gave lessons on the flute. His pepper-and-salt suits, his silent neckties, his manner gave no hint. Yet he was not an enigma; he'd gladly have told all about himself had anyone cared to ask him.

The members must have seen Saunders Rook scores of times before that fateful evening, but had you asked any of them to describe him, the reply doubtless would have been:

"Oh, yes, Saunders Rook. I believe there is such a fellow around the club. Let me see. No, I don't think he's very tall or very short or very dark or very light. In fact, I don't believe he's very anything."

How and when he had become a member of the club no one knew, and presumably no one had ever been concerned about knowing. Perhaps he was a friend of a friend of a member now deceased. He dined at the club four or five times a week and paid his bills. No one remembered having seen his face anywhere else. The Heterogeneous Club is proud of the range and brilliance of its talk but until this night it had never discussed Saunders Rook. After this night it could talk of little else.

Saunders Rook was not a glum, sullen, aloof soul; he was not unnoticed by choice; evening after evening he was on the edge of the circle of talk, listening, as politely attentive as a well-trained collie. He may even have ventured on one or two occasions to come out with something positive; but if he ever did so, it made no impression on the members of the club, and they were a not unimpressionable lot.

On this night, as he sat over his coffee, Saunders Rook from time to time moistened his lips with his tongue and cleared his throat as if he were making ready to say something important, and then compressed his lips as if he had decided that it was not worth saying.

The truth was that Saunders Rook was afflicted with "cab-wit," that he was one of those unfortunates who think of the bright things they might have said only while on their way home in a taxicab. He was oppressed by the knowledge that if he did say

anything, it would probably be as colorless and unoriginal as he suspected himself to be. He was oppressed mildly, for he was mild in all things, by the certainty that he could not compete with the witty Max Skye or the sparkling Lucile Davega, who could always quote something arresting from Krafft-Ebing. He did not enjoy being ignored any more than any other man does, and he had his full share of man's natural desire for a beam of the limelight. A craving for attention had of late been growing more insistent within him. His mind began to play with ideas, which, he reasoned, if uttered in a loud enough voice, might bring his hearers to their, and his, feet. He wanted just for once to cause a stir. Just once, he told himself, would appease him.

Then came the lull that always comes from time to time when groups are talking, and Saunders Rook found himself saying distinctly:

"On the Fourth of July I shall commit suicide."

Just why he said that he did not know. It must have been sheer inspiration. As a matter of fact, he had never contemplated doing anything of the kind. He had never demanded much of life; his existence was not rigorous, but placid. He was a sub-editor on a woman's magazine—he conducted the etiquette page—and this brought him twelve hundred dollars a year. He had inherited an income of twelve hundred more. He was able to live in modest comfort, for he was an orphan and a bachelor; he had a season ticket to the opera; his health was good. If he had a cross, it was a light one: minor editors of minor magazines usually rejected his minor essays, imitations of Charles Lamb, hymning the joys of pipe-smoking and pork-chops. So it startled him not a little to hear himself announcing his imminent self-destruction.

But it produced the desired effect with an electrical suddenness. The lull became a hush; not only the group at his own long table, but other groups had heard, and the eyes of the entire room were directed to the man with the wan mustache.

"But, my dear fellow," cried Max Skye, "you don't really mean that."

Saunders Rook curbed an exigent impulse to recant on the spot, and replied firmly:

"But I do mean it."

A woman member in a far corner called:

"Would you mind repeating what you said? I'm not sure I heard you correctly."

Saunders Rook cleared his throat and said again,

"On the Fourth of July I shall commit suicide."

The members began to shift their chairs so that they could more plainly see and hear him.

"But why?" asked Lucile Davega.

"Yes, why?" came from other members. Some were a little excited.

Saunders Rook had not thought that far ahead, and the question confused him. He wanted very much to say, "Of course, I was only jesting." No, he couldn't do that. What a dolt they'd think him! Hastily, he ransacked his brain, cleared his throat to gain time, and declared:

"As a protest against the state of civilization in America."

Again sheer inspiration. The state of civilization, up to that moment, had never worried him. He heard an interested ripple run round the room.

“But what do you consider the state of civilization to be?” asked Max Skye, bending toward him.

“Rotten,” said Saunders Rook, emphatically. Now that he was in for it, there was no sense in half-way expressions. “Rotten,” if not elegant, was strong, he decided.

He heard someone in a corner whisper:

“I say, who is that fellow?”

“Why, his name is Book or Cook or something,” was the whispered answer.

He smiled. He hoped they would think it the quiet, resolute smile of martyrdom.

“But Mr.—er—Rook,” said Lucile Davega, “have you made all your plans?”

Here was another contingency for which he had not prepared. He slowly cleared his throat.

“I have,” he said gravely. Then, with a touch of mystery, added, “And I haven’t.” He hoped they would probe no further. But the Heterogeneous Club is composed of inveterate probers.

“Oh, won’t you tell us all about them?” As Lucile Davega said this she clasped her hands. Mr. Rook frowned ever so slightly. They acted as if he were planning a trip to Bermuda. He’d have to show them how deadly in earnest he was.

“If you insist,” he said, his mind groping wildly for plans. Unanimously, they insisted.

“Mind you it must go no further than this room,” he said. They all said that of course it wouldn’t.

“Well,” said Saunders Rook, speaking very deliberately, “of course, you see, since it is to be a protest, it must have a certain amount of publicity.”

Everyone nodded approvingly.

“So I thought,” he felt his way along, “that I should do it in some rather public place.”

“Central Park?” suggested Max Skye.

“Exactly,” replied Saunders Rook, grasping at the idea. “The very place I had in mind.”

There were murmurs of “Splendid!” “A big thought!” “There’s a lot more to these quiet chaps than meets the eye.”

Saunders Rook, hearing, glowed.

Just then Oscar Findlater made one of his infrequent appearances at the club. The members were proud of belonging to the same club as Oscar Findlater, who was editor of “The Liberal Voice,” most advanced and oracular of weeklies. He was a vastly serious person of Jovian demeanor. Usually the members flocked about him to catch the pronouncements that dropped from his lips, but on this evening they only nodded toward him and continued to gaze expectantly at Saunders Rook. To Saunders Rook,

Oscar Findlater had always seemed a god, despite the fact that “The Liberal Voice” had rejected numerous choice essays on pipe-smoking by the fireplace and kindred topics over which Saunders Rook had toiled. He had mildly envied the attention paid to the editorial Olympian. Now he, Saunders Rook, was actually stealing the spotlight from the great man. It was most pleasant.

“Good evening, Findlater,” said Max Skye. “You know Saunders Rook, don’t you?”

The editor murmured something about never having had that pleasure.

“Rook,” announced Max Skye, impressively, “is going to commit suicide.”

“On the Fourth of July,” added Judy Atwater.

“As a protest,” contributed Rogers Joyce.

“Against the rotten condition of civilization in America,” finished Lucile Davega.

Oscar Findlater gazed at the wan mustache with sharpened interest.

“Not really?” he exclaimed.

“Yes,” said Saunders Rook, in the voice of a man whose mind is irrevocably made up, “really.”

“By Jove!” cried Oscar Findlater, and sat down. He was plainly stirred. “Do you mind talking to me about it?”

“Not at all,” said Saunders Rook, trying to inject casualness into his tone, “if you think it at all interesting.”

“Interesting?” Oscar Findlater excitedly stroked the black ribbon that streamed from his nose-glasses. “Why, man alive, it’s overpowering. Biggest idea I’ve struck this year.”

He studied Saunders Rook.

“Your mind is made up?” the great man asked.

“Absolutely.”

“Nothing can change it?”

“Nothing.”

“Well,” said Findlater, with a sigh, “then I suppose we must make the best of it.”

He sank his head on his bosom, the usual attitude by which his disciples knew he was submerged in thought. Then he said:

“Rook, would you consider doing a series of essays for ‘The Liberal Voice’?”

Would he? What a question! Saunders Rook could only nod.

“Let’s say six essays tracing the genesis of the idea, you know, and arraigning civilization.”

But Saunders Rook merely nodded.

“Of course,” went on Oscar Findlater, “there are only three weeks between now—” he paused embarrassed—“and then.”

Saunders Rook murmured:

“Of course.”

“Still,” exclaimed Oscar Findlater, struck by a happy thought, “we could bring out the last three posthumously.”

“Posthumously,” echoed Saunders Rook, sepulchraly. At that second came again the impulse to say, “But, of course, this is all in fun.” He stifled it. After all, it was something to have essays in “The Liberal Voice,” even posthumously. “How long should they be?” Saunders Rook found himself asking carelessly.

“Oh, about three thousand words; more if necessary. Not too heavy in tone, of course, or morbid. Readable, you know, almost chatty; but with an underlying strain of philosophy.”

“Precisely,” said Saunders Rook.

“We’ll want the first one immediately,” said the editor.

“You shall have it,” promised Saunders Rook.

He could not but note the admiration, almost awe, in the circle of eyes. He was wise enough to depart before the spell was broken.

“Well,” he said, rising, “I think I’ll run along to bed now. Can’t be too careful of my health, you know.” He tossed this last sentence off with a grim smile. He was full of inspiration tonight.

The members crowded around him.

“Will you come to my studio for tea tomorrow?” asked Lucile Davega.

“And dine with me afterward at the Authors’ Club,” insisted Max Skye. “Some fellows I want you to meet.”

“We’d love to have you come up to Croton for a week-end,” said Rogers Joyce. “The crowd up there would like to know you. Jolly lot. Keen on new ideas like yours.”

For the first time in his thirty-three years Saunders Rook had the gratifying sensation of being inundated with invitations, of being sought after. He consulted a date-book, appeared surprised to find that it so happened that he was not booked up to any extent in the near future, and accepted sundry invitations.

As he strolled to his snug two rooms and bath in Grove Street, Saunders Rook could not but congratulate himself on being a singularly fortunate fellow.

At the tea given by Lucile Davega Saunders Rook experienced a new and not unwelcome sensation: he was lionized. He found it extremely pleasant to play the lion to a studio of pretty women. He noted how the tea went cold and the toast untasted as they flocked around him. Also, each one found an opportunity to take him aside and say:

“Of course you don’t really mean it.”

“But I do,” he would reply almost severely.

“But what have you against civilization?”

“It’s rotten,” he would growl. He was getting better and better in the rôle.

“O Mr. Rook!”

He enjoyed the sensation he was creating.

One girl, Margery Storey, who was young and had red hair, a combination that sometimes appeared in Saunders Rook's dreams and private yearnings, whispered to him that she was sure he was disappointed in love; but, she added archly, there were plenty of uncaught fish in the sea.

He said sternly that love or lack of it did not enter into his plan at all. The act he was to perform was to be a perfectly calm, philosophic protest against the state of civilization in America.

"You will remember," he told her, "how the early Christians walked naked into the arenas as a protest against the brutality of the gladiatorial combats. My motive, I hope, is equally untinged by any selfish emotion."

His heart was accelerated by her glance, so full of compassion. She said a little diffidently that she was a painter, and would he sit for his portrait? She'd love to do it; her studio was Number 148——

No, he interrupted, he could not. Actually he wanted to very much. He was busy, he explained, on a series of essays for "The Liberal Voice."

"After that, then?" she suggested.

"For me," said Saunders Rook, "there will be no 'after that.' "

Her blue eyes were full of sympathy.

"It seems too bad," she said. "You are still so young."

He smiled a smile of practised cynicism.

"In years, perhaps," he said.

He saw that he had moved her.

Decidedly, this new rôle of his was worth playing, said Saunders Rook to himself as he donned his dinner-jacket that night in preparation for his dinner with Max Skye at the Authors' Club. He was pleased with himself. In retrospect were the sympathetic blue eyes of Margery Storey; in prospect, a dinner among the celebrities of the Authors' Club, into which sacred premises he had never gone physically, but solely in his most roseate imaginings.

Max Skye, who was a poet of no mean repute, introduced Saunders Rook to a group of notable men.

"This," said Max Skye, with the air of a showman, "is Mr. Saunders Rook, who is going to commit suicide on the Fourth of July."

Saunders Rook bowed to them; gravely they bowed back and stared at him, fascinated.

"In Central Park," continued Max Skye.

Saunders Rook bowed deeply.

"As a protest against the rotten state of our civilization," added Max Skye.

Saunders Rook again bowed.

They returned his bows with marked deference, he noted delightedly. He managed, however, to maintain an air of great world-weariness as he said:

“When one feels as I do about it, what else can one do?”

He had rehearsed this coming up in the taxicab.

“Mr. Rook is writing a series of six essays for ‘The Liberal Voice,’” announced Max Skye, plainly proud to be the discoverer and friend of so remarkable a man.

“But,” objected Deline, the novelist, a man Saunders Rook had long admired from afar, “how can you publish six essays? It’s June now. When could the last three be published?”

“Posthumously,” said Saunders Rook, with a touch of pride.

“Posthumously?”

They all repeated the word as if there was magic in it.

“But why do you feel that the state of civilization requires so drastic a protest?”

Deline asked this question as Saunders Rook was enjoying the third course, tender roast young guinea-fowl with mushrooms; Rook loved good food.

“Because,” said Saunders Rook, with fork poised, “it’s rotten.”

Around the table went murmurs of approbation and interest.

“But, my dear fellow,” exclaimed Deline, warmly laying his hand on Saunders Rook’s arm, “we need men like you.”

“Yes, yes,” cried others about the table. “America needs men with the courage of their convictions.”

“You see,” said Deline, with a wave of his hand. “You’re needed.”

No one had ever before intimated to Saunders Rook that he was in the least needed. The happy thought occurred to him to rise and say, “In that case, gentlemen, I shall stay with you.” But he didn’t say that. Going home in the taxicab, he wished that he had. What he actually did was to sit with folded arms, a picture of determination, and say:

“When one feels as I do about it, what else can one do?”

Perhaps, after all, he mused, it was just as well that he had not recanted. It was something to be told by a great novelist that you are needed. Perhaps, if he recanted, they might discover that they did not need him so very much, after all.

A few days later as he sat at his desk among the other sub-editors—beauty editors, household editors, baby-care and feeding editors, kiddie page editors, cooking editors—he was summoned, just as he’d finished writing a letter to a lady in Waterloo, Iowa, to tell her that engraved invitations are not required for a straw-ride, into the sanctum and presence of the publisher and owner of the magazine, Keable Gowler, a man of terrifying importance in Saunders Rook’s eyes. Until that moment it had not occurred to Saunders Rook that he was anything more to Mr. Gowler than a name on the pay-roll, and rather far down on the pay-roll at that. Yet Mr. Gowler greeted him with a fatherly affability, and offered him a chair.

“Well, Rook, tell me all about it,” said Mr. Gowler, with heavy geniality.

“About what, Mr. Gowler?”

“This story I’ve been hearing about you and the Fourth of July.”

"Really now——" began Saunders Rook.

"Is it true, or is it not true that you are going to commit suicide in Madison Square?" demanded Mr. Gowler.

"Central Park," corrected Saunders Rook, mildly.

"It is true, then?"

"Yes."

Mr. Gowler made tutting noises with his lips.

"Oh, come now, Rook," he said, "you're not serious."

"I am," said Saunders Rook. He was pleased to know that he was more than a mere name to his employer, and he wished to remain a personage.

"But, my dear young man," cried Mr. Gowler, distressed, "I ask you, would that be fair to the magazine? People might hold us responsible, you know."

"No, they won't."

"How can we be sure?"

"I have made it plain," said Saunders Rook, "that no petty, personal motives are behind my act. It is to be purely a protest against the state of civilization in America."

"America seems pretty civilized to me," observed Mr. Gowler. "What's wrong with it?"

"It's rotten," said Saunders Rook.

Mr. Gowler looked horrified, but he surveyed Mr. Rook with a strong, new interest.

"Come, now," said Mr. Gowler, soothingly. "Let's see if we can't settle this thing. We'd miss you, Rook. The interior decoration page would miss you."

"I do the etiquette page, Mr. Gowler," said Saunders Rook, gently.

"Yes, yes. I meant that; why, of course," said Mr. Gowler, hastily. He decapitated a cigar and faced Saunders Rook. "Look here, Rook," he said, "I'm afraid we've been hiding your light under a bushel around here. To be frank with you, I didn't realize the stuff you were made of—until a few days ago." Mr. Gowler paused significantly.

"Now, what this magazine needs," he went on, "is a live young man of forceful character, who has modern ideas and isn't afraid to back them up. Roscoe Quimper is getting old; been an editor too long; we need a man with spirit for his position. Will you take it?"

Saunders Rook moistened dry lips; speech failed him; it was a post he had long coveted. He affected to consider.

"It pays fifteen thousand," said Mr. Gowler. His tone was actually persuasive.

Saunders Rook thought swiftly.

"I'll take charge, Mr. Gowler."

"Good!" cried Mr. Gowler. "Good!"

"Until the Fourth of July," added Saunders Rook.

Mr. Gowler evinced his concern by a sharp elevation of his shrubbery of eyebrows.

“Then you are in earnest?”

“Absolutely.”

“Of course”—this was said almost cajolingly—“if fifteen thousand seems too little, I might be willing to——”

Saunders Rook held up his hand.

“Thanks,” he said; “but it’s not a question of money.”

Mr. Gowler shook his head dejectedly.

“Then I guess there’s nothing I can say. Still”—he brightened—“even if your mind is made up, you could take charge until the Fourth of July and outline a policy and get things started, couldn’t you?”

“If you wish,” said Saunders Rook, handsomely.

“Good!” ejaculated Mr. Gowler. “Good!”

Saunders Rook, somewhat in a daze, started for the door.

“Oh, by the way, Rook,” said Mr. Gowler, “couldn’t you take dinner with us next Thursday? The governor of the State, two United States senators, a few congressmen, and a professor will be there. They’d like to know you.”

Saunders Rook riffled through his date-book and said he might be late, as he had two teas and a talk before a Brooklyn club scheduled for that day, but that he would try to get to the dinner in time for the dessert. Mr. Gowler was greatly obliged to him.

At the dinner at Keable Gowler’s Fifth Avenue house the attention paid to Saunders Rook by the governor, the senators, the assorted congressmen, the professor, and their wives would have flattered a person even less susceptible than he. In trumpet tones Mr. Gowler announced him:

“This is Mr. Saunders Rook, one of my most valued associates. On the Fourth of July, as a protest against our civilization, he will commit suicide in Washington Square.”

“Central Park,” said Saunders Rook, bowing modestly.

“Not really?” they all said in breathless chorus.

“Yes, really,” said Saunders Rook.

He talked, and they listened. He had been expanding the idea, and had worked up an indictment or two against civilization.

Over his after-dinner liqueur the governor declared that, if necessary, he would do the only thing he could think of to prevent Saunders Rook from robbing the State of so valued a citizen, and that was call out the militia. He was not prepared to say, he remarked darkly, how he should employ it, for he was fresh in the gubernatorial chair. However, he knew that a governor has the power to call out the militia, and he was interested to learn what would happen if he did call it out. Surely the case of Saunders Rook, he maintained, warranted the step.

The senator from Alabama promised that he would see the President at once, and volunteered to get the cooperation of Federal troops to help the governor’s militia. Saunders Rook listened, sphinx-like, outwardly impassive, inwardly agog. The senator

from North Dakota said that it had not before been called to his attention that the state of civilization in these United States was sufficiently rotten to cause a man of his good friend Rook's high type to plan so violent a protest, but now that it had been called to his attention, something should be done about it by the Senate. Political considerations, he said, prevented him from committing himself to any definite program, but this he would do: he would rush back to Washington on the morrow and start a senatorial investigation into civilization at which Saunders Rook would be the chief witness.

One of the congressmen present said that for his part he was prepared to introduce a resolution in the House of Representatives calling for the immediate appropriation of three hundred thousand dollars for the establishing of a congressional commission of seven on civilization, and that, obviously, the only person for the chairmanship was Mr. Rook. Another congressman said he was in hearty agreement with his honorable colleague in principle, but would like to amend the bill, so that it would call for eight hundred thousand dollars and a commission of twenty-one. While they were debating this point, Saunders Rook forced himself to depart. He had to look over the proofs of his article in "The Liberal Voice," he said. Keable Gowler himself helped Saunders Rook on with his coat and urged him to come again.

The appearance of the first Rook article brought him a tidal wave of letters. Scores of persons in all parts of the globe begged him for various reasons not to do it; two elderly ladies offered to adopt him and leave him their not inconsiderable estates; a group of young Russian radicals by cable offered to jump into the Volga on the Fourth of July to show they were in sympathy with him; eleven clergymen asked permission to call; a publishing house offered him a handsome figure for his diary, novel, or what had he? Fourteen ladies of different ages offered to marry him, and of these seven sent photographs, of which two were quite personable; three motion-picture companies asked him to name his own price for the exclusive rights; a vaudeville syndicate offered him two thousand a week for a ten-minute monolog twice daily until the Fourth of July; the police commissioner wrote to warn him that suicide is an offense amounting to disorderly conduct, and is punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both. A procession of reporters, photographers, feature-story writers, and interviewers invaded his apartment. In newspapers and magazines his wan features began to appear, accompanied by stories of varying degrees of accuracy. He began to be pointed out on the street; ribs were nudged as he passed. He loved it.

Crowded days passed, days full of pleasurable excitement and intense living for Saunders Rook. So swiftly did they speed by that it was a distinct shock for him, one morning, to be awakened by a boy with a tall stack of telegrams. The messages were from many people and many places; some urged, begged, and a few even conjured him not to do it today; many said simply, "Farewell." Today? Saunders Rook glanced at the date on the telegrams—"July Fourth."

He dressed himself with care in his new gray suit and lavender tie, took his bamboo stick, and sauntered up Fifth Avenue. It was a delicious, sun-lit day; the avenue was bright with flags; somewhere a parade was forming, and he heard the gay sounds of distant bands. Life had never seemed quite so fair to Saunders Rook, but, and he stopped abruptly, what of tomorrow?

Today, the Fourth of July, the eyes of the nation were on him. He bought a morning paper. Yes, there he was on the front page, a picture, smudged, but resolute-looking, and a two-column headline, “Saunders, Self-Slain Today for Civilization’s Sake.”

He wiped his brow with his silk handkerchief. It was impossible for him not to think of himself on July fifth; also July sixth, seventh, eighth.

“What a lot of dynamite there is in one little word!” he muttered to himself. “What a difference there is between, ‘Saunders Rook, the man who is going to commit suicide on the Fourth of July,’ and ‘Saunders Rook, the man who *was* going to commit suicide on the Fourth of July!’ One is romantic, promising, glorious; the other,—ugh!—the other is the epitaph of a weakling, a turncoat, a failure.”

He stopped before a picture-store and moodily gazed at a seascape in the window. He recalled that some sage has said, “Any man can make a reputation; it takes a real man to keep one.” He had a reputation, he reflected. He derived pleasure from that fact even now. It was more than he had dared hope for. Three weeks before it had seemed that he had been cast for a minor rôle in life, the voice of the mob offstage; almost overnight he had attained stardom. He, who had never expected to have a line to speak, had strutted and postured and declaimed in the center of the stage and heard the sweet music of applause. Today he was a hero; tomorrow he would be a joke. The day was warm, but he shuddered.

A holiday crowd in summer colors was passing. There was laughter in the air. How intelligent the people looked, he mused, and how civilized! A graceful, powerful motor car purred by.

He paused before a window full of books, and saw many that interested him. He glanced up at the spired heights of a church, and his gaze traveled onward to a new building, towering, shapely, beautiful; men, he reflected, had made it, had shaped the steel and stone to their will. The paper dropped from his fingers, and a passing stranger courteously picked it up, and handed it to Saunders Rook with a friendly smile. Saunders Rook felt an impulse to cry aloud, “This land, these times aren’t so rotten, after all.” The words died still-born. Down Fifty-second Street he heard the shrill cry of a newsboy, “All about Saunders Rook, the martyr.”

He hurried on toward Central Park. The governor had kept his word; he had called out the militia; alert soldiers with fixed bayonets patrolled the paths and scrutinized the picnickers from under their hat-brims. The green lawns were dotted with blue policemen. They, too, were watchful. Indeed, as Saunders Rook slipped into the park, unrecognized, he saw a burly officer collar a mild, blond little man, and heard the man protesting loudly that he was not Saunders Rook, but only Ole Svenson, a pastry-cook, and that the thing he had just eaten was not poison, but a banana. As he left the man struggling in the hands of the law, Saunders Rook shrugged his shoulders, smiled a pale smile, and penetrated deeper into the park.

“They’ve gone to a lot of trouble on my account,” he said to himself, almost proudly. “It wasn’t always like that. Funny how little interest people took in me when I only wanted to live.”

He picked a flower and stuck it in his buttonhole.

“It’s great to have a reputation,” he remarked. Then, as he paced along, added, “But it’s tough to have to live up to it.”

He had reached the sequestered end of the reservoir, and, glancing about, saw neither soldier nor policeman in sight.

“Stupid, incompetent fools!” he muttered.

He stood looking down into the cool, clear water. Then he raised his head and drew the fresh air into his lungs, and expelled it with a sigh. How well he felt! Slowly from an inside pocket he took his little red date-book, and with his fountain-pen wrote in his round, precise hand:

“I do this as a protest against the rotten state of civilization. Saunders Rook.” He blotted it neatly with a pocket blotter. He looked up at the smiling sky and sighed deeply.

“Still, after all, a reputation is a reputation,” he said.

Then he jumped.

SON OF A SLOGANEER

MR. BOWSER thumbed a buzzer. His secretary popped into his office. All his staff popped when Mr. Bowser buzzed. "Minktakmemo," commanded that high-powered executive. Translated this meant, "Mink, take memo." Mr. Bowser avoided the use of useless words such as "a" and "the"; he had calculated that they waste from twenty-one to twenty-seven minutes of a busy man's time per month. To get into the habit of eliminating these words might have proved difficult for an ordinary man, but not for J. Sanford Bowser. He was not ordinary, and he was, distinctly, a doer. There was a doing air about him from hair tonic to rubber heels.

"Get-There Men have the Get-Things-Done Habit," he liked to say. As president of The Bowsers, Inc., publicity engineers, "Let The Bowsers Put You on the Map!"—slogans leaped from his lips as naturally as rabbits have children, and with even less effort. He was passionately devoted to the science of slogan making; to coin a striking trade name for a new can opener, and couple with it some pregnant selling epigram—that, to Mr. Bowser, was almost the apex of human achievement. His mind, by long training, plucked from the air pithy punch phrases—his own expression—as swiftly and subconsciously as a man tottering on the brink of a sneeze reaches for his handkerchief.

"Minktakmemo."

Miss Mink poised her silver-plated pencil—it was a Bowser-advertised product—a Rite-Riter, "The Pencil That Does Everything But Think"—over her book. Mr. Bowser cleared his throat.

"Memo to Mrs. Bowser," he dictated staccatoly, "*in re* teething ring for baby. I have personally tried all advertised brands of teething rings. My tests show most scientific ring to be Cohnco Ring, Toy Efficient for Teething Tots. (N. B. Pretty good slogan). Cohnco Rings are (a) less rubbery in taste, (b) more durable, and (c) fit well in the mouth. If you check with me on Cohnco Rings I'll order one gross sent to our house at once.

"(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*."

Mr. Bowser lit a Marlborough-Somerset, "Each Puff Has a Pedigree," smoothed his straw colored hair, and swooped down on a pile of mail.

"Minktakletter."

Miss Mink prepared to take a letter.

"Woonsocket Kumfee-Fit Undervest Co., Woonsocket, R. I. Attention Mr. Snedecker——"

And, thus launched, Mr. Bowser whizzed through his correspondence like a buzz saw through a ladyfinger, ejecting punch-laden sentences even as a machine gun ejects used cartridges.

A person unfamiliar with the principles of high-speed efficiency on which Mr. Bowser conducted his life, business and domestic, might have thought that Mrs. Bowser was in Fiji or Lapland or some equally remote spot. As a matter of fact the surveyed distance between Mr. Bowser and Mrs. Bowser at that precise moment was twelve feet, for she occupied the office next to his, and, as his partner and associate publicity engineer, herself daily coined Slogans That Sell and mothered Phrases That Put Products on the Map.

She would have been the first to reject with scorn the suggestion that he should stick his head through the doorway that connected their offices, and tell her, verbally, about the teething rings.

“The Secret of our Success,” she would have said—for she, too, talked like a twenty-four-sheet poster—“is Organization. Nothing is Too Small to be Organized. In our country home, Caslon Farm, we have a model kitchen and by motion study we have cut down the motions our cook uses in making rice pudding from forty-three to seven, or, with raisins, eight. Organization! It used to take our nurse twenty-six minutes by stop watch to bathe our baby; now she does it in fourteen; we saved seven minutes just by using blotters instead of towels. Yes, Henry T. Organization is first vice-president of Success, Progress & Co.”

Mr. Bowser’s memo *in re* teething rings reached Mrs. Bowser’s desk within an hour. Mrs. Bowser—she had been Pandora Irene Kunkle, of Dingman, Tinney & Kunkle, “Advertising in All Its Arteries,” until a mutual devotion to slogans had brought her and Mr. Bowser into partnership, commercial and matrimonial—was a well-developed, copper-haired woman, hovering around thirty-five. She had a sharp chin and wore a stiff linen collar.

“Gussing, take a memo,” she directed.

Miss Gussing also wore a stiff collar and had a light blond mustache, but at heart she was a woman. The Bowsers always called the women of their company by their last names; Mrs. Bowser was an ardent feminist and felt that to call the female slogan makers Ruth or Hattie or Olivia was too feminine, and to call them Miss not in keeping with the spirit of camaraderie which prevailed about the Bowser office except during one short painful period each year when increases in salaries were being discussed. Mrs. Bowser stared thoughtfully from the window of the lofty Bowser Building—“Built—like the Himalayas—for the Ages,” and her gray-green eyes roved over the kaleidoscope of New York’s roofs—red, green, brown, purple.

“Memo to Mr. Bowser,” she said, “*in re* teething ring for baby. Cohnco Rings may be O. K. scientifically, but our Mr. Hencastle reports that he is soliciting the account of the Ess-Bee-Dee people who make Kiddie-Kutter Rings. I therefore think it wise to choose Kiddie-Kutter Rings for our son because of the effect on the trade. I do not check with your suggestion that we get a gross. One ring will be enough. This proves my contention that no man understands children or the Feminine Appeal in Advertising Copy.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President.*”

Having discharged this wood-pulp arrow at her spouse, Mrs. Bowser tapped her front teeth with her pencil for three seconds; then, briskly: “Gussing, take another memo.”

“Yes, Bowser,” said Miss Gussing, who had a bass voice. Mrs. Bowser herself insisted on this method of address; it gave her a hearty man-to-man feeling with Miss Gussing. With Mr. Bowser the case was somewhat different; his male hired help with salaries of more than five thousand dollars a year called him J. S. B. as more intimate than Mister and not so presumptuous as Sanford. Lesser employees called him Chief, and still lesser ones Mistered him.

“Memo,” dictated Mrs. Bowser, “to Mr. Bowser.”

“Shall I incorporate it with the first one?” asked Miss Gussing.

Mrs. Bowser gave her a look fraught more with pain than anger.

“Gussing,” she said, the sweetness of patience struggling with the vinegar of reproof, “must I remind you that the rule of The Bowsers, Inc., is: One subject to one memo? Simplicity, Gussing, is one of the First Flowers in the Garden of Organization. M-m-m-m—not bad, that. Take that down, Gussing. I may be able to use that phrase in the Bedfello—the Hot Water Bottle Beautiful—campaign. Now take a memo—a separate one if you please, to Mr. Bowser.”

The chastened Gussing suspended her pencil over a virgin sheet.

“*In re* name for new cleaning powder,” said Mrs. Bowser. “I have noted with care list of names for new cleaning powder suggested by you. I do not check with any of them.

“‘GARFINKLE’S Pride of the Bathroom’ has a high-class appeal but is too long.

“‘KLASSIC-KLEENER—Out, darned spot’—is good and would permit a tie-up with Shakespere in the ads, but the profanity might offend some possible buyers.

“‘TUB-PUP—Just Sic it on the Dirt’—is snappy but hardly serious enough for a product that retails at one dollar a can. Humor has no place in business.

“‘ROSE-DUST—The Powder That Perfumes as it Cleans’—is the best on your list because it suggests quality and also Hammers Home” (caps, Gussing) “the one distinctive point about the new powder—i.e., the fact that it has a pleasant smell. It is rather more like fresh pine shavings than roses, I think. In the name and slogan we must put across the punch idea that this good-smelling powder is also a cleaning agent with a kick. I attach list of names I have developed.

“Please let me have your reactions to these names very soon as Peabody Garfinkle called up today to ask when he can go ahead and order cans and labels for the new powder. He wants to get it on the dealers’ shelves in time for spring house cleaning. Action please.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President.*”

Mrs. Bowser skimmed with agile eye her list headed “Things To Get Done This Day,” then dictated:

“Memo to Mr. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. Please note that baby will be one year old tomorrow. He should be christened then. It is not intelligent to continue to call him Baby and Junior indefinitely. I suggest that you send me without delay list of names you consider suitable for him. I will give them my careful attention and I hope we can reach an agreement today on this subject.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President*.”

Mrs. Bowser tapped her teeth for two seconds, glanced at her watch—a Krafty-Kronometer, “The Personality Timepiece with the Different Tick” (her own slogan)—and then became all animation.

“Gussing,” she shot out, “get the Chicago and Salt Lake City offices on the long distance, send Meldrum, O’Grady and Kitchell to me at once, and order a taxi to be here in fifteen minutes to take me to a conference with Miss Switzer of the I-Say-Ma-Ma Mechanical Doll Company at the Jill Club.”

Miss Gussing bustled out and Mrs. Bowser tore into her work like a tornado through a picnic of paper dolls.

When Mrs. Bowser returned from her luncheon conference glowing with triumph over the fact that she had sold Miss Switzer the idea of making some of the dolls say “Pa-pa,” she found on her broad, plate-glassed-topped, thoroughly organized desk two memos on the bright orange paper Mr. Bowser used so that memos emanating from the presidential office might not be confused with the pallid blue and punchless pink of lesser memoranda. She read them.

“*In re* slogan for new cleaning powder. I do not like any names you have suggested.

“‘LILY-LAVA—Makes Your Bathroom a Conservatory’ has possibilities, but my opinion is that many housewives do not know what a conservatory is.”

Mrs. Bowser, as a fighting feminist, frowned at this slight on the vocabulary of her sex, and read on:

“‘GARFINKO NOSTINKO—Easy on the Nostrils but Hard on the Dirt’—is the best, but it just misses hitting me hard enough. Somehow it lacks dignity; I FEEL this lack. I shall concentrate on this problem tonight after dinner and see if I can evolve a Clarion Phrase That Will Shout Its Message from the Shelves. I will let you know my final choice tomorrow.

“(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*.”

Mrs. Bowser emitted a sound resembling “Humph.”

“His final choice!” she remarked, frowning at the buzzer buttons on her desk, of which there were enough to make a vest. “His final choice! As if I personally did not sell Peabody Garfinkle the Bowsers’ Big Idea—Words That Hit Buyers in the Pocketbook! As if I myself didn’t get his signature on a three-hundred-thousand-dollar contract. Now Bowser acts as if it were his product. Humph! Just like a man. Garfinko Nostinko does not lack dignity. Printed in orange-red on a deep purple background it

would Hit Any Housewife in the Buying Eye. I'm going to fight for it. He is getting too bossy lately, anyhow."

She was in a decidedly truculent frame of mind as she picked up the second orange memo from her spouse:

"To Mrs. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. Have given this matter much thought. Have decided that the following points must be considered in choosing name:

"A. Our baby is no ordinary baby. An Unusual Child should have an Unusual Name.

"B. Obviously, ordinary names, such as Robert, Henry and Thomas, will not do; they are for ordinary infants.

"C. Our baby will be much in the public eye. As the son of The Bowsers, Inc., he will receive much publicity. Later when he is head of the company his name will be a household word. His name must be one that leaps out of a printed page and has strong memory value.

"D. To get a really distinctive name for him we must COIN ONE! We must use just as much scientific care in coining it as if it were the name of a product for which we were trying to create a National Market.

"E. Therefore, in considering names for baby, ask yourself these questions:

"1. Does it express baby's personality?

"2. Is it distinctively individual?

"3. Is it easy to spell?

"4. Is it easy to say?

"5. Is it easy to get over the telephone?

"6. Does it look well in type? (N. B. Have all names set up in 12-point Caslon, new style.)

"7. Has it a flowing, harmonious sound?

"8. Does it begin with some incisive, unusual, INTEREST-GRABBING letter, like K, U, Y, V or Z?

"9. Has it that Can't-Be-Forgotten PUNCH that makes it Bite into a Man's Memory and STICK there?

"F. I attach list of names that answer these requirements. These names have been selected from more than six hundred coined by myself and the staff of the Product-Naming Department. To which one do you react most strongly? Action, please!

"(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*."

Mrs. Bowser, with frosty eye scrutinized the list, then tossed it on her desk with unmistakable petulance. She had read:

"NAMES FOR BABY:

“Ugobono Bowser
“Veekar Bowser
“Zail Bowser
“Zazzar Bowser
“Zerric Bowser
“Yondo Bowser
“Vindo Bowser
“Yubar Bowser
“Kinzo Bowser.”

If it is possible for a lady, a sloganeer and a college graduate, to snort, Mrs. Bowser, at that moment, snorted. She pronged at one of the buzzer buttons with an outraged finger. Miss Gussing shot in as if from a pneumatic tube.

“Gussing, take a memo. To Mr. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. I have noted with care your lists of names (baby). I emphatically do not check with you on any of them. There is only one name I want to have baby christened. It is not on your list.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President*.”

“Gussing,” snapped Mrs. Bowser, “please deliver this memo to Mr. Bowser personally.”

Miss Gussing vanished as if she had seen a boojum, but reappeared again after a brief interval, in her hand one of the sacred orange memos. Mrs. Bowser examined it.

“Memo to Mrs. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. I am always open to GOOD suggestions. What is yours?

“(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*.”

Mrs. Bowser’s eyes sparkled with determination.

“Gussing, take a memo,” she said in a crossing-the-Rubicon voice. “Memo to Mr. Bowser. *In re* christening baby.

“JOHN.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President*.”

Miss Gussing regarded her chief blankly.

“John?” queried Miss Gussing. “John what?”

“Nothing. Just ‘JOHN.’ All caps, Gussing,” said Mrs. Bowser, and her protruded chin symbolized a made-up mind.

She signed the memo so fiercely that she broke her pen—a Bowser-sold Product—“The Last-a-Lifetime Pen—Shakspere Would Have Used One.”

“Now,” ordered Mrs. Bowser, “take this to Mr. Bowser at once and see that it is called to his attention.”

Miss Gussing bounded from the room on her rubber heels—they were “Spine-Pals—Your Backbone’s Best Buddy.” Soon she bounded back. She carried reverently an orange memo which she placed on the desk. Mrs. Bowser plucked it up, read it, scowled.

“Memo to Mrs. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. I cannot permit my son to be named John. Suggest conference on this subject in Quiet Room at 4:40. Do you check?

“(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*.”

“Memo, Gussing.” Mrs. Bowser was almost feverish. “To Mr. Bowser. *In re* christening baby. Must remind you baby is my son as well as yours. I insist on John. I will have conference with you in Quiet Room at 4:40.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President*.”

The Quiet Room was a Bowser institution. It was his idea, and he was proud of it.

“It’s Psychological!” he exclaimed. “I Believe in Psychology. Do you know?”—here he lowered his voice as one imparting a confidence—“Psychology Plays a Big Part in Modern Business?”

He contrived to give the impression to some of his clients that he, Mr. Bowser, had discovered psychology. At no small expense he had installed a laboratory as part of the Bowser establishment, and to it he brought all prospective clients that they might observe his two hired psychologists, grave men, peering darkly into microscopes or cheyving guinea pigs through mazes.

“We are endeavoring to determine,” Mr. Bowser would explain, “the basic psychological reason why New York ladies prefer pink underthings while Boston ladies prefer them white. Ultimately, through psychology, we will be able to Condition the Buying Habits of the Consumer.”

“This Bowser is a deep fellow,” the clients would say to one another. “He’s scientific. He gets right down to the bottom of things.” And they would hasten to inscribe their names on the dotted line.

The Quiet Room had been planned by the psychologists, after a series of experiments that cost the lives of uncounted guinea pigs.

“This,” said Mr. Bowser, in introducing the Quiet Room to his staff, “is a Thinking Chamber. Here you can bring your Big Problems and in the Thought-Compelling Silence Think Through to a Sane Solution. When your Thinker is Fagged, come in here. Just put up a sign outside the door, ‘Someone is Now Thinking in this Room. Quiet, please,’ and no one, not even the president, will dare disturb you.

“Of course,” added Mr. Bowser, with a smile at once playful and yet with its serious side, “I hope that this will not be construed as a suggestion that you come in here to take a nap. That,” he concluded, “would be beneath contempt.”

The Quiet Room idea had worked out well; three pairs of copy writers—one male and one female to the pair—had announced their engagements since its introduction.

The Quiet Room was done in mouse gray—walls, carpets, furniture, even the lights were all of that inaudible hue.

There were no pictures to distract attention; just a simple sign in gray letters, “Quiet, please. This is a Room for Thought.”

To this room Mrs. Bowser repaired at 4:40 precisely. Mr. Bowser, himself the epitome of punctuality, was just opening the door as she reached it.

“Good afternoon, Bowser,” he said pleasantly.

“Good afternoon, Bowser,” she returned. They had agreed that in business hours they would be strictly businesslike.

“No Sentiment Between Nine and Five,” he had proposed as, on their honeymoon, they motored through New England looking for billboard sites. And she had agreed heartily.

They hung up the “Quiet, please” sign outside and sat in mouse-toned chairs at a mouse-toned table. Mr. Bowser spread out a sheaf of memos.

“I brought the correspondence in this matter,” he explained.

“Bowser,” said his wife, “I want to say right here and now that I won’t stand for one of your coined names for my baby. I want to christen him John.” She glanced at a list. “Yubar,” she said disdainfully. “Sounds like a varnish.”

“It strikes me,” said Mr. Bowser with dignity, “that Yubar is an especially distinctive name.”

“Yes, for a varnish,” flashed Mrs. Bowser. “But our son is not a varnish.”

The masculine Bowser frowned, then spoke in a low-pitched voice:

“You are getting excited, Bowser. You are raising your voice. Permit me to remind you that this is the Quiet Room, not the smoking room at the Jill Club.”

“Don’t use that tone to me, Bowser. I’ll raise my voice if I please.”

“But think of the employees!”

“I’m thinking of my son.”

“My son, if I may say so.”

“Your son!” Mrs. Bowser exclaimed. “You talk as if you’d bought him from a jobber.”

“Bowser! In the Quiet Room too.”

“Quiet Room be hanged!”

“You amaze me. Frankly, this conference cannot proceed while you are in this mood. We are here to confer, not to shout.”

“Very well. You agree to John?”

“No. Emphatically no. I will not agree to John, I tell you.”

“Who’s shouting now?”

“I’ll shout if I please. I veto John.”

“Oh, you do, do you! What am I—a rubber stamp?” Mrs. Bowser’s eyes were snapping. “Don’t try that he-man business on me, Bowser. First you try to legislate through your own slogan for the cleaning powder, and now you are trying to give my son a name like a patented stove polish. I say John. John! John!”

Her voice was shrill and his was not exactly suppressed.

“Do you realize,” he said, “that we are having our first quarrel?”

“I guess I have good reason to quarrel. I want to name the baby John. My mind’s made up.”

“No. Never. Not John.”

“Well, what do you want to call him?”

Mr. Bowser compressed his lips masterfully.

“Kinzo,” he said loudly.

“Kinzo?” she protested.

“Kinzo Bowser,” he repeated. “An almost perfect name! Look,” he went on in his selling voice. “Just say it over. Just roll the syllables over on your tongue. Kinzo Bowser! Hasn’t that a smooth, lyric quality? Kin-zo Bow-ser! Get it?”

He whipped from his pocket a large card on which he had printed KINZO BOWSER.

“Look!” he cried triumphantly. “Hasn’t that name Eye-Stabbing Power? See how that ‘K’ sticks out. Notice how that final ‘O’ ends the word with a snap. Why, that name fairly sings out loud. Kinzo Bowser! I tell you it would stand out on a dealer’s shelf like a wart on a bald head!”

“Who wants our baby’s name to stand out on a shelf?” Mrs. Bowser demanded.

“Oh!” said Mr. Bowser with some slight confusion. “I meant in case he ever manufactured canned goods. He might, you know. We owe it to him to pick a name that would be useful under any and all circumstances, don’t we?”

“John!” was all Mrs. Bowser said.

“John?” Mr. Bowser’s voice had many elements of a roar in it. “John? Plebeian! Common! One instantly associates John with mediocrity, with nincompoopity. Why, when I hear the name John it always suggests a man who sleeps in his underwear and thinks grapefruit is poisonous.”

“Your name is John,” his wife reminded him.

Mr. Bowser flushed.

“Am I to blame for that?” he inquired warmly. “You notice I call myself J. Sanford. Besides, my father was a farmer, not a publicity engineer. He knew about alfalfa but not about the Psychology of A Name With A Punch. I tell you I won’t even consider John. I want Kinzo.”

“Bah! Sounds like a Japanese acrobat or a cure for flat feet.”

He fastened upon her an eye impatient and stern.

“Apparently you haven’t grasped the first principles of Names that Mean Something. Well, I won’t argue with you while you’re in this state. Let’s discuss something else.”

“John,” said Mrs. Bowser with set jaw.

“Let’s postpone that subject, please,” he said. “Peabody Garfinkle just phoned me that he must start printing labels for his cans tomorrow. He wants the design and name by one o’clock. He’ll use any one our organization works out. That’s Client Confidence, eh?”

“I hope it is not misplaced,” said Mrs. Bowser, her voice scented with a faint perfume of irony.

Mr. Bowser ignored this observation.

“Sorry I couldn’t check on any of your slogans for the cleaning powder,” he remarked with a great show of amiability. “One of yours—Garfinko Nostinko—almost made the grade, but not quite. Just didn’t pull the trigger with me, somehow. Your slogan is excellent—‘Easy on the Nostrils But Hard on the Dirt!’ Very pretty, very pretty. Pithy too. But—a little long, don’t you think?”

“No.”

“But, Bowser, don’t you recall that our Doctor Butterfield worked out in the laboratory that the Human Eye Can Only Rivet on Seven Words at Once? Your slogan has nine. If you could somehow boil it down——”

“I’ll boil nothing down. I like it as it is.”

Mr. Bowser shrugged his well-tailored shoulders.

“And fly in the face of psychology?” he asked gently, but as one who is hurt.

Mrs. Bowser bridled.

“Don’t look at me as if I were a naughty child, Bowser!” she ejaculated. “I’m not a green copy writer that you’ve caught wearing an unadvertised brand of rubber heels. I was a Successful Slogan Builder before I ever met you, please remember.”

“Come now, control yourself. At least let me tell you about the Big Thought I just had before I came in here.”

Mrs. Bowser tapped her teeth with her pencil. Mr. Bowser jumped to his feet and when he spoke his voice held chords of rapture and his eyes were alight with the joy of creation.

“Listen,” he began. Then in his special slogan voice he declaimed: “Smelly-Welly—dirt-devourer!”

Mrs. Bowser regarded him without enthusiasm.

“Not bad,” she admitted.

“Not bad?” he cried. “Great Scott, woman, it’s perfect! Smelly-Welly! Why, it’s an inspiration. Came to me like a flash from the sky. Smelly-Welly! Easy to say, easy to spell and chock-full of punch. Look here, Bowser, just look here!” From an inside pocket he took a strip of cardboard on which he had hastily lettered in large black print:

SMELLY-WELLY

Dirt-devourer

He held it aloft, eyes beaming.

“Just picture that in orange on a dark blue background! Smelly-Welly! A child can say it. Ah, an idea! ‘A child can use it just as easily as a child can say it.’ We’ll print that on every can. Why, it would be a sin to retail Smelly-Welly at a dollar a can. I bet we could get a dollar and a half easy for a product with a name like that. Smelly-Welly! There’s magic in it, I tell you. Isn’t it a peach, Bowser?”

“I like Garfinko Nostinko better,” she answered doggedly.

He bit his lip.

“Oh, do you?” he said stiffly.

“Yes; Smelly-Welly lacks dignity.”

“Is that so? Well, I tried it on Mink, Pffeffer, Boley, Deyo, Hendricks and Shinnors, and they were all most enthusiastic about it.”

“They would be, the jellyfish,” said Mrs. Bowser dryly. “If you suggest Cupid’s Caress as the name for a tire pump they’d applaud.”

Mr. Bowser was outraged by this suggestion.

“You’re just in a stubborn streak, Bowser,” he declared. “No use reasoning with you. I shall use Smelly-Welly.”

“It lacks dignity,” she retorted.

“Smelly-Welly,” said Mr. Bowser with concentrated gravity, “is my choice, and I intend that it shall be used.”

“We’ll see about that,” said Mrs. Bowser grimly.

A light and timorous tap sounded on the door; the frightened face of Miss Mink peeped through the crack.

“Sorry, Mr. Bowser,” she said, “but your reducing class at the Billboard A. C. starts at 5:30 and it’s now 5:25. You told me to be sure you didn’t miss it again. Your car is waiting.”

“I’ll come directly, Mink,” said Mr. Bowser. He turned to his wife. “I shall stay at the club tonight,” he informed her, then stalked out.

She said nothing; ominously she tapped her teeth. There was a buzzer in the Quiet Room—a pale gray buzzer with a wan buzz; this she pressed. Miss Gussing flitted into the room.

“Gussing, take a memo. To cook. *In re* dinner tonight. Mr. Bowser will not be present. Tomato soup, roast chicken, little green beans, guava jelly, raspberry mousse, eight sharp.

“(Signed) P. I. BOWSER, *Associate President.*”

Morn came to the office of J. Sanford Bowser. Up and down, up and down paced Mr. Bowser, heedless of the fact that he might wear a path in the genuine Cabistan rug. That he, most careful of men, should thus imperil so costly a piece of his own property was a sure sign to his employees that he was in no mood to be trifled with. His brow, generally bland, was creased with care and perplexity. He lit Marlborough-Somerset after Marlborough-Somerset, then tossed them, half-smoked, into the copper ash tray. J. Sanford Bowser was in conference with himself.

Heads of departments tiptoed about with ashen faces and tight-shut lips; now and then they paused in the corridors to exchange a few tense, whispered words. Copy writers in their coops wrote furiously but silently with soft black pencils; now and then they glanced apprehensively over their shoulders as if they momentarily expected the grim reaper himself to enter. Little girls down in the checking department curbed their giggles and masticated their gum with nervous molars; even the space salesmen on the benches in the reception room sensed the fact that the atmosphere was electric with suspense; in muted voices they muttered their selling talk over to themselves.

"J. S. B. is making some big decision," whispered the head of the copy department to the head of the media department.

"The Chief is making some big decision," whispered Copy Writer Deyo to Copy Writer Shinnars as they held hands in the Quiet Room.

"Mr. Bowser is makin' some big decision," whispered Mickey the messenger to Sallie the checker.

And Mrs. Bowser, where was she? Alone and aloof in her own private concentrating room on the roof of the building, she did not know of the spiritual wrestling match that went on in Mr. Bowser's soul. She was busy; her chin juttet out resolutely; with pieces of colored paper and with paint she frantically designed car cards, posters, cartons, on which she lettered vigorously "Garfinko Nostinko."

"Hit them in the Eye with Something Tangible," she explained to the faithful Gussing who stood guard outside the door to prevent interruption. "Once Bowser sees these, he'll forget Smelly-Welly. Smelly-Welly lacks dignity, don't you think, Gussing?"

"Yes, Bowser."

From the theater of war, where Mr. Bowser battled with himself, came a news bulletin which leaped from mouth to mouth:

"J. S. B. is going into the Quiet Room."

"The Chief is going into the Quiet Room."

"Mr. Bowser is going into the Quiet Room."

They saw him, hands clasped behind him, chin resting on necktie, eyes oblivious to things mundane, stride down the corridor and into the Quiet Room. As noiselessly as if it were the cobweb door to ghostland the gray door purred shut behind him. From basement to roof in the vast Bowser Building breaths were held.

In the Quiet Room Mr. Bowser set up on racks four cards, in groups of two. The first card bore the words:

SMELLY-WELLY

Dirt-devourer

The second card had inscribed on it:

GARFINKO-NOSTINKO

Easy on the Nostrils, But Hard on the Dirt

The other two cards were smaller. One bore the words:

KINZO BOWSER

The other had written on it:

JOHN BOWSER

J. Sanford Bowser leaned back in a gray easy-chair, stretched out his long legs and studied for many minutes the cards.

Abruptly he stood erect; dynamically his teeth clicked. With quick hands he seized the Garfinko Nostinko card and the John Bowser card and tore them into small bits.

“Thinking out loud,” he said—a favorite expression of his—“I intend to be master in my own office and in my own home.”

He jabbed a buzzer button. Two thousand employees of The Bowsers, Inc., breathed again. They knew that the big decision had been made.

In spurted Miss Mink.

“Minktakmemo.”

She looked at him in some alarm; he appeared ruffled, almost agitated. It was contagious; her hand trembled.

“Memo to Hencastle,” he jerked out. “*In re* name. My final decision is SMELLY-WELLY—Dirt-devourer! This name must be used no matter what objections are raised; it will be up to you to see that this is done. Please note that appointment is for one sharp, as per verbal instructions given this morning.

“(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*.”

He signed it as if he were signing the Declaration of Independence.

“Minktaknuthermemo.”

Miss Mink snapped to attention.

“To Hendricks. *In re* matter discussed this morning. My final choice is Kinzo. Please carry out my instructions to the letter. Use my limousine.

“(Signed) J. SANFORD BOWSER, *President*.”

"Now," he directed, "when Hencastle and Hendricks have left the office please find Mrs. Bowser and ask her to be so good as to come to the Quiet Room as soon as she can for a very important conference."

Miss Mink scurried forth, and he picked up a large pad of paper and began to sketch out posters for the forthcoming Smelly-Welly campaign.

So engrossed was he in this work that he did not notice that it was fully two hours before Mrs. Bowser entered. She was slightly disheveled, slightly smeared with purple ink, slightly flushed, and in her hand were many papers.

"Well, Bowser?" she inquired.

"Sit down, please," he said most affably.

She did so.

"Bowser," he began levelly, "I'm not going to beat around the bush. I'm going to tell you straight out."

Her eyes narrowed suspiciously.

"Two heads," stated Mr. Bowser, "may be better than one in thinking, but one is better than two in doing. So I determined today that I would go ahead and name the new cleaning powder and attend to the christening of the baby myself."

"Oh, have you really?" said Mrs. Bowser in a voice ten degrees below freezing. "Important, if true."

"It is true," he rejoined calmly. "The things have been done."

"Done? Done!" The first "done" she uttered was a whisper; the second "done" a scream.

"Precisely. Both jobs I put through according to a careful plan," he continued with serenity. "By my order Hencastle went to Peabody Garfinkle and told him he could order one million cans bearing the label Smelly-Welly."

Mrs. Bowser, incapable of speech, sucked in her breath sharply.

"And," finished Mr. Bowser, "also by my order, Hendricks called at the house today, took the baby to the church in the limousine, and had him christened."

"What?" asked Mrs. Bowser faintly. "John?"

"No," said Mr. Bowser; "Kinzo."

For a brief second Mrs. Bowser appeared to be about to swoon, but she didn't; she spoke, but with an effort.

"There are times," she said slowly, "when mere words cannot express thoughts. And this is one of them." Then, with mounting ire: "Do you mean to sit there and tell me, J. Sanford Bowser, that you had the unmitigated nerve to name my baby without _____,"

"Hush, for heaven's sake! There's somebody at the door," he said. There was indeed somebody at the door; the Bowsers heard a crackling noise.

"Look! What's that?" exclaimed Mr. Bowser.

"It's a newspaper; someone is poking it under the door," she said, mystified.

He stooped and picked up the paper.

“Early edition of the Evening Clarion,” he said. “Look—it’s marked—right here.”

For a moment they bent their heads over the sheet.

Then Mrs. Bowser gave forth a heartrending scream that made the gray walls of the Quiet Room tremble; then Mr. Bowser cried aloud “Great Cæsar’s ghost!” and collapsed into a chair. Staring out in cold black type they saw:

LATE NEWS

BOWSER SCION CHRISTENED

The infant son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Sanford Bowser, well-known publicity engineers, of Park Avenue, and Great Neck, L. I., was christened at noon today in the Church of Saint Jude the Obscure, by the Rev. James Russell Swiggette. The name given the infant was Smelly-Welly Dirt-devourer Bowser.

Mr. Bowser recovered just enough to moan, “Great Cæsar’s ghost—they got the memos mixed! They got the memos mixed!”

“Smelly-Welly Bowser,” repeated Mrs. Bowser over and over, as if under some horrible spell. “Smelly-Welly Bowser. My baby! Smelly-Welly Bowser.”

“They got the memos mixed, Pandora,” he said abjectly. “I tell you they got the memos mixed.”

“Smelly-Welly Bowser,” she moaned. “You wanted an unusual name! You wanted a name no one will forget! You wanted a name easy to say! Well, you’ve got it! Oh, dear; oh, dear—Smelly-Welly Bowser! My son. Smelly-Welly——”

“Oh, Pandora,” he cried, taking her hand, “how can you—or he—ever forgive me?”

She looked up and the beginning of a smile twitched her lips.

“Now we’ll just have to call him John,” she said.

THE WRONGING OF EDWIN DELL

“ONE, two, three, four,” counted Aunt Charity as she put the hard-boiled eggs into the shoebox beside the bananas, and twisted a little cornucopia from the sheep-dip advertisement in the Crosby Corners’ News to hold the pepper and salt. “Do you think four will be enough, Edwin?”

“Four what, Aunt Charity?” asked Edwin Dell, looking up from his book; it was Jeremy Taylor’s “Holy Living and Holy Dying.”

“These,” she said, pointing a long, pale forefinger. She never mentioned the word egg. To her there was a suggestion of the improper about an egg.

Edwin Dell looked at them, blushed, turned his head away.

“I think so, Aunt Charity,” he murmured.

She cut slices of bread from the home-made loaf and swaddled each slice in tissue paper.

“You’ll be careful what victuals you eat in New York, Edwin,” she said; it was half question, half command.

“Oh, yes, Aunt Charity,” promised the young man. “I’m always most particular about my victuals.”

“Sit up straight, Edwin. And be sure to allow plenty of time to get to the station. The New York train leaves at three-twenty-four. What is it Emerson says about punctuality?”

“Punctuality,” Edwin quoted, “is one of the legs of the table of Success.” He knew his Emerson.

“And Edwin——”

“Yes, Aunt Charity?”

“Don’t forget what I said about women.”

“Indeed I shan’t, aunt,” he said, earnestly. “I shall eschew them. Indeed I shall eschew them, Aunt Charity.”

“You’d better,” said his aunt, grimly. She was a geometric woman, all angles, corners, tangents and plane surfaces. The one man who might have loved her was Euclid. She had come to Crosby Corners, Connecticut, from Louisburg Square, Boston, to bring up her infant nephew, Edwin Dell, an orphan whose parents had been called away when lightning struck the village church during Wednesday prayer meeting. After Edwin was one year old she always called the gardener in to give Edwin his bath. She had conducted an exclusive school for girls in Boston, and so was able to bring the child up carefully and well. He had not been permitted to go to school; that would have brought him in contact with gauche persons. Any young man would have envied him his ability to read Latin at sight and his considerable knowledge of ecclesiastical history. The malady of the time—ingrown worldliness—had never tainted him. At twenty-one he had conversed with practically no one but his aunt, and the Rev. Vernon

Stickney Entwistle, who came to tea on alternate Tuesdays, and Palumbo, the Italian gardener, whose remarks, by Aunt Charity's strict orders were confined to agricultural subjects, such as "Theesa punk" and "Theesa cab." It took Edwin some years to discover that Palumbo was saying "This is a pumpkin" and "This is a cabbage."

Aunt Charity's library consisted of the following books: The Book of Common Prayer, Young's Night Thoughts, Fox's Book of Martyrs, Holy Living and Holy Dying, the Sermons of Bishop Amos Pratt, the Sermons of the Rev. Hosea Ballou (in eleven volumes), the Sermons of John Wesley Tweedy, D.D., the Collected Prayers of the Rev. Nathaniel Beasley, the Sermons (one volume each) of the Revs. Snellgrove, Tetter, Peabody, Kinsolving, Struthers, Kipp, Manning, Pinkney, and Dodd, and The Genealogical History of the Tillotson Family. Aunt Charity was a Boston Tillotson. Young Edwin had free access to this library, and, being by nature bookish, he read all the volumes so assiduously that his aunt had to renew the chintz slip-covers three distinct times.

And now Edwin Dell was going to New York to seek his fortune. It was his first visit to that great city. In its libraries he planned to find material to finish the work on which he was engaged, a scholarly and exhaustive treatise on The History of the Dogma of Infant Damnation in New England between 1800 and 1830. It was to fill six large volumes, possibly ten. It would make something of a stir in the more thoughtful literary circles, he expected, in all modesty. He was a modest young man; he could not tolerate mirrors in his bathroom.

His heart beat fast as he took his seat in the train to New York. There he sat, waiting for the train to start, his ticket and the address of his boarding house clutched in one hand, his lunch box, with the four hard-boiled blanks, clutched in the other. His first week's allowance was pinned to his union suit by two safety pins.

Passengers, even hardened traveling salesmen, turned to look twice at Edwin Dell; he was so young, so fresh. His light blue eyes were large, round, wondering; they looked at the world so candidly, so trustingly. He had the tall, well-proportioned body of the Tillotsons and the frank, boyish features of the Dells. Not a million mud-baths could have given him those cheeks, to which the color came easily; they were Nature's reward for clean living, early retiring, and waking with the lark. Electricity had had nothing to do with that wave in his blond hair; that, too, was Nature's gift. He was quietly dressed in a pepper and salt suit; his necktie was blue with white polka dots.

"Edwin," his aunt called through the window, "are you sure you packed"—she looked about to be sure no one overheard her—"your woolens?"

"Yes, Aunt Charity."

"And the goose-grease?"

"Yes, Aunt Charity."

"When you feel a cold coming on," she said, "be sure to rub the goose-grease on your—self."

He knew she meant "chest". He was glad she didn't say the word in front of all those strangers, but, of course, he reflected, there was not the slightest danger of Aunt

Charity committing an indelicacy; she tacitly admitted the existence of Edwin from chin to ankles, but never mentioned it.

“Edwin?”

“Yes, aunt.”

“Remember what I said.”

“About what, aunt?”

“About women.”

“Have no apprehension,” he said. “I shall eschew them.”

The engine tooted, the train creaked, and he was off to New York.

General Grant, it is likely, never stayed at the boarding house of Miss Hetty Venable in West 13th street. But the mark of his régime was on it, particularly in its interior decorations. In Edwin Dell’s room on the second floor, rear, hung heavy velvet portières that still smelled faintly, from the campaign cigar some roomer had smoked there during the Hayes-Tilden election. The furniture was massive and glum; the marble mantel was covered with a cloth with yellow tassels; in the bathtub were painted purple and green tulips of decalcomaniac tendencies; the gas jets suffered from chronic asthma and halitosis. The view from the window embraced four back-yards as similar as pocket-dictionaries, with frescoes of clothes-lines, and a liberal sprinkling of ash-barrels, elderly shoes and used cats. Edwin rubbed his hands with satisfaction; it seemed to him an ideal place to write his kind of book.

Four days after Edwin Dell came to New York and to West 13th Street, Miss Venable’s cook left to accept a position in the moving pictures, and Edwin, who had had his meals in his rooms till then, was now forced to seek his nourishment outside. Was it he who impersonated a serpent in a garden some eons ago who led Edwin Dell to select for his meals the Scarlet Hyena Tea Room, dinner eighty five cents, with soup or salad, one dollar; chicken Sundays? He thought he chose it because it lay on his route to the Greenwich Village branch of the public library.

It was during his second dinner there that Edwin Dell, looking up from page 512 of Bishop Groody’s masterly defense of the theory of infant damnation, saw the girl. He had been aware that there were many girls in New York, but he had ignored them. This girl was hard to ignore. She was looking at him, looking directly and smiling a slight, shameless smile. Edwin frowned, dropped his eyes to his book, and felt uncomfortable. In his confusion he salted his cocoa, and, on tasting it, sputtered. He heard her only partly suppressed titter. He knew that he was flushing. He tried to look up without meeting her eye but he ran straight into her gaze; she was smiling most provocatively. He gulped down his cocoa, salt and all, and fled from the restaurant.

How fresh and pure seemed the air of Seventh Avenue as he crossed it! How reassuring the presence of the traffic policeman! Edwin picked his way along through the crisp December evening. The sound of steps on the sidewalk behind him made him glance over his shoulder. His heart fluttered. Somebody was following him.

Under the arc light he could see her unmistakable dress, an unrestrained maroon batik affair bespirt with ochre fish pursuing mauve worms. It was she, the one who had smiled. Edwin Dell's backward glance was hasty, but hasty as it was, it saw her smile, and her wink. Something close akin to panic gripped him and he lengthened his strides; from the *lap, lap, lap* of her sandals he knew she too had increased her pace. With anxious eyes he glanced at the numbers; he had forty houses to go before he reached Miss Venable's. His breath began to come jerkily. Thirty numbers more. She was gaining on him, and was clearing her throat with a loud "Ahem" that even to his inexperienced ears sounded manufactured. Twenty more numbers; and the girl drew nearer, nearer. Edwin broke into a species of canter; *lap, lap, lap, lap*—she was cantering, too. Just in time he reached the brown stone steps of Miss Venable's house; with two leaps he reached the door and miraculously hit the key-hole the first stab. He slammed the door shut behind him, and sank down, almost fainting on the derby hats of the other roomers on the hall hat-rack.

Next day before Edwin Dell went forth, he stood for a long time looking at a steel engraving he had brought with him from his home in the country and had tacked to the rose-dappled wall-paper. It was a picture of Ralph Waldo Emerson. New courage rushed into his system like air into a tire as he gazed into the wise, kind, understanding eyes. He ate a push-cart apple for breakfast and another for lunch, and entrenched himself in the library behind the bulwark of Bishop Groody's ponderous tome. It was past seven that evening when Edwin Dell had intimations that he had a grosser side and must appease it with food. He set forth to do so.

Edwin Dell's acquaintance with Freud was as limited as Freud's acquaintance with Edwin Dell. Edwin Dell knew no more of the theory of the subconscious than a trout does of trigonometry. Little did the country lad realize that he was an iceberg with one-third of him projecting above the surface of consciousness, and the other two-thirds plunged deep down in the murky realms of the subconscious. So, with the utmost innocence of intention (ah, little did he reck of the tricks of the subconscious!) he found himself well into the fried atmosphere of the Scarlet Hyena before he remembered that he had resolved never to set foot in that place again. He wheeled about to leave, but a vigilant waiter herded him into a seat in a corner and affixed him there with a napkin, a glass of water and butter. Edwin peered round, and saw no cause for alarm. The girl was not there. Her bobbed red head was nowhere visible in the forest of black, brown, yellow and brindle bobbed heads. With a relieved sigh he ordered chicken liver omelet and weak tea.

He was seeking for vestiges of chicken liver with one eye and reading Groody's epoch-making chapter, "Have Babies Adult-sized Souls?" with the other, when he became aware that someone had taken the vacant seat across the table from him. Of course he did not look up; he hadn't the slightest interest in knowing who it was. But the person addressed him.

"I beg your pardon, but will you give me a light," the voice said. He had to look up then. It was she.

He wished to leave at once, but he was too well-bred, so he said, with impersonal politeness:

"I'm sorry, but I have no matches."

"Ah," she laughed, "I'll bet your aunt won't let you carry them."

Surprise made him exclaim:

"My aunt? How do you know I have an aunt?"

The girl laughed again.

"You would," was all she said. "Have a cigaret?"

"Thank you, I never smoke."

"I do," she said, and taking a box of matches from her hand-bag she lit a long Russian cigaret.

"Then you did have matches all the time!" cried Edwin.

She looked at the box in her hand, and said, as if she were the most astonished person in the world:

"Why, so I did." Then she added, "My name is Valerie Keat."

Edwin had it drawn forcibly to his attention that this woman was outrageously pretty in a bold, obvious way. She had adventurous green eyes and an insinuating mouth; her lips were a vivid carmine. Red, thought Edwin, the sign of danger; a person to be eschewed.

With a brief prayer that his tapioca pudding would be brought soon, he took up his book and sought safety in the prose of Bishop Groody. But the book had changed to some foreign tongue; its pages seemed blurred and its words hieroglyphics; had the Bishop lapsed into Czech? His table companion laughed.

"Do you always read upside down?" she inquired.

He turned his book right side up and looked at her with what for Edwin was a glare.

"No," said he, stiffly.

"You're from the country?"

He nodded. Why didn't that wretch of a waiter hurry with the pudding?

"You've just come to New York?"

Again Edwin nodded.

"Ever been kissed?"

He straightened up in his chair as if a pin had been abruptly inserted in him.

"Really, now——" he began.

"Call me Val," she said. "What shall I call you?"

His mind was too beside itself to be on the defensive.

"My name," he said, "is Edwin Tillotson Dell."

"I'll call you 'Ned!'" she said. "I'm an artist. How do you cheat the wolf, Ned?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"What field of endeavor do you decorate?"

"Me? Oh, I'm an—author."

“How interesting your work must be!” Was she sincere, or was she putting it all on?
“What do you author?”

It occurred to him as an inspiration that he might be able to swamp and daze her with technical theological terms till his pudding came, so he began to quote his book, beginning on page one. He did not, however, get far.

“You can tell me all that when you come to see me,” the girl interrupted.

“When I come to see you?”

“Certainly. You’ll come, won’t you? Or shall I come to see you?”

He thought of the eyes of Emerson—wise, kind, understanding. His resolute teeth closed on a bit of chicken liver.

“Neither,” he said.

This, he thought, should abash her, but it did nothing of the sort. Instead, she gave him a playful wink.

“Ned,” she said, “I used to belong to the Northwestern Mounted Police and you know their motto.”

“I do not.”

“Get your man,” said Miss Keat.

He buried embarrassed eyes in the tapioca pudding which that moment providentially arrived.

“I hope,” he said, his eyes still on his plate, “that nothing in my manner has encouraged you to venture on such familiarity.”

It was impossible to rebuff this woman with the adventurous eyes and the carmine lips. Rebuffs rebounded from her.

“What are you doing this evening, Ned?” she asked.

Intuitively he sensed his peril.

“I am going to my room,” he said, “to think.”

He picked up book, coat, hat.

“You’re not mad, Ned?” she called after him.

“No, not mad,” he said, simply. “Only hurt, terribly hurt.”

He did go to his room as swiftly as if he had been tapped for Skull and Bones. He locked the door. He tried not to think of her, of those eyes, those lips. He looked hard at the picture of Emerson, and tried to think of him.

Valerie Keat lived in a reformed haymow over a converted stable in a redeemed alley in Greenwich Village. She had nineteen pairs of jade earrings, black, georgette underwear, and the following books: the Droll Tales, Jurgens, Mlle. de Maupin, The Rainbow, the collected writings of Havelock Ellis, the Decameron, the works of Rabelais, Ulysses, The Genius, Many Marriages, The Memoirs of Casanova, Sappho, Leaves of Grass, and an array of books in French, beginning with Volupte by Sainte-Beuve and Fleurs de Mal by Baudelaire and ending with La Garconne by Victor

Margueritte. She had divorced one husband, had been divorced by a second, and kept a little red leather note-book full of names and telephone numbers. She was not a good girl.

Her haymow studio was large, with several square yards of north-light sky-light and a balcony from which were draped bright Spanish shawls. On the walls hung a dozen of her own paintings, most of them guilty of grand or petty nudity. Her gold bed stood on a platform reached by four purple steps and it was snowed under by twenty-four fat, odd-shaped cushions, each a different color, vermilion, heliotrope, claret, taupe, wisteria, tan, orchid, bisque, chrome yellow, bice, russet, carnation, cream, periwinkle, cherry, azure, citrine, jet, bister, salmon, maize, cinnabar, flame and flesh. She had invested some of her alimony in Chinese screens, Japanese prints, Russian brasses, Czecho-Slovakian china, East Indian hand-printed curtains, French futuristic furniture, a brocaded Bengal howdah to house her telephone, tall, white, wicked-eyed Copenhagen porcelain cats, Viennese statuettes, Florentine candle-sticks, carved ivory cigarette boxes from Egypt, and a profusion of thick, soft, Oriental rugs—Cabistans, Hamadan Mosouls, Namazis-Kanepas, Zaronims, Dozar-Namazis, Noborans, Ispahans, and a priceless Anatolian prayer-rug. But this last she never used; Valerie Keat was the sort of woman who never prays. Soft lights with strange shades by Bakst, Urban and Alice O'Neill filled the room with a sensuous glow. In one corner a green bronze cobra made by Javanese natives emitted subtle chypre incense from its eyes. At the end of the room stood the model stand, covered with black velvet. Beside it was a crimson baize screen behind which the models undressed. Before the fireplace lay a tiger-skin rug. Such was the place to which Valerie Keat had sought to lure Edwin Dell.

At the very moment that night when Valerie Keat in écru satin pajamas, sank down on her twenty-four cushions, lit a Persian narghil, and opened a French novel by Gyp, Edwin Dell, in his unpretentious white muslin nightshirt, was lying on his plain iron cot; was rereading a sentence from a letter he had just received from his aunt. Half aloud he read the words in Aunt Charity's precise, virginal script:

"Some people New York ennobles; others, it drags straight down to H——."

With his eyes resting on the picture of Emerson, Edwin Dell said the word "Fortitude." He repeated the word—"Fortitude, fortitude, fortitude, fortitude, fortitude," until the gentle, dreamless sleep of innocence wrapped him in its platonic embrace. Valerie Keat dreamed of wild horses, rushing water, satyrs. . . .

For his frugal dinner next evening Edwin Dell avoided the Scarlet Hyena and went instead to the Esoteric Pussy-Cat, in a damp, artistic basement on Washington Square, South. It was so full of young men and older women eating the dollar dinner and discussing intimate problems that only one seat was left and that was in the window, where Edwin, perforce, had to eat his dinner in the most distressingly public fashion, while rude passers-by stopped to stare at him, presumably under the impression that he was advertising a dyspepsia cure. One passerby stopped much longer than the rest and pressed a retroussé nose against the window-pane. Edwin Dell's heart began to knock like a poor motor taking a high hill.

Valerie Keat, for she it was, came bounding into the restaurant and greeted him like an old friend. She conjured up a chair and drew it to his table, uninvited. He looked appealingly at the other diners, seeking in all that throng one wise, kind, understanding face. He sought in vain. The faces of New Yorkers are hard, hard.

“Still damnationing the infants?” asked Valerie Keat, breezily.

“Levity on that subject is most unbecoming,” he said.

Unexpectedly her face grew sober under its film of cosmetics.

“You are right, Edwin,” said Valerie Keat. “I am too facetious. Perhaps you think I take nothing in life seriously. But I do, I assure you I do.”

“Ah, do you?” he said, hoping to convey the idea that it didn’t in the least matter to him. Then, to his surprise, he found himself adding the word “What?”

Her green eyes bored into his light blue eyes.

“Love,” she said, in a low, poignant voice.

Edwin beckoned the Japanese waiter.

“My bill, please, at once,” he directed.

“Vellygoo,” said the waiter, and brought it, discreetly folded, as all restaurant bills are, as if they were illicit billet doux. Edwin put his hand inside his coat pocket. Alarm and dismay congealed him. He had no money. Caring naught, as he did, for worldly goods, he had entirely forgotten that he had given away his allowance to the poor, and Aunt Charity had forgotten to send him a fresh supply of money. Doubtless she had sent it to the missionaries; so much of her income went there. He looked up, and there stood the waiter, suspicion in his oblique Nipponese eyes. Valerie Keat was quick to sense the situation.

“Broke?” she asked.

He nodded.

She bent over and from somewhere took a five dollar bill, which she tossed to the waiter. He came back with four dollars in change. Nonchalantly, Valerie Keat waved the money away.

“Keep the change, Ito,” she said. The waiter bowed himself back to the kitchen and fainted.

“I seldom tip more than two dollars,” the woman explained, “but Ito has a wife and nine kiddies. Don’t you just love kiddies, Ned?”

Had he misjudged the woman, Edwin Dell wondered?

“Besides,” went on Valerie Keat, and her voice broke a little, “he reminds me of my father.”

Clouds seemed to lift from Edwin Dell. Surely it was not possible to suspect the honorableness of the intentions of a woman who spoke like that about her father.

“Will you stop at my studio?” he heard Valerie Keat saying. “I want to give you a book I think you should read.”

“I only read books on ecclesiastical and theological subjects,” he said.

"That's just what this book is," she assured him.

But when they reached the door of her studio, something (was it his guardian angel?) made Edwin hesitate.

"Come on up," she said, urgently.

"It's rather late," objected Edwin.

"Nonsense! It's only nine. Come on."

Mystery was in her smile; or was it mystery?

For one second, two seconds, possibly three seconds he wavered. Then on the wall of the building opposite he seemed to see written in fiery letters the warning words of his aunt.

SOME PEOPLE NEW YORK ENNOBLES; OTHERS IT DRAGS STRAIGHT DOWN TO H——.

His soul was a battle-field of conflicting emotions. What, he asked himself, would Emerson have done in a case like this? That thought steadied him.

"No," he said. "A thousand nevers. I'll wait here."

Pain showed in the green eyes of Valerie Keat.

"Don't you trust me?" she asked.

"I trust everyone," said Edwin Dell, gently. "But then I am so very young."

"It was your youth that attracted me," she said; then added hastily, "Don't misunderstand me. I am speaking purely in a professional sense. I am an artist, you know. I want you for a model."

Edwin Dell shrank from her.

"Me?" he said. "A model?"

"Yes, why not?" Her manner was most reassuring. "I want to paint a Galahad or maybe a Parsifal. You'd be perfect. I suppose you know"—here she lowered her voice and her eyes were full of meaning—"that you are very handsome."

"You must not say such things to me," said Edwin Dell.

"Forgive me," she murmured, "but I forgot myself." Then, very businesslike, "But you will pose for me, won't you?"

Edwin Dell drew back.

"You've been kind to me, Miss Keat," he said, "but please don't ask this thing of me. Ask anything, but not that."

Her tone was hurt as she said:

"I only want to help you. I know you're hard up. I pay some of my models ten dollars an hour."

Remembering how she had spoken of her father, Edwin felt that he had been a brute, and he said:

"I'm very sorry. I don't wish to seem ungrateful. Perhaps it is foolish of me to care about . . . some things; but I do. I think you'd better not stand out here any longer; it's beginning to snow; you'll catch your death of cold."

Her eyes lingered on his.

"Would you care?" she asked.

"Yes," he said. "After all, you are a human being."

He thought there was hardness in her laugh.

"Thanks," she said. "Then you won't come?"

"I cannot," he said.

"Very well. Another time, perhaps. I'll get that book."

She brought down to him a thick, much-thumbed volume.

"Are you sure it is theological?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, indeed," she said. "It's by the Rev. Mr. Rabelais. Well, bring it back when you're finished and I'll lend you Leaves of Grass. Good night, Ned."

She held out a small hand; he found it warm.

"Remember," she said, pressing his hand, "about my offer. Ten dollars an hour. I usually paint at night."

Her eyes were like emeralds held before lighted candles.

Miss Venable met Edwin in the hall of his house. She was a lady whose face appeared to have been pickled, and she was pessimistic by nature and experience. Her faith in human nature had been erased by a life of running a rooming house; her roomers were always using her gas to terminate their lives. Briefly she informed Edwin that his rent was overdue. She would trouble him, etc. Always the soul of frankness, Edwin told her he had no money, but that he would be in funds in a day or two. He even tried to laugh a little to show her how unwarranted her fears about his solvency were. Under her freezing eyes and skeptic nose the laugh was hollow on both ends and cracked in the middle.

"I want ten dollars," she said, "not promises. I must have my money by midnight or . . ."

"Or?"

In pantomime she indicated an exit.

"But, Miss Venable, you can't mean . . ."

"What can't I mean, young man?"

Edwin blanched.

"The streets," he said.

One look at her stony countenance told him that the streets were precisely what she did mean.

He stumbled up to his room, dropped into a chair, and tried to collect his thoughts. In the rural calm of his sheltered life he had never felt the raw edge of existence before.

This was stark life. He would read a bit to compose his mind, he decided. He opened the book Valerie Keat had given him.

Some words he knew, some he did not know, some he suspected. A hot flush of shame began to mantle his brow. At Chapter Four, he threw the book from him. He dare not lift his eyes to Emerson's. Hardly knowing what he was doing, he marched downstairs, holding the book at arm's length before him. One idea was uppermost in his mind: he must take back the book to its owner.

He knocked with the gargoyle knocker, and Valerie Keat came to her studio door in a Chinese mandarin coat, thrown hurriedly about her.

"Ah," she said, "it's Infant Damnation himself! So you have come."

"Yes," he said, "I have come."

"Well, step in. Don't stand in the hall and wake the neighbors."

He found himself inside the studio; the incense, the mellow lights, the warmth, the magnificence of it all left him incapable of speech. Then he remembered why he had come and thrust the book out at her.

"I could not sleep in the same house with this thing," he said. She shrugged her shoulders and carelessly dropped the book on the tiger-skin rug. A Swiss cuckoo clock proclaimed that it was ten. Edwin shuddered; two hours to midnight . . . and the streets.

"Well, let's begin," said Valerie Keat, picking up a palette.

"Begin to what?" he asked, tremulously.

"I to paint," she answered; "you to pose."

"But, merciful Heavens, Miss Keat, you don't think I came here for . . . that?"

"Then what did you come for?" Her eyes narrowed.

"To bring back that dreadful book."

Her sardonic laugh jarred on his ear-drums.

"A man doesn't come to a woman's studio late at night to bring back a book," she said.

"I must go, really I must," declared Edwin, wondering, as he spoke, where to.

He put his hand on the door-knob; the door seemed to be locked.

"Please reconsider your decision," said Valerie Keat. She turned on her most pathetic look. "If I could paint you it would mean everything to me; everything, do you understand? You have my artistic career at your mercy. Won't you help me?"

He hesitated. To one so good at heart as he, such an appeal could not go unanswered.

"I'd like to," he began, "but Emerson says——"

"Besides," she broke in, "think of the ten dollars."

Had she read his inmost thoughts?

“What possible harm could it do?” she argued. “Can’t you see I respect you? Won’t you trust me?”

“Let me think,” begged Edwin Dell. “Give me five minutes for quiet thought.”

Valerie Keat went to the buhlwork cabinet and took out a square bottle and a glass.

“Here,” she said. “This will help you think.”

“I never drink.”

“This is only juniper-berry juice and water. It’s a soft drink,” she told him.

Her eyes were so friendly, and he remembered how she had spoken of her father, so he poured half a glass of the pellucid drink down his dry throat. An agreeable sensation of warmth and well-being filled him. He emptied the glass. How bright the lights were!

He stood up and said:

“I have arrived at a decision.”

“Yes? What?” she asked, eagerly.

“I will be your model,” said Edwin Dell.

He sank back into his chair; there was a singing in his ears, a dancing before his eyes.

“Go ahead, paint me,” he said, almost with *sang froid*.

She came close to him and fastened on him intense eyes.

“You say you’ll be my model?” she asked.

“Yes.”

“You know what that means.”

“I think so.”

“You’ll pose for the head?”

He nodded.

“You’ll pose for the shoulders?”

He gulped, but nodded. He felt his breath coming in short, cold pants; his brow was icy damp. He heard her low voice say:

“You’ll pose for . . . the figure?”

The room swam before his eyes; his cheeks were conflagrations; he drew in his breath with an effort, and gulped again.

“I’ll do . . . whatever models do,” he said.

Her eyes ran over him like flies over a cake; beneath them he trembled. How his heart throbbed! In a nightmare, he heard her say.

“Good! Go behind that screen.”

To Edwin Dell the lights were blurred now; the singing in his ears was frenzied. His pallid face was set. Walking like an automaton, he went behind the crimson screen. Slowly his quivering fingers fumbled with his polka-dot tie; his shoe lace seared his finger-tips. . . .

“Come, get a wiggle on. Don’t take all night. I’m waiting,” he heard the woman say. Her voice sounded, somehow, tense.

His teeth bit his bloodless lips; his nails dug into the palms of his hands.

“Fortitude,” whispered Edwin Dell.

Then he stepped out on the tiger-skin rug.

Came morn to the bedroom of Edwin Dell. Dully he opened his eyes. Had it all been a terrible dream?

He went to the window and scooped up a handful of snow and held it to his fevered brow. No, it had not all been a terrible dream. He dressed with leaden fingers. A letter had been slipped under his door and he opened it without interest. What could letters mean to him . . . now?

It was a note from his aunt. She told him to come home for Christmas, and enclosed a ticket to Crosby Corners, and a check. The check fluttered to the floor; the crooked smile of irony twisted his lips.

“Too late,” he said “too late.”

More like a machine than a man, he began to pack his straw suit-case. The last thing he did before leaving the room was to take down the picture of Emerson; Edwin did not look into those wise, kind, understanding eyes; he tore the picture into small pieces. Then, with bowed head, a wan, worn caricature of what had been Edwin Dell went slowly out into the snow-garbed metropolis.

It was Christmas eve in Crosby Corners. Thick snow was falling heavily and the wind whistled like a drunken demon; it was cold, bitter cold. Edwin Dell rapped with mittened hand on the door of the cozy farm-house and Aunt Charity opened it.

“Well, aunt,” he said, “I’ve come back.”

“For pity’s sake, close the door,” she said. “Hang up your coat and put your goloshes in the golosh-box.”

He did so. He sat there, silent, ashen.

“Why, Edwin Dell, what ails you? What is the matter?” she asked, sharply.

“Oh, nothing, nothing,” he faltered.

“Then why do you sigh?”

“It was the wind,” he replied. “Only the wind in the pines.”

“Fiddlesticks! I know a sigh. Stop moping, Edwin. This is Christmas eve.”

“It’s Christmas eve for some folks,” he said; “but just night for me.”

“What do you mean?” his aunt asked, fixing on him needle-pointed eyes.

He poked the glowing logs and made no reply.

“Edwin!”

“Yes, aunt.”

“Has anything happened?”

He poked the logs.

“Speak to me, Edwin. Tell me all.”

He poked the logs.

Aunt Charity put down her knitting, strode to him, placed her hands on his shoulders and bent a face lined with foreboding toward his.

“Edwin Dell,” she questioned, hoarsely; “what has New York done to you?”

He tried to avoid her alarmed eyes.

“Edwin Dell,” she cried, “I conjure you to answer me one question.”

“What?” His parched lips framed the word.

“Tell me, Edwin Dell, are you a . . . good boy?”

He made no answer.

“It can’t be,” cried his aunt. “Look me in the eye and I’ll know it isn’t so. Can you look me in the eye, Edwin Dell?”

He couldn’t.

She pushed him fiercely from her.

“My God,” she screamed. “Not that, not that?”

“Yes, Aunt Charity,” he groaned, “that.”

“Heaven give me strength in this dark hour,” she prayed. “That this thing should happen—and you a Tillotson. Tell me everything, I command you.”

“I was young,” was all he could say. “Nobody told me; I didn’t know.”

“Faugh,” she sneered, towering above him, her face working with wrath. “You might have guessed.”

“But she spoke so respectfully of her father,” sobbed Edwin Dell. “It was . . . that . . . or . . . the streets.”

His aunt scorched him with her outraged eyes.

“Which would Emerson have chosen?” she demanded.

“I was drugged,” he wept.

“Faugh! A likely story! Edwin Dell, put on your goloshes and leave this house.”

He cowered in his chair.

“Tonight? In this blizzard?” he quavered. “Where could I go?”

“Go to her,” said his aunt, and held the front door open.

Edwin Dell reached the studio of Valerie Keat late Christmas night. Inside he could hear the sounds of revelry—unrestrained laughter, bursts of song, a jazzing

phonograph, the bursting of toy balloons, the popping of corks. Valerie Keat was holding high carnival. His heart was no bigger than a pea as he knocked. The door opened and a wave of hot air laden with confetti, tobacco smoke, incense and the fumes of alcohol rushed out and engulfed him. Inside he saw a mad whirlpool of gala-dressed dancers. Valerie Keat herself had opened the door; she stood there in an artful evening gown of shimmering silver, with no back whatsoever.

“Well?” she snapped.

“It is I. Edwin. Ned,” he said.

“So I see. What of it.” Her voice was icy.

“Where shall I put my goloshes?” he asked.

She pointed down the stairs behind him.

“That way. One after another,” she said.

He staggered as if from a blow.

“But you don’t mean . . . you can’t mean . . . Auntie has turned me out.”

“So do I. That makes it unanimous,” she said, puffing mockingly her cigaret.

“But it was because of . . . you,” he stammered. “Have you forgotten . . . so soon.”

“I’ve a poor memory,” she said unconcernedly.

“But you don’t mean . . . you can’t mean . . . Oh, think of your promises. . . .”

“Bah,” said Valerie Keat.

“Have you no compassion?”

“Not a bit.”

“No honor?”

“Nope.”

“Valerie Keat, think of your father!”

She flushed beneath her painted mask.

“You keep his name out of this,” she flashed. “Run along now to your damnation infants.”

“You say this to me?” His voice was wild. “To me? After my sacrifice?”

“Your sacrifice?” she jeered. “Do you tell all the others that?”

He reeled.

“The others?” he exclaimed aghast, “it’s a lie, a shameful lie, I tell you.”

“They all pull that one,” she gibed.

“All? All? Then there have been others, Valerie Keat? Then I was naught but the plaything of an idle hour?”

“Naught,” she replied.

“And you would fling me aside like a discarded glove?”

“That is just what I would fling you aside like,” she answered, unmoved.

"I see it all now," said Edwin Dell, his voice the voice of one utterly crushed. "The veil lifts from my eyes. I'm just a man girls forget. You have drained the cup of pleasure, but it is I . . . I . . . who must pay . . . and pay."

"Fair enough," said Valerie Keat, in a voice like a file rasping steel. "Pay away. Good night."

"Then you would have me go . . . out of your life . . . forever?"

"Or longer," she said. "Shut the outside door after you."

He did. The wind screamed down the alley; whirling snow dervishes danced round him. Ten thousand bright-lit windows bespoke the Christmas cheer within. Some people were happy. But on the once boyish face of Edwin Dell tiny hard pellets of ice formed; they were frozen tears. On he wandered through the night, he knew not whither. In time he reached a large building, and tottered in; it was a railroad station, a place where one bought tickets to go away. To go away? His brain caught at the idea.

He would go away. He went to the ticket window, and put down all his money, twenty-four dollars and seventy cents.

"Give me a ticket," he said.

"Where to?" the ticket seller asked.

"I don't care," said Edwin Dell. "Anywhere. I want to go away . . . away from it all . . . away from this City of Broken Vows."

The man sold him a ticket to Granville, Ohio.

"Oh, Pa! Oh, Pa!"

"What is it, Mary?"

"There's a man lying in our wood-shed."

"Fetch him in, daughter, fetch him in," said Peter Wood, known in Granville and for miles around as "Big-hearted Peter."

Presently Mary Wood returned carrying the unconscious form of Edwin Dell in her big strong arms. She was a Greek goddess of a girl, with the brow of Diana, the nose of Minerva, the chin of Venus and the shoulders of Juno. Tenderly she laid Edwin down beside the kitchen stove.

"He'll be all right when he thaws out," said the farmer.

"What lovely eyelashes he has," said Mary Wood.

She was bending over him with a steaming cup of coffee when Edwin Dell slowly opened his eyes.

"Am I in Heaven?" he asked, faintly.

"Gracious sakes, no," said Mary in her kind, contralto voice. "What makes you think so?"

"Because you look like an angel," he answered.

Love was born in that minute.

Came spring to the world, and to Granville, and it brought back the color to the cheeks of Edwin Dell. He was strong enough to help Mary with the spring cleaning. They talked.

One evening, as the sun was sinking to rest in a cloudy bed of strawberries and oranges, Mary said:

“Edwin, let’s take a little walk.”

They walked together through the spring-scented eventide; on the peach trees blossoms were burgeoning; the vesper songs of mating birds could be heard.

“Let’s sit down with our backs to the silo,” suggested Mary. They sat. She turned her great, gray, honest eyes to him.

“Edwin,” she said, “folks are beginning to talk about us.”

“About us, Mary? What are they saying?”

She took a sudden interest in the toe of her shoe.

“Can’t you guess?” she said, softly.

“Yes,” he said, “I can guess. But, oh, Mary, I’m afraid that there are some dreams that can never come true.”

“I don’t understand, Edwin.”

“Mary, I must go away from here.”

“From Granville? From . . . from me?”

He nodded. She searched his face with her ardent eyes.

“Then,” she said, “you do not . . . care?”

“Do you, Mary?”

She laid her hand on his.

“Tremendously,” she said.

“Ah, if it could only be,” he sighed.

“Would June 14th at half past two be convenient for you?” asked Mary. “They’ll have finished painting the church by then.”

He turned grief-struck eyes to hers.

“Mary,” he said, “it cannot be.”

“Oh, Edwin, what do you mean?”

He spoke as if each word he muttered were a stab.

“There’s a reason,” he said, “why we can never be more than”—emotion nearly strangled him, but he finished—“friends.”

“Reason? What reason? Speak, Edwin, speak.”

“Simply this, Mary,” he answered, gravely. “I am unworthy of your love.”

“You unworthy, Edwin? No, no. You jest.”

“I never jest,” said Edwin Dell.

“Edwin,” she cried, “I cannot endure this suspense. Tell me, is there another?”

He hung his head.

“There was,” he said, “another.”

“You don’t mean . . . ?” she said in an anguished whisper.

“Yes,” he said, “I mean . . .”

Her grip on his hand tightened.

“Poor boy,” said Mary Wood, “poor boy.”

“I was young,” he said, brokenly, “and I was alone . . . alone in New York. Ah, New York, New York!”

He picked up his hat.

“Well,” he said, “I guess I’d better be running along now.”

“Stop!” cried Mary Wood.

He did not know how it happened but they found themselves in each other’s arms.

“The past,” he heard Mary Wood saying, close to his ear, “is past. The future lies ahead. I care not what you have been, Edwin Dell. It is what you are that I love.”

“Oh, Mary,” was all he could say. “Oh, Mary.”

“True love,” she whispered, “conquers all.”

And so, together, hand in hand, like little children, Edwin Dell and Mary Wood set out upon the shining road toward the bright promise of a new world.

THE UNFAMILIAR

WHO he was and what he was and where he came from no one knew. How he came to be in Crosby Corners was a mystery, and at harvesttime Connecticut farmers are too busy to peer into mysteries. He could not speak much English beyond "Yes," "No," "Hungry," and "Go Hell." He could gesture, however. He could gesture with his hands, his elbows, his eyes, his feet. He appeared to be trying by pantomime to convey the idea that he had been forcibly seized in his native land, which was remote, had been pressed into service aboard a ship, had been very ill at sea, had escaped at a port, had fled on a train, and had dropped, or been dropped, at Crosby Corners. The farmers, however, had no time to interpret pantomime. Farm-hands were scarce, and if a man had two hands and at least one good eye, they did not delve into his past or his pedigree; they put him to work. It was thus that the small, scared man in the velvet trousers entered the employ of Ben Crosby, richest farmer in that region.

"I found the little rascal," Ben Crosby told his wife, "squealing like a pig in a hornet's nest, and frightened almost out of his wits, with Constable Pettit marching him along by the ear. 'Constable,' I says, 'what is that and where did you get it?' He says to me: 'I dunno what it is, Ben, but it looks foreign. I found it down by the railroad tracks trying to eat a raw potato. When I asked it what its name was, it said: "See."' I says to the constable, 'He may be a Gipsy or he may be a Hindu, and he looks as if he suspected you of being a cannibal. But,' I says, 'he seems wiry and he didn't get that lovely tobacco-brown finish of his at a pink tea or from working in an office. Now I need hands worse than ducks need ponds. So turn him over to me 'stead of sticking him in the calaboose, and I'll give him a job.' Pettit didn't want to be bothered with him, so he turned him over to me, and there he is out at the pump washing the dirtiest pair of hands I ever did see, and now and then rubbing his belly to show how hungry he is. I'll send him to the back door, Hannah; you give him a lining of ham and eggs and pie, and then send him down to me. I'll be in the twenty-acre lot."

Presently there came a knock on the back door of the Crosby house. It was not at all a robust knock; it was a tap as faint and timid as a butterfly's kick. Mrs. Crosby opened the door, and saw a small man standing there; his face was a rich brown, his eyes were black and apprehensive; he appeared to be ready to flee if the occasion demanded it. When he saw Mrs. Crosby, however, he bowed deeply. Such a bow had never before been executed in Crosby Corners except in the moving pictures. It was a sweeping, courtly thing, that bow, in which the small man swept off his wide felt hat and dusted the steps with it. Then he smiled; it was a humble, ingratiating smile. He looked toward the stove, where the sizzling ham was sending its aroma heavenward, and sighed. Mrs. Crosby pointed to a chair at the kitchen table, and he, with another bow, took it, and presently he was eating hungrily and freely. Mrs. Crosby now and then lifted an eye from her canning to regard the exotic stranger; she had a doubt or two at first whether it was quite safe for her to stay there. You never can tell what the foreigners may do, even if you are past forty and the mother of a grown daughter. She glanced into the dining-room, where, above the mantel, hung Grandpa Crosby's Civil-War sword, a long, heavy

weapon, and its presence reassured her. As she studied the man, she decided that any fear of him was quite groundless; if anything, he was afraid of her. His hair, she observed, was blue-black and long, but arranged in a way that suggested that he was a bit of a dandy. The stranger's trousers surprised her greatly; they were of black velvet, really painfully tight, except at the bottom of each leg, where they flared out like bells. He had no belt, but instead a scarlet sash. His shirt, when new and clean, must have been a remarkable garment; it had been plaid silk, but it was now neither new nor clean. His boots were of patent leather and excessively pointed.

When he had eaten a very great deal he arose, bowed, smiled beatifically, and made gestures of gratitude. Mrs. Crosby pointed in the direction of the twenty-acre lot, and he understood. She saw him picking his way down the path; he was the first man she had ever seen whose gait at one and the same time included a mince and a swagger.

When Ben Crosby came in to his late supper that evening he announced:

"I was wrong about that new little fellow. He doesn't seem to have done farm work. He's willing enough, but he handles a hay-fork as dainty as if it was a toothpick. And, say, he certainly is the most scary human being I ever set eyes on. You should have seen him when the tractor came into the field with the mowing-machine. He gave a yelp and jumped on the stone wall, and if there'd been a tree handy, I guess he'd have climbed it. He looked as if he was afraid the machine would eat him. Pete High, who was driving it, said, 'I guess it ain't only his skin that's yellow.' I hope Pete isn't right. I hate a coward."

"Don't you let Pete High pick on him," admonished Mrs. Crosby. "Perhaps the man never saw a mowing-machine before. I remember how scared I was when I saw the first automobile come roaring and snorting along the road. And so were you, Ben Crosby."

"Well, I didn't let on I was," replied her husband, harpooning a potato.

"No, you old hypocrite, maybe you didn't; but I saw you looking around for a tree."

He laughed, and was on the point of sending a potato to its final resting-place, when they both heard a cry—a high, terrified cry that came through the dusk. He started up.

"That's not Janey?" he asked.

"No; she's still in town taking her music lesson."

"Who is it, then?" he asked quickly.

They heard the patter of running feet on the path outside; they heard the sound of feet landing after a leap to the porch; they heard someone banging frantically on the front door. Ben Crosby called out:

"What's the matter?"

A flood of words in a strange tongue answered him.

"It's Velvet Pants," he exclaimed, and flung open the door. The small man, breathless, tumbled in.

"What in the name of thunderation?" demanded Ben Crosby. The small man pointed through the open door with quivering fingers.

"I don't see anything out there but the evening," said Ben Crosby.

“Ice!” cried the man, very agitated. “Ice!”

“What do you want ice for?” asked Ben Crosby.

The man made eloquent gestures; first he pointed at his own face, then he pointed outside; his index finger stabbed at the gloom once, twice, a dozen quick times.

“Ice! ice! ice! ice! ice! ice!” he said.

“Why, Ben, he means ‘eyes,’ ” exclaimed Mrs. Crosby.

“Eyes? What eyes, Hannah? I don’t see any eyes. There’s nothing out there but lightning-bugs.”

One of the circling fireflies flew quite near the open door. The small man saw it coming, and made an earnest, but only partly successful, attempt to climb into the grandfather’s clock that stood in the corner of the hall.

Ben Crosby threw back his head and laughed.

“Why, dog my cats! if the little cuss ain’t afraid of lightning-bugs!” he said. “Hey, Velvet Pants, look here.”

He plucked the man out of the clock with one big hand, and with the other captured the firefly, and held it near the stranger’s wide eyes.

“Look,” said Ben Crosby in the loud tone that is supposed to make the American language intelligible to those who do not understand it when it is spoken in an ordinary tone of voice. “Bug! Bug! No hurt! Lightning-bug. LIGHTNING-BUG!”

The small man pulled away from the insect.

“Not know lightning-boogs,” he said.

Ben released his hold on the small man, and pointed up-stairs; then Ben gave a highly realistic imitation of a snore. The man comprehended, and his velvet-clad legs twinkled up-stairs toward his bedroom. Ben Crosby returned to his supper, shaking his head.

“It beats me,” he remarked to his wife. “He’s afraid of mowing-machines and he’s afraid of lightning-bugs. I wonder if he’s afraid of the dark. I need farm-hands, but may I be fried like a smelt if I’ll tell ’em bedtime stories or sing ’em to sleep. What’s the world coming to, anyhow? Can you imagine a real, honest-to-goodness farm-hand like Pete High being afraid of lightning-bugs?”

“Boneheads are seldom afraid of anything,” remarked Mrs. Crosby, pouring buttermilk.

They heard the front door open.

“There’s Janey,” said Mrs. Crosby. “Hello, dear. Come right to the table. I’ve made ice-cream—coffee, the kind you like.”

Janey, daughter of the household, came in, bearing her guitar. She kissed both her parents. Janey was nearly eighteen, a pretty, elf-like girl. All the masculine hearts in Crosby Corners beat a little faster when she went down the village street; her blue eyes had been the cause of many black eyes. Her father told her of the new man, of his extraordinary velvet trousers, and of his still more extraordinary fears.

“Poor little fellow!” she said.

As the harvest days hurried along, Velvet Pants atoned somewhat for his lack of expertness as a farmer by his unfailing good nature. He even learned to speak a little English of a certain hesitant species, but he had little opportunity to talk with his fellow-workers. Mostly they ignored him, or, if they addressed him at all, did so loftily and with contempt; a man who paled at the sight of mowing-machines and lightning-bugs was not of their stout-hearted kind.

The incident at the swimming-hole added little to Velvet Pants' reputation for bravery. The swimming-hole was Sandy Bottom, where all the workers, hot from their day in the fields, went for a cool plunge after work. They noticed that Velvet Pants never went with them.

"How does he keep so neat and clean?" they asked. It was Pete High who solved this mystery.

"Yesterday morning," said Pete, "I woke up earlier than usual, and what do you suppose I see? Well, I hear a tap, tap, tap, like somebody was stealing down-stairs on his tiptoes. I peek out o' the door, and it's Velvet Pants. Just for fun, I follow him. He goes down to the creek, not to Sandy Bottom, but a couple of rods down-stream, where the water ain't more than ankle-deep. He strips, and takes a stick about the size of a cane and goes like this, 'Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah,' and pokes at the bushes each time he says 'ah.' Then he gives one big loud 'Ahhhhhhh,' and lunges with his stick at the bushes; then he bows low, like he was an actor in a show. He takes a bath, then, dabbing a little water on himself like a cat does; but he doesn't go in above his ankles. I guess he's afraid of the water."

"Mebbe he ain't much on swimming," said one of the other hands, "but he sure can twang a mean guitar. He's giving Janey Crosby lessons."

Pete High scowled.

"He is, is he? First I heard about it. Well, the first thing he knows he won't know nothing. I'm not going to have any wop——"

"She likes him," teased the other man. "Says he's got such lovely manners; just like what you ain't, Pete."

"She don't know how yella he is," Pete High growled, "but she will."

On Saturday afternoons most of Crosby Corners, men, women, and children, comes to Sandy Bottom, bringing bathing-suits. It is not a very big pool; at its deepest part it is not much over six feet deep.

How it happened that the small man with the velvet trousers should be passing Sandy Bottom that Saturday noon at the precise moment when freckled Johnny Nelson was floundering in the water and calling loudly for help does not matter. Why Johnny Nelson should be drowning at all is something of a puzzle, for he was the best swimmer in the county. It also happened that just as Johnny was going down for the ninth or tenth time and was calling piteously for Velvet Pants to dive in and save him, Janey Crosby and a party of girl friends came down to the pool.

They saw Velvet Pants, his dark face ivory colored, trying to reach Johnny with a young tree wrenched from the bank. The small man was a picture of frantic helplessness.

“Save me, Velvet Pants! Save me!” bawled Johnny, submerging, and coming up for the fourteenth time.

“Not know how,” screamed Velvet Pants in agony. “Not know how.”

Janey Crosby and her companions grew mildly hysterical; Johnny Nelson went down for the seventeenth and eighteenth time, respectively. Velvet Pants, finding that he could not reach Johnny with the tree, had fallen on his knees, and with clasped hands was praying aloud in his own tongue. Then, it also happened, that Pete High came racing through the bushes.

“I’ll save you, Johnny,” he cried dramatically. Overalls and all, he plunged in and brought the dripping Johnny to the bank. The prayers of Velvet Pants became prayers of thanksgiving. Pete High stood regarding him with disgust.

“Oh, Velvet Pants,” said Janey Crosby, “why didn’t you jump in and save him?”

Slowly, sadly the small man shrugged his shoulders.

“Not know water,” he said; “not know sweem.”

He did not seem nearly so abashed as he said this as he might very well have been in the circumstances; he said it very much as if he were stating a fact, a lamentable fact the truth of which he regretted, but a fact, nevertheless. He looked dismayed and surprised when Janey Crosby and the others turned away from him.

After that Velvet Pants was an outcast. The men spoke to him only when it was necessary to do so, and then briefly and even harshly. He did not seem to understand; he would try to tell them things, making many gestures; but he had not the words to make himself clear, nor had they the inclination to listen to him.

In the evening, when the men were sitting about the porch, competing for Janey Crosby’s smiles, there was no place for him there. He had tried to join in their talk and play, to be friendly, to be one of them; they froze him out, and still he did not seem to understand that they did it because he was so flagrant a coward. At last he seemed to accept his status as a pariah without really understanding it, for he would take his guitar, which he had constructed from the ruin of an old one, and go alone into the woods. It was said that he sang there to himself, sad songs in his native tongue.

Janey Crosby’s birthday came toward the end of the harvest season, and it was the most important social event of the year in Crosby Corners. All the village was invited, and all the village came, the girls in their fresh dimities, the men, soaped and collared and uncomfortable, but happy. They brought presents, as if they were bringing tribute to a queen, and Janey, as graciously as a reigning sovereign, took them all, and smiled.

The party was held in the masonic hall, and it was an affair of considerable tone, with dancing, two helpings of ice-cream all around, and a three-piece orchestra.

The dancing was half over. Janey and Pete High, her current partner, had gone out on the porch; a harvest moon silvered the village streets.

“Look,” exclaimed Pete, “what’s that sitting down there on the horseblock?”

“It’s a man,” said Janey, her eyes following his pointing finger.

“But who can it be?”

The girl looked again, and made out a small, bent figure sitting there, chin on hands, eyes turned toward the lighted hall, ears toward the music and the buzz and laughter of the guests.

“Why, it’s Velvet Pants!” she exclaimed.

“Shall I chase him away?” asked Pete, swelling out his chest and looking belligerent. Janey laid a restraining hand on his arm.

“No; don’t chase him, Pete. Let him stay. The poor fellow’s probably lonesome. Everybody is here but him.”

“He deserves to be lonesome,” said Pete; “he’s yella.”

“Would you jump in to save a person from drowning if you didn’t know how to swim?” asked Janey.

“Of course I would,” replied Pete, promptly. “Now, see here, Janey Crosby, don’t you go sticking up for that wop. He’s not fit to associate with white men.”

She sat gazing at the small, miserable figure; then she made a sudden resolution.

“I’m going to ask him to come up to the party,” she said.

“No, you ain’t.”

“Whose birthday is this, Pete High? I guess it won’t do any harm to give him a dish of ice-cream. You don’t have to associate with him. Run down and tell him I’d like to see him, Pete.”

Pete mumbled protests, but he went. Very diffidently, as if he momentarily expected to be kicked, Velvet Pants approached the porch. Janey Crosby saw that he was wearing a new, clean shirt, that his black locks had been parted and buttered, and that his shoes had been rigorously shined. Over his shoulder was slung his wreck of a guitar.

“This is my birthday, Velvet Pants,” said the girl. “I want you to help me celebrate it. Pete, will you get another plate of ice-cream?”

The small man seemed overcome; he bowed twice very low. Then he spoke. He spoke mechanically, as if the words had been often rehearsed.

“I haf no gif” for you on your birthday, Mees Crosby, but I haf learn a song American to seeng for you. I hear heem on funnygraf. I hope you like.”

He said it humbly, but not without a certain pride that attends the accomplishment of a difficult feat.

Janey laughed delightedly.

“So you learned an American song just for my birthday? Well, now, wasn’t that a sweet idea! Wait! I’ll call the others; no, better still, you come in the hall and sing, so they can all hear.”

Velvet Pants looked horrified at this suggestion.

“But, no,” he protested. “I do not seeng good.”

“That’s all right. They won’t know the difference,” said Janey, laughingly. “Come along.”

She pushed him through the open doorway. The guests looked up; what would Janey Crosby do next?

“Folks,” announced Janey Crosby, “Mr. Velvet Pants is going to sing for us. He learned a little American song just for my birthday. Wasn’t that nice of him?”

It was evident from the face of Pete High, who stood in the doorway, that he did not think it was particularly nice.

The small brown man glanced uncertainly about the hall; then he began to play chords on his guitar. Some of the girls giggled. In a round, clear tenor Velvet Pants began to sing:

“Kees me hagain, kees me hagain,
Kees me hagain, and hagain.”

His memory seemed to go back on him at this point; he groped for a moment for the words, then plunged on:

“Kees me hagain, kees me hagain,
Kees me hagain, and hagain.
Kees me hagain, kees me hagain,
Kees me hagain and hagain,
Kees me hagain, kees me hagain,
Kees me, kees me, hagain!”

When he had finished, Velvet Pants bowed deeply first to Janey, then to the rest. There was a slight, dubious ripple of applause that was checked suddenly. Pete High had strode up to Velvet Pants and was facing him.

“Just a minute there,” said Pete. “You and me has got a little bone to pick. Wadda you mean by singing a song like that to Miss Crosby?”

The small man looked puzzled.

“It ees only song American I know,” he said.

“Yeah? Well, I’m goin’ to teach you to sing it out of the other side of your mouth. Come outside with me.”

“Pete High,” broke in Janey, “don’t you go fighting with him. He didn’t mean any harm; he probably doesn’t know what the words mean.”

“I told him never to say anything to you whether he understood it or not,” stormed Pete. “Come on, you.”

Velvet Pants made an attempt to steal away, but Pete blocked his path.

“You’re going out on the lawn with me,” said Pete.

“And seeng?” asked the little man, who seemed somewhat dazed by what was happening.

“No; fight.”

“Fight?”

“Yes; fight.”

“But I do not hate you, Meester Pete.”

“Well, I hate you. Come on.”

“But how we fight?” inquired the small man; he was pale beneath his tan, and trembling. For answer Pete thrust a clenched fist under the man’s nose. The man drew his head back and shivered.

“No!” he said, shaking his head; “no! no! no! no! no!”

“You won’t fight?”

“No.”

“You’re a coward,” declared Pete.

Velvet Pants shrugged his shoulders.

“Not know hand-fights,” he said.

Pete slapped him across the face with his open hand.

“Now will you fight?”

“Not know hand-fights,” said the man, drawing away. Pete, contempt on his face, gave him a push into the night. They heard the sound of feet on the path; Velvet Pants was running.

“Not know hand-fights,” Pete mimicked. “Did you ever in your life see such a rat?”

Next day excitement swept Crosby Corners. Defender Monarch had gone crazy, and when that news spread, they forgot all about the conduct of Velvet Pants on the night before. As for him, he went about his work with a puzzled and hurt look on his brown face; he seemed still uncertain why the others did not respond to his smiles and attempts at friendliness.

Defender Monarch was the pride, and the terror, of the county. His owner, Ben Crosby, had raised him from a gawky calf, wobbly on his legs, into a massive ton-and-a-half bull, with a chest like a haystack, a voice of thunder, and the temper of a gouty demon. Ben Crosby had not dehorned him, because in cattle shows a good pair of horns is considered a point of merit in judging bulls, and the giant bull had won many blue ribbons. On this day Ben Crosby wished most earnestly that he had foregone the blue ribbons and taken off those horns. A savage bull without horns is bad enough, but a savage bull with a pair of sharp, wicked horns is just about the most dangerous animal that walks.

Perhaps on that morning Defender Monarch had realized that he had reached the end of his usefulness, and that before very long he was doomed to end a proud career, ingloriously, as steak, roast, and stew. He stood in his pasture, roaring a challenge to the world that he would die fighting. By blind luck Ben Crosby was able to trick him into entering the big pen, but in the process Defender Monarch had given a sample of his viciousness by ripping Johnny Nelson’s arm from elbow to shoulder and had failed by a hair’s-breadth in a sincere attempt to crush the life out of Ben Crosby himself. Once confined in the pen, Defender Monarch’s rage knew no bounds. He hurled himself against the thick board sides so furiously that they creaked and trembled, and the crowd that had gathered to see him darted back to places of greater safety.

Luckily, the pen was a stoutly built affair; it was not really a pen at all, but a small corral, perhaps fifty feet square. About it moved Defender Monarch, his small eyes

blazing, alert. And, perched on boxes and ladders, Crosby Corners, fascinated as all men are by dangerous things, watched the mad king of the herd.

"Isn't he just too terrible," said Janey Crosby to Pete High.

"Oh, I don't know," answered Pete, airily. "I've worked round him often."

"But not since he went crazy, Pete."

"No," admitted Pete, "mebbe not. I'm used to cattle of all kinds, but I never saw one that acted this way. Just plain bulls I'm none too fond of fooling with, but a crazy one! Excuse me."

"See how he's looking right at us with those mean little eyes of his," said Janey. "It's just as if he were saying, 'If I only had you down here for a minute!' I'm scared, Pete."

"I'm here," said Pete High, reassuringly. "Look, Janey, he's getting another fit; he's going to try to buck that opposite wall."

Janey Crosby, to get a better view, climbed to the very top of the stepladder that leaned against the wall of the corral. There was a sharp crack as the top rail gave way, then horrified cries. She had fallen into the pen, and lay unconscious almost at the feet of the mad bull.

The women screamed, the men ran about aimlessly, wildly, shouting orders at one another.

"Help! Janey's fallen into the pen!"

"Oh, he'll kill her! he'll kill her! he'll kill her!"

"Get pitchforks!"

"Get a gun!"

"No use; we've only got bird-shot. It would just make him madder to hit him with that."

"Someone will have to jump in."

"Where are you running to, Pete High?"

"To get a rope or something."

"You'll be too late."

Defender Monarch looked down at the girl, and his eyes were evil. Then he looked at the ring of white faces that lined the top of the corral. He seemed to understand the situation; he seemed to know that he had plenty of time, and he gloated. He turned away from Janey, trotted to the farther end of the corral, wheeled about, and surveyed the distance between himself and the girl's body; then he lowered his head with his gleaming prongs, and gathered his body for a charge.

The aghast onlookers became aware that something was in the corral besides the girl and the bull. A figure had come through the gate of the inclosure, silently and swiftly. It was a small man in velvet trousers and he was strolling toward Defender Monarch as casually and placidly as if the bull were a rose-bush. On the brown face of Velvet Pants there was not the slightest trace of fear; indeed, he was smiling, a slight, amused smile. Otherwise he was as matter of fact as if he were about to sit down to his

breakfast. A brown-paper cigaret hung limp from one corner of his lips; with the mincing strut they had noticed and made fun of, he walked slowly quite near to Defender Monarch. The animal, distracted, stood blinking at the little man. Within a few feet of the bull, Velvet Pants halted; with magnificent nonchalance he blew a cloud of smoke into the bull's face, and then they saw a flash of something red. It was Ben Crosby's red flannel undershirt that a few moments before had been drying on the line. The small man had flicked it across the bull's face. Defender Monarch forgot for the moment his plan for smashing Janey Crosby; he saw the red, and he plunged toward it. The women turned their heads away, the men clenched their teeth. They saw Velvet Pants slip aside with the quickness of a jungle cat, and the bull, unable to check himself, jolt his head against one of the sides of the corral. Velvet Pants turned round, smiled pleasantly, and bowed very low to the spectators. They saw that he had in his right hand something long and bright that caught the rays of the sun; they realized that it was Grandpa Crosby's old Civil-War sword that had hung in the dining-room. He was holding it as lightly and as easily as if it were a butter-knife.

Defender Monarch, recovering from his fruitless charge against the wall, spun about; once more the red shirt was deftly flapped before his bright, mad eyes. Once more, with a roar of wrath, he launched his bulk straight at Velvet Pants. Then something happened to Defender Monarch. It happened with such speed that all the onlookers saw was a flash; then they saw the huge frame of the bull totter, crumple, and sink down. Sticking from the left shoulder of the bull they saw the hilt of Grandpa Crosby's sword; they saw the hilt only, for Velvet Pants had driven the point into Defender Monarch's heart.

The people of Crosby Corners allege that Ben Crosby kissed the little tanned man on both cheeks, but this he denies; he admits, however, that he hugged him and patted him, and said many husky words of gratitude and admiration to Velvet Pants, who seemed abashed and quite unable to understand why everyone was making so much of a fuss about him.

"And I called you a coward," Ben Crosby kept saying. "I called you a coward, and you went in and faced a mad bull without batting an eyelash."

"It was nuzzing," murmured the small brown man.

"Nothing to face a mad bull?"

Velvet Pants shrugged his shoulders.

"But I am a toreador," he said. "In my country, Andalusia, I keel one, two, t'ree bull every Sunday for fun. Why should I fear bulls? I know bulls."

A HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY

I MET him again in this way: The revolving door of the excessively fashionable St. Erdman Hotel was spinning around furiously—and yet no one came forth. My eye spied this phenomenon; and, ever curious, I paused on Fifth Avenue and watched. Round and round sped the door like the Ferris Wheel in a squirrel cage propelled by an athletic squirrel gone mad. So fast did the door revolve that with difficulty I made out a small figure in a brown suit in one of the compartments. It was he who was making a whirligig of the door. Then I saw another figure, very bulky and cholericly red in the face and wearing the purple-and-gold livery of the hotel, stop the buzzing door and with outraged thumb and forefinger pick up the little man in brown by the collar, pop him out of the door like a tiddleywink and send him bouncing across the sidewalk in my direction. The little man picked himself up, apparently not in the least angry, cast not a single malediction at the broad purple back of the doorman, but began to brush himself off thoughtfully. Then I saw that he was Hosmer Appleby, with whom I had had a casual acquaintance in college some five years before.

“Why hello, Appleby,” I greeted him. “Are you hurt?”

“I shall not have one,” was his reply. “I do not like them.”

I stared at Appleby, uncertain whether he was dazed by his recent experience, or was perhaps psychopathic, or had been drinking.

“You do not like what?” I queried.

“Revolving doors,” he said. “I’ve tried them in seven buildings now, and I don’t like any of them. No; I shan’t have one. That’s settled.”

He addressed me as if I were trying to compel him to have a revolving door, willy-nilly.

“There, there,” I said soothingly, convinced now that his mind was affected. “You need not have revolving doors if you don’t want them.”

“But what kind shall I have?” he demanded, looking at me anxiously. “What kind would you have?”

“Have? For what?”

“Why, for your house, of course,” he said.

“But I have no house, Appleby.”

I fancied that he looked at me pityingly.

“Neither have I,” he said; “but I am going to have one.”

“Are you? Where?”

“In the country.”

“Whereabouts in the country?”

“I don’t know yet.” Then, in a tone that was rapt, if not actually reverent, he said, “Yes, some day I’ll have a house in the country.”

“When?”

“I wish I knew,” Appleby said. “As soon as I save enough to build the house and to provide a small income for myself.”

“You’re married then?”

“Oh, no; no, indeed. Nothing like that,” he assured me hastily.

“Then what the dickens do you want with a house in the country?”

“I’ll tell you,” said Appleby. “Where can we go and talk?”

I suggested a certain coffee house, hidden away in a side street.

“The coffee,” I said, as we started there, “is the best Java in New York. It is raised for the exclusive use of a royal family in Europe; but now and then the royal steward sells a bag to this coffee house. It has to be smuggled in, bean by bean; the man said so.”

“Smuggled in, bean by bean,” repeated Appleby. “Do you think I could get a bag?”

“A whole bag? What for?”

“For my house, of course,” he said. “I could serve it at the housewarming.”

“Well,” I said, “it strikes me that a fellow who plans what sort of coffee he’ll serve at the housewarming of a house that isn’t even started yet must like to peer into the future.”

“I do,” said Appleby seriously.

As we neared the coffee house he suddenly darted from my side. With some apprehension I saw him, by a somewhat hazardous display of gymnastic ability, mount a window ledge that he might examine closely one of the old ship lanterns that served to light the sign of the coffee house.

He climbed down, shaking his head.

“It won’t do,” he said.

“It won’t do what?” I asked.

“It won’t do for my house,” he replied.

As we entered the vestibule he dropped to his knees and ran an appraising hand over the doormat.

“Too prickly,” he announced. “For me, at any rate.”

We took a table in the little back room, and while Appleby inquisitively fingered the curtain material and searched the bottom of the sugar bowl for the maker’s mark, I examined him. Save for the addition of a blond snippet of mustache, he was much the same as he had been in college. He wore the same sort of assiduously brushed brown suit, the same careful necktie, the same intent, intense air.

“Did you see the Yale game this year?” I asked.

“No; but let me tell you about my house,” he answered. “Just now it’s to be a rather simple affair of, say, ten rooms; a low, rambling house of the English type, with plaster walls showing the trowel marks; or I may have it of field stone, with a beamed ceiling in the living room and——”

“But why are you going to build it, Appleby?”

He looked solemn.

“Because of my philosophy of life,” he said.

“I don’t see——”

“This is what I mean,” he explained: “I came out of college about as well prepared for life as a snake is prepared to ride a bicycle. I’d no idea what I wanted to do. First, I thought I’d like to be a painter; I lived on art and sausages for five months; then I ran out of paint and sausages. So I went to work in an advertising agency. I’m not just sure now why I did. I think I ran into some fellow who said advertising was a young giant still in its infancy and advised me to get in on the ground floor; I remember the metaphor, if not the fellow. I did get in on the ground floor and I stayed there for four months. Then I lost interest in the superlative merits of the hair restorer my company advertised, and left the young giant still in its infancy.”

The coffee came; he absent-mindedly, drank some.

“I entered finance,” he went on. “That is to say, I trekked all over town trying to find someone feeble-minded enough to buy a bond from me. Not finding anyone, I entered foreign trade; meaning, I sat at a desk and tried to sell dolls in gross lots to Peruvian importers. I did this for some endless months. One day I found myself looking out of my ninth-story window and wondering why I didn’t jump. ‘Why,’ I found myself asking myself, ‘do I continue to live? Do I care a snap about dolls in gross lots? I do not! Do I like Peruvians? Not at all! In fact, they both bore me. Life,’ I said to myself, ‘is as empty as a used cantaloupe.’ What had I to live for?”

Appleby sipped his coffee, and I said I didn’t know.

“Nothing,” he said; “nothing. What was my life? Same routine. Get up in the morning; miserable business, getting up. Shave myself; always painful; tender skin, you know. Breakfast; same old coffee, same old cereal, same old eggs. Jostle down to the office. Same dolls; same Peruvians. Lunch with earnest young exporters; same oatmeal crackers and milk; same talk about profits and markets. Back to the office; ‘Miss Gurry, take a letter: “Yours of the fourteenth received, and in reply would say in re shipment of 325 gross of best India-rubber dolls, style 7BB—squeaking—am shipping same f.o.b., Wappingers Falls, N. Y., at once.”’ Oh, you know the line. Home to my apartment, the size of a police patrol. Read the papers. Same old bunk. ‘Strike Situation Serious.’ ‘International Situation Serious.’ ‘Pugilistic Situation Serious.’ Everything serious, everybody serious. Dinner; that’s serious too. Same old question: What shall I do to kill the evening? Read a book? The usual bunk; either romance about people who are too happy, or realism about people who are not happy enough. Go to a show? The old plots, the old lines, the old girls. Same banalities; same strutting hams spouting moss-covered buckets of bunk. Call on a girl? Ghastly bore. Same old ‘Have you seen this or have you read that? Isn’t it shocking about the Warps getting a divorce, or nice about the Woofs getting married? Do you believe a man and a girl can really be friends in the strictest sense of the word, and how is your golf game getting on?’ Home to bed, wind the alarm clock; same old dreams, and then—br-r-ring—7:30 same thing all over again. I was slaving at work I hated, and what was I getting out of it? What was it all leading to?”

Again he sipped coffee; again I said I didn't know; again he launched himself.

"Nothing," he said; "nothing. There I was at twenty-four doing work I loathed in order to lead a life that bored me. The whole business seemed as pointless as an aquarium without fish. What could I do to make life worth living?"

"Well, what did you do?" I asked.

"First, I analyzed the situation. I always was analytic, you know. Then I decided what I must do. I must have some definite object to work for. I must set some goal for myself."

He tossed off his coffee with a triumphant air; his eyes sparkled. I signaled for more coffee and looked at him interrogatorily.

"And the goal?" I questioned.

His voice was alive with excitement as he said, "To have a house in the country; to retire and live there and raise roses."

"You're pretty young to retire," I remarked.

"Oh, I won't be able to do that for years and years," Appleby said. "I'll not only have to earn enough for a house but enough to bring me in a modest income."

"Well, you have your definite object."

"I have," said Appleby. "And you've no idea how it has bucked me up. I've gained ten pounds since I thought of it. And my whole outlook has changed; I'm as happy as a cat in a fish store these days. You see, I'm going to build a perfect house. I take all the building magazines. Every Sunday I go walking in the country looking for sites. And as for my job——"

"You like it now?"

"I do not. I'm still distinctly bored by dolls in gross lots, and Peruvians; but I take them seriously now. They're pawns in my game, you see. Now, every time I sell a gross of dolls I say to myself, 'Ah, 144 dolls means a commission to me of \$4.77, or enough to pay for one electric outlet in my house.' Or, if I sell ten gross I say to myself, 'Good work, old boy! The commission will buy andirons, or bricks for the chimney, or so many gallons of paint.' I'm three times as good a business man as I was. Indeed, I should be at my office this minute, but I got thinking about revolving doors and could not be easy in my mind till I tried some. I don't think they'd be appropriate for a country house, do you?"

"Decidedly not."

He looked relieved.

"Good! Glad you agree. I'll cross them off."

He took out a fat memorandum book and crossed words off a list.

"When do you expect to make this dream a reality?" I asked.

A wistful look came to his face.

"If I do it by the time I'm fifty I'll be lucky," he said. "There isn't much money in dolls. It will take years. But"—and he brightened—"I have already set aside enough

money to pay for one window with leaded glass, one foot scraper, three electric outlets and part of the coal bin. Have you any ideas about coal bins?"

Before I could give him the benefit of my thought on this subject he vanished from my sight. I perceived that he had dived under the table and was subjecting the floor to a microscopic scrutiny. Presently he looked up.

"Wanted to be sure whether the floor is painted or stained," he explained. "I think I'll have my floors painted." There was pride in his voice as he accented the word "my." He got to his feet.

"Well, I must rush along. Hope I can sell a few gross of dolls before the market closes. Glad I ran into you. By the way, if you hear of anybody who wants to buy dolls _____"

He did not finish his sentence, for his attention was caught by the door-knob of the front door and he bent over to see how it worked.

Then he went out. I did not see Hosmer Appleby again for six years.

New York eats men. It ate Appleby. At least I did not encounter him. He may have ridden in the same cars or lived in the same block; but our paths did not cross until one afternoon at the art museum. It was, as I recall it, just six years after we drank coffee together and he told me about his aim in life. I was in one gallery of the museum looking at a new exhibition of etchings, when I heard a commotion in the next gallery. A bass voice was in somewhat violent controversy with a tenor voice.

"But you can't lie in that there bed," the bass voice protested loudly.

"Why can't I?"

"That there bed," declared the bass voice, "was slep' in by Napoleon. It's worth twenty thousand dollars. We can't have people layin' in it, now can we?"

"But I'm only trying it."

"It's against the rules of the museum," stated the bass voice.

I entered the gallery at this moment and saw a fat and agitated museum attendant, owner of the bass voice, expostulating with a small man in a brown suit, the tenor, who was reclining on an enormous gilt, canopied, four-poster bed of florid design.

"Oh, very well," said the man on the bed. "I don't think much of it as a bed, anyhow. I wouldn't have it in my house."

Saying this, he rose from the bed and I saw that he was Hosmer Appleby.

"Oh, you wouldn't, wouldn't you?" said the attendant, loyal to his charge. "Well, it was good enough for Napoleon, that there bed was."

"Steel beds are more sanitary," said Appleby. Then turning to me, "Don't you think so?"

He spoke as if I'd been with him all the time. He had the same absorbed expression, the same intent, intense look.

"How's the house?" I asked. "Are you enjoying living in it?"

"Living in it? Why, I haven't started to build it yet!" he told me as we strolled through the collection of Sheraton furniture, which he now and then stopped to poke.

"No," he continued, "I haven't found a site. Haven't the money, anyhow. But I'm looking. I suppose I've looked at five hundred sites since I saw you, and have got forty earaches listening to real-estate agents. I'm in no great hurry. The perfect house on the perfect site—that's my plan."

He said it as if he were announcing a religious principle.

"And the dolls?" I asked.

He made a wry face.

"Oh, I still sell the little beasts," he replied. "I'm assistant sales manager now, you know."

"Good work!"

"Beastly grind," he said. "I detest dolls. But they're going to build me a house in the country."

"A doll house?" I suggested.

He did not smile; his look said that his house was too sacred a matter for facetiousness.

"How are you, anyhow? Married, or anything like that?" I inquired.

"The living room is going to be thirty-five by twenty," he said.

I stopped to admire a Fuller landscape.

"Aren't those shadows lovely?" I said.

"My living room is going to be very bright," said Hosmer Appleby. "Splashes of brilliant color everywhere. Old Spanish." He said this in a confidential whisper, as if he were imparting a secret. "And, do you know," he concluded, "I've earned almost enough to furnish the living room."

I congratulated him. He shook a rather woeful head.

"It's fearfully slow work," he said. "Sometimes I think I'll never make it. Sometimes I fear that the house is a mirage that can never be reached. But I conquer these fits of despair; I put on full steam and sell dolls like a fiend incarnate." He made a face. "Little bores," he added. We had reached the front door of the museum.

"Well, good-by," Appleby said. "Glad I saw you. Let's have lunch sometime. Have to go back downtown and cable Peru. Just dropped in here to try that Napoleonic bed. Now I can cross canopied beds off my list." He did so.

Then I saw him make a hasty exit, and I saw his brown-suited back disappear in pursuit of a bus.

We never did have that lunch; he disappeared from my life and it was some years before I saw him again. It was at an auction. I heard an excited tenor voice bidding on a dragon-sprinkled Chinese rug.

Appleby shook hands with me vigorously, without taking his eyes off the auctioneer. He seemed in excellent health and spirits; he had color in his cheeks and a spark in his eyes. He bought the rug.

"This makes the seventh rug I've bought," he whispered to me breathlessly.

“How’s the house?” I asked.

“Still in the blue-print stage,” he said, a little sadly. “But I’ve earned nearly enough to pay for the first floor. And I’ve got my eye on a wonderful site in Connecticut. You should see the hanging lamp I picked up at a sale last week! Very French and cubistic.” His eyes glowed.

“For your old-Spanish room?” I asked with a smile.

“Oh, now it’s going to be a modern French room,” he said.

“Still selling dolls, Appleby?”

“Yes, worse luck. I mean I still get no thrill out of the work. But I’m to be made sales manager the first of the year. That means more money, and every dollar I make brings me nearer my house in the country, and freedom.”

I left him bidding feverishly on a plum-colored Cabistan.

I had almost forgotten Hosmer Appleby and his house. A good many years had passed since our last meeting—seventeen years, I think; or maybe eighteen. Then one day last spring I received a note inviting me to the housewarming of Briar Farm, near Noroton, Connecticut; it was a very cordial little note, and it was signed “Hosmer Appleby.” Then I knew that he had attained his goal at last.

I went out to Briar Farm to the housewarming. The site was, indeed, perfect; five acres or so of rolling land, with a view across Long Island Sound; and the house itself was a gem. Hosmer Appleby, white-haired now, but as bright-eyed and interested as ever, greeted me warmly. He skipped from guest to guest, rubbing his hands, bowing acknowledgments of the compliments they offered him on the perfection of his house. Now and then he pointed out some perfections that might have escaped our attention—that chair was from a sixteenth-century monastery near Seville; that fireplace was his own design; the beams in that ceiling he had discovered in an old manor house in Somersetshire; he invented that especially efficient shower bath; and didn’t we think that Matisse in his library rather good?

He took me to the library window, showed me gleefully how the patent casement windows worked, and said: “You see that garden out there? It’s to be a rose garden. There I’m going to spend the rest of my days; at night I’ll read in this room. It’s been a long pull, I can tell you; but here I am.”

“You’ve deserted the dolls?” I asked.

He made the face of one who has just taken unpleasant medicine.

“Don’t remind me of them,” he said. “I hope I’ll never see one of the little brutes again. When I think of the years I spent worrying and sweating over them—still they helped me attain my objective. I was president of the company, you know, when I resigned.”

When I was leaving his house he said to me, “You must come up when the roses are blooming. They ought to be beauties; I’ve been studying books on rose growing for the last ten years.”

Three months later I was driving near Briar Farm, and I stopped in to see Appleby and his house and the roses. I saw a figure in old clothes pottering about in the garden.

It seemed to me as I watched him that his walk sagged. He would pick a rose bug from a leaf, look at it for a whole minute or more, put it into a can, and then pick off another rose bug. He saw me standing there and came slowly toward me. I thought he seemed pale. He shook hands with me limply.

“How well the roses are getting on!” I said.

“Do you think so?” he said without enthusiasm.

We went into his living room—he had done it in old-Spanish style, after all. I admired a venerable refectory table. Appleby shrugged his shoulders. There were long silences in the course of our conversation, during which Appleby would sit with head on chest, staring at a rug; and yet I felt somehow that he did not see the rug.

“What a stunning lamp!” I said.

“Oh, it’ll do,” said Appleby; his tone seemed dull.

“Don’t you feel well, Appleby?” I asked.

“Not particularly,” he said in that same blunted voice.

A week later I heard through a mutual friend that Hosmer Appleby had taken to his bed, and that his doctors were shaking their heads and looking grave. I had it in mind to go out to see him, but business called me suddenly to England for a flying trip. I was gone a month. I came back to New York on the newest and largest of liners, the Steamship *Gigantic*. We tied up at a New York pier, and while waiting for the customs inspectors to delve into our baggage I decided to take a last stroll about the vast ship.

I had penetrated into its depths and had come to the place where one could peer down and see the mighty engines, great polished and black giants crouching in their cave. As I stood there I became aware that a man, at no small peril to his safety, was hanging out over the rail and studying the engines with fascinated eyes. He was shaking his head and muttering to himself as if he were in the midst of calculation or inner debate. He heard my step and swung around. It was Appleby. He bounded toward me and shook hands with me with a hearty violence. His face was full of color, and I have never seen brighter eyes.

“Well, well, well!” he cried. “How are you?”

“Fine, thanks. And you?”

“Bully!” he said. “Bully!”

“But what are you doing here, Appleby?”

“I got a pass and came aboard just as soon as the boat docked,” he explained. His manner was alert, almost jaunty, one would say. “You see, I know the president of the line. I use his boats to export some of my dolls.”

“Your dolls?” I exclaimed.

“Certainly. I’m back in the doll business. And I’ll bet you a good cigar we’ll sell half a million dollars’ worth of dolls this year.”

His voice was brisk, his air determined.

“But your house in the country, Appleby.”

“Oh, I sold that. Tell me, how did these new oil-burning engines work on the trip coming over? You see, I’m going to build myself a yacht. I’m working like a beaver to earn the money. It’s going to be the finest yacht that was ever built—the newest oil-burning engine, mahogany decks, cabins for twenty or more, elevators——”

SHOES

“YOUR name?”

“William Felton.”

“Speak louder, can’t you?”

“William Felton.”

“Your age?”

“Twenty-two.”

“Say ‘Your Honour,’ when you answer a judge. Don’t pretend you haven’t been arrested before.”

“I haven’t been, your honor.”

“How old did you say you are?”

“Twenty-two, your honor.”

“You look older. What is your occupation?”

“Clerk in a shoe store, your honor.”

“Officer Greavy, Officer Greavy.”

“Here y’ronor.”

“What is this man Felton charged with?”

“Well, y’ronor, I was on m’post on Simpson street las’ night an’ at twenty-three minutes past eight, I hear a commotion in front of the Idle Hour Movie Theater, at 1833 Simpson Street, Saul Bloch, proprietor. I seen the prisoner here bein’ thrown outa the theater by some men. They was kickin’ and punchin’ him. A woman was screamin’ ‘He kissed me! He kissed me!’ I ast her did she want to make a complaint against him and she said yes, she did. So I arrested him.”

“Is that woman over there the one that got kissed?”

“Yes, y’ronor. That’s her.”

“Thank you, officer. You may go. Will you take the stand, Madam? What is your name?”

“Elsa Keck.”

“Mrs?”

“Miss, your honor, Miss.”

“Your age, Miss Keck.”

“Must I?”

“Yes.”

“Well—forty-one.”

“Are you employed?”

“Yes.”

“Where?”

“I’m a waitress in the White Tile Restaurant, corner of Third Avenue and 149th Street.”

“Been there long?”

“Twenty-two years, your honor.”

“Where do you live?”

“At No. 1989 Second Avenue.”

“With your family?”

“I ain’t got any family.”

“With friends, then?”

“No; furnished room.”

“Tell me exactly what happened last night.”

“Well, your honor, I was on the early shift, bein’ I been workin’ there at the White Tile longer than any of the other girls, so I got off about seven and I says to myself I can’t go home to that hot room of mine this early so I guess I’ll go take in a movie show, so I goes into the Idle Hour. It’s cool in there and I can rest my feet, I says; if you ever done any waitin,’ your honor, you know how hard it is on the feet. Well, I goes in and they’re showin’ a lovely picture all about an Arab prince that fell in love with a white girl and carried her off to his tent and——”

“Please be as brief as possible, Miss Keck.”

“Well, your honor, this man was sittin’ next to me, and I paid no attention to him except to notice that his face was sort of sickly and his eyes sort of wild. I didn’t give him no encouragement, your honor; I’m a decent girl. I just watched the film. Well, I slipped my pumps off my feet and leaned back to take it easy when all of a sudden he reaches out and kisses me right on the face. I screamed. I got all sort of hysterical. Then some men began punchin’ him and the ushers dragged him up the aisle and I was that upset—nothin’ of the kind ever having happened to me before—that I screamed some more; and when the cop come and asked did I want to have him run in, I said I did. I was afraid the men would kill him; they was beatin’ him something fierce and he wasn’t very strong lookin’——”

“Don’t you want to press the case?”

“I—I dunno, your honor.”

“Well, I do. I’m not going to let you withdraw your complaint, Miss Keck. I happen to be the father of nine children, six of them growing girls. For their sake and the sake of the rest of the womanhood of the city, I’m going to see if something can’t be done about men like this. Is that man over there the one who kissed you?”

“Yes, your honor.”

“Are you sure?”

“Oh, yes, your honor; I couldn’t forget.”

“You say you haven’t been kissed before——?”

“No, your honor.”

“I mean by a stranger in a moving-picture theater.”

“Oh, no, your honor.”

“Ever been followed on the street by men, or annoyed by mashers?”

“Never, your honor.”

“Very well. You may stand aside, Miss Keck.”

“Your honor——”

“What is it?”

“I don’t want to be hard on this—this boy. I guess he didn’t mean no harm; mebbe he’d been drinkin’ or wasn’t right in the head or sumpin.’ I guess I was sort of hysterical when I said I wanted him run in. I don’t want to get him in trouble and make him lose his job. Jobs is hard to get and——”

“That will do, Miss Keck. It’s too late now to drop the case. You tender-hearted women, with your misplaced sympathy, are to blame for mashers. I represent the public, and the public can’t have young ruffians going around kissing women old enough to be their mothers. I’ve got daughters to think of, and the daughters of other men, too.”

“But, your honor——”

“That will do, Miss Keck. Prisoner, stand up. Well, Felton, you’ve heard the officer and you’ve heard Miss Keck. What have you to say?”

“Nothing, your honor.”

“Speak up, can’t you? Don’t mumble. Are you guilty or not guilty?”

“Guilty, your honor.”

“Have you anything you’d like to say? I’d really like to know why a quiet-looking young fellow like you goes around acting like a beast; I really would.”

“I—I—would like to say something, if you don’t mind.”

“Well? Don’t mumble.”

“I—I’m not a beast, your honor.”

“Well, why do you act like one then?”

“It wasn’t me, your honor. It was somethin’ in me. I don’t know how to tell you. It ain’t decent to talk about such things. The minister said so. I never done anything like this before. Honest. It just come over me—all of a sudden. I wouldn’t have done it if she hadn’t taken off her shoe; it was the first time I ever seen a foot—like that, you know—outside of a store; I guess I got a devil in me or sumpin.’ Anyhow, before I knew it I’d done it and she was screamin’ and the men was punchin’ me and kickin’ me and I didn’t know just where I was. I didn’t mean to do it, your honor; honest, I didn’t; it just happened—just happened——”

“Nonsense. Things like that don’t just happen, Felton. Tell the truth. You went in there to annoy a woman, didn’t you?”

“No, your honor, no. I swear on the Good Book I didn’t. I went in there so I wouldn’t annoy no woman.”

“I don’t understand you.”

“I—I—don’t like to talk about it, your honor. It ain’t decent. But I can’t help it—I got sumpin’ wrong with me, I guess. Always did have, ever since I was a kid. I ain’t a bad one, your honor. I go to church regular and I know my Bible and I ain’t never been in no kind of trouble before. You can ask Mr. Wirtz if I ain’t honest and sober and hard workin’——”

“Who’s he?”

“I work for him—down at the Elite Shoe Store on Third Avenue—Jacob Wirtz—‘Fancy Feminine Footwear.’ He’ll tell you—Oh, I wish to God I never did go to work there. That was what done it, your honor. If I’d a been able to get a job as a chauffeur or a salesman in the gents’ haberdashery or anything, it wouldn’t have happened to me. But I didn’t know nothin’ but shoes—nothin’ but shoes, your honor. And they got me; I knew they’d get me; I did try to fight ’em, your honor; night and day I tried. I prayed every night, ‘Dear Jesus, don’t let the shoes get me——’ ”

“Come, come, Felton. I haven’t time to listen to you all day. If you have anything to say that bears on your case, out with it.”

“I’m tryin’ to tell you, your honor. It—makes me all ashamed. I don’t know how to tell things; I ain’t talked much to people, except about shoes.”

“Shoes? What have they to do with your conduct?”

“They got everything to do with it, I guess, your honor. It was them that made me do it—the shoes—— You see, when I was a kid I wasn’t like the other kids—I dunno why. Things made me excited—little things that the other kids didn’t seem to mind. Things made me tremble and shiver like I was freezin’. I lived up-state in a little town with my uncle and aunt. The other kids played with girls but I never did; it made me all sort of nervous just to see ’em. Once I went on a straw-ride when I was in the seventh grade, and I sat next to a girl and I got so nervous I threw up. Other boys wasn’t like that; but I was——

“My uncle took me outa high school to go to work in his store. He kept a shoe store. I didn’t want to; I wanted to be a sailor. But he made me. I didn’t want to work in a shoe store, your honor. I was afraid.”

“Afraid?”

“Yes—well, you see—your honor—he made me wait on women. They had little feet, your honor, such little feet. And some of them wore silk stockings——”

“Go on, Felton.”

“Uncle Ralph made me wait on them. He made me. He used to crack me across the face because I got sizes wrong; somehow I couldn’t think straight; with men it was different; I didn’t get their sizes wrong. But those little feet in the silk stockin’s——”

“Look at me, Felton. Anything more?”

“I was nervous and sick and I felt queer all over and I used to think wicked things, your honor. I couldn’t stop it; no matter how hard I prayed; I’d just think and think—

and I had to sit there and touch those little feet in the silk stockin's. It got worse and worse— Guess I got some kind of a disease, your honor; I was always funny that way; and I didn't want to be, honest I didn't.

“Well, your honor, I clerked along in Uncle Ralph's store for five years; I thought mebbe it would get easier; worse, that's what it got. Uncle give me five dollars a week and my keep; but I couldn't save much. He made me give money to the missionaries and when I made mistakes about women's shoes, he fined me. I wanted to save enough to take a course to be an engineer on a steamship. I wanted to get away—get away from the shoes. I was afraid I'd go crazy or sumpin', your honor. I was afraid I'd do, I don't know what. Uncle Ralph didn't know; I didn't tell him; I knew he wouldn't understand; he was a good man and men's shoes and women's shoes was all the same to him. But me, I was different.

“Well, your honor, one night in spring there was a bargain sale and there was lots of women and girls in the store, tryin' on shoes. I began to feel very queer and awful; it was wicked; I drunk ice water and I prayed, but it done no good. I knew if I stayed there I'd go clean crazy and perhaps do, I don't know what; a girl come in and she had red hair and silk stockin's and I had to try on her a pair of 2AA pumps—she had the littlest feet you ever see, your honor—and I took to tremblin' and I kept sayin' under my breath, ‘Dear God, don't make me want to kiss her; please don't make me want to kiss her.’ An' I guess He didn't hear or sumpin', or perhaps He was punishin' me, because, anyhow, I did want to; I wanted to sumpin' fierce. But I knew it would be wrong and I didn't want to disgrace Uncle Ralph who was a good man and a deacon in the church. So I ran right outa the store just as I was, without a hat or nothin' and I left her sittin' there. I was so nervous I could hardly see where I was goin'. I ran all the way to the railroad station. I got on a train, the first that come. It took me to New York.”

“Go on, Felton.”

“When I got to New York I had one dollar left. I looked for a job in a department store. The man said, ‘Any sellin' experience?’ And I said ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘What line?’ and before I knew it, like a fool, I said ‘Shoes.’ So they put me in the Misses' shoes. It paid sixteen a week. I thought mebbe I could save enough to get married. I guess I oughta have got married. But the fellas who was married said, ‘Fat time a young fella has that marries on a clerk's salary! It ain't so much the wife that costs; it's the kids.’ And I says ‘But have you gotta have kids?’ And they said, ‘Of course y' have. How you goin' to stop havin' 'em?’ And I says ‘But s'pose y' can't afford kids?’ They said, ‘Then it's tough luck for you,’ they said, ‘and for them.’ There was a girl in the cotton goods, your honor, that liked me, I guess. She was makin' twelve. We could of got married, mebbe, if it wasn't for havin' to have kids. If I only coulda got married, your honor, I wouldn't be here.”

“Well, you are here, Felton. What else?”

“In the big store it was worse than Uncle Ralph's. All kinds of girls come to get shoes. I began to get nervous again; I was scared I'd do sumpin' wicked. I tried to get work at the docks; they said I was too light. I had to stay in the Misses' shoes. I stayed a year. Then I couldn't stand it another minute. One day when I was tryin' a brogue oxford on a girl I felt so bad I ran right out the store. I didn't stop for my pay or a

reference or anything. I just run right out and went into a movie because it's cool and quiet in movies.

"Well, your honor, I tramped all over town lookin' for another job; everything was full up; I did get a job carryin' boxes in a lead pipe factory, but they fired me after the first day; the boss said I didn't have the muscle. I didn't have no money left—I'd used up the money I'd saved to be married with—and they put me outa the house I roomed in and I didn't have no overcoat and winter was here and for three days I didn't have nothin' to eat but coffee. I couldn't stand it. I asked a man to give me a quarter and he said, 'You lazy bum, find a paper and get a job.' I did find a paper and it said 'shoe salesmen wanted.' It was beginnin' to snow and my head felt light and queer and I guess I'm weak, anyhow, so I went up to the Elite Store and they give me a job at fifteen per. I been workin' there nearly a year: next week Mr. Wirtz was goin' to raise me to sixteen—and then I got into this trouble——"

"Is that all, Felton?"

"No, no, your honor. There's a little more. It's about what happened last night. I was workin' away in the Elite and it was gettin' worse and worse. The older I got, the worse it got. I prayed, your honor. But I guess I was made wrong or sumpin'. The other fellas in the store didn't mind; they was all married. But I couldn't get married on fifteen a week. I used to walk miles every day; but that didn't help none. It got worse. Those little feet—your honor, there oughta be a law against girls wearin' silk stockin's and little patent leather pumps with red heels. Things began to get worse; I was all sorta jumpy; all last week I couldn't sleep. Last night I felt sumpin' comin' on me like I felt in Uncle Ralph's store that night I run away; I was afraid—. It's not decent to talk about things like that, your honor——"

"Go on, Felton."

"A girl come into the store; she was a red-headed girl, your honor, and she had the littlest feet—and she wanted patent leather pumps with red heels——"

"Come, Felton. Take hold of yourself. If you've anything more to say, say it."

"I went to get the pumps—but I was tremblin'—and the box dropped from my hand; I knew I couldn't stand it; I ran outa the store; I guess they thought I was crazy or sumpin'; I went into the first movie show I come to; I knew it would be cool and quiet and dark—in there——"

"Well, what then, Felton?"

"They was showin' a film there, your honor, that there oughta be a law against; the girl wore silk stockin's and the man kissed her. There was a woman—that woman there—sittin' next to me and when the fella in the picture kissed the girl, this woman makes a little sighin' noise, and I looked at her sidewise. She seemed sorta old and tired lookin', your honor, and skinny and plain and her eyes were sorta sad and I said to myself, 'I'll bet she wishes she was bein' kissed, just like I wished I was bein' kissed.' 'And,' I says to myself, 'fat chance for either of us.' 'And' I says to myself, 'I guess, mebbe, she wouldn't mind if——' But I knew it was wicked so I turned away and tried to watch the picture. And then——"

"Well, Felton?"

“And then, your honor, I heard her movin’ and I looked and she’d slipped off her pumps—and she had little feet—and I’d never seen feet before outside of the store—and then—I dunno why—but—I—kissed her—and the next thing I knew they was punchin’ and kickin’ me and the policeman had me, twistin’ my arm and hurtin’ me sumpin’ fierce. I didn’t mean to do it, your honor; it just happened—just happened _____,”

“I’ve listened to enough, Felton. More than enough. I’m heartily ashamed that there are such men as you in this country; you are unworthy of the name of American, Felton. It is men like you who can’t control themselves that worry the soul out of the fathers of growing daughters. I can’t understand why you don’t exercise a little self-control. Six months in the city prison on Blackwell’s Island!”

THE PRINCE HAS THE MUMPS

YOUNG Prince Ernest was ill. He had, in fact, the mumps. “Beastly nuisance,” he remarked to his valet. He wanted very much indeed to say “damned inconvenience”; and, considering the circumstances, even this would not have been putting the case too strongly; but he did not say “damned inconvenience,” because a prince must not set a bad example; and, mumps or no mumps, Ernest Cosmo Adelbert Oscar James never forgot that he was a prince.

“Every inch a prince,” said the newspapers of his native land in referring to him, which they did in every edition from the first, or bulldog, to the last, or five-star extra-special sporting final.

That made sixty-six inches of prince, for Ernest was a rather pretty boy of medium stature, with a pink, almost waxen complexion, blond hair impeccably parted, and a brow as unruffled as a pan of skimmed milk. At the moment the symmetry of his features was somewhat marred by the presence of two mature mumps; and, noting this in the gold-rimmed mirror near his bed, Prince Ernest gently groaned.

Physiognomists might have argued from the serenity of his brow that the prince was not a thinker; but they would have been in error, for in his twenty-three years he had, not infrequently, thought. Happily his thoughts had not been disturbing ones. It had taken no soul-struggle to make him entirely content with his princely lot. Having been born a prince, nursed as a prince, breeched as a prince, taught as a prince, at twenty-three and a few days it seemed completely natural to Ernest to be a prince. It was quite impossible for him to imagine himself anything else.

Sometimes he thought: “Of course, I don’t say I have a divine right to be a prince; nowadays that isn’t considered in good taste. But, since I’m being perfectly frank with myself, I must admit that there is something—well, if not exactly sacred, at least sacerdotal about royalty. Being a prince isn’t at all like filling a place in the cabinet or the civil service or the army, where almost any sort of fellow can get ahead if he has enough push. A prince has no use for push; he’s a prince, and that’s all there is to it.”

And at other times he thought: “It’s the fashion in these times to pretend that a prince is just like any other man in the country, and not a bit better. That’s rot, of course, and no one knows it better than the people. If I am like all the rest of them, why do they stand in the rain for hours to see me whisk by in a limousine? Why do they crowd into some stuffy hall to hear me tell them I am glad to be there, gazing into their open, manly countenances?”

Or, on other occasions, he thought: “To hear some of these radical chaps talk one would think any fellow could be a prince. Really, you know, that’s nothing more than twaddle. If they tried it they’d soon find that it takes generations of royal blood behind one to give one that—well, that authority, that—so to speak—presence. I’d just like to see one of those long-haired johnnies try to lay a corner stone—with the proper dignity, I mean. Why, the people would laugh at him! They never laugh at me.”

By nature a modest and candid young man, Prince Ernest had but one vanity. He was proud of the appearance he made at public functions. He loved to lay corner stones, to unveil monuments, to visit hospitals, to address meetings. On these occasions he invariably made a neat speech, and he had never, he was glad to say, in any of his speeches given offense to anybody. He accepted, with becoming graciousness, the tributes paid him by the crowds. It pleased him exceedingly to hear his subjects punctuate his speeches with their uncouth but sincere evidences of approbation. Often he read about it afterward in the press, and secretly glowed.

“Prince Ernest”—the front page of the *Morning Stiletto* is speaking—“was greeted with vociferous enthusiasm when he laid the corner stone of the new polo field being built by the Coal Mine Workers’ Union for the use of its members. The prince shook hands with a number of the men and made one of his felicitous and witty speeches. In part His Highness said:

“‘I am always glad to speak to miners. [Cheers.] I was once a minor myself. [Laughter.] Now, all joking aside, and speaking seriously, I am glad to be here and to look into so many open, manly countenances. [Violent cheering and cries of ‘Every inch a prince!’ and ‘Long live Bonny Prince Ernie!’] Yours is a very important industry. [Cries of ‘Hear, hear!’] I can’t think what I should do in winter if it weren’t for coal. [Cheers, and cries of ‘God bless Your Highness,’ and ‘Spoken like a prince!’] I repeat, therefore, I am glad to be with you——’”

Yes, there was no question about it, his subjects loved him.

But now he had the mumps. He was as puffy as if he had attempted to swallow a pair of inflated water wings, and when he drank a glass of water it was like swallowing a string of biggish beads. Moreover, he had a fever, and his royal knees felt decidedly gelatinous, and the doctor had said he must stay in bed. To get mumps at a time like this, he mused, was almost unprincely. His country needed him, and there he lay, ineffectual and mumpish. Indeed, mumps at a time like this was nothing short of a calamity, for on the morrow His Very Serene Highness the Emperor of Zabonia was to pay an official visit to the prince’s country. Fifty million people held their breath and tremulously awaited the result. Would there be war? Everybody knew that the answer depended on the emperor’s visit.

Relations between the prince’s country and Zabonia were strained—dangerously strained. Why had that bellicose old fire eater, the Duke of Blennergasset, made that intemperate speech in which he referred to the Emperor of Zabonia as a “pompous elderly porpoise with the morals of a tumblebug?” Why had Count Malpizzi, the Zabonian Secretary for War, in heated rejoinder seen fit to declare that as for Prince Ernest’s father, the king, he was no lily of the valley himself, and furthermore, Prince Ernest’s countrymen were three degrees lower in the scale of existence than the guinea pig? A painful and acute situation had been created between the two countries; one puff of the air of animosity on those smoldering embers and the blood-red flame of war would break forth. This eventuality would be highly inopportune for Prince Ernest’s country, for Zabonia had just perfected a cannon whose shell carried a hundred miles and then bounced back to be recharged. War must be averted. The Emperor of Zabonia must be received with every show of cordiality, must be accorded every honor, must be

given not the slightest shadow of a pretext for taking umbrage. The emperor must carry away the impression that Prince Ernest's country loved Zabonia with a surpassing love; the emperor must be made to believe that the Duke of Blennerghasset's reference to him as a pompous elderly porpoise was one of pure affection and esteem, and that a comparison of the morals of His Very Serene Highness to those of a tumblebug was an idiomatic expression, and highly complimentary, inasmuch as tumblebugs are popularly believed to lead lives of singular probity and chastity.

Prince Ernest's father, the king, had given orders that his entire royal family, down to the most remote ducal cousin, must be on hand to greet the Emperor of Zabonia; and, of course, so the king stated, it was of the highest importance that the heir apparent, Prince Ernest, should be there. But how could he be, for he had the mumps? It was an exceedingly regrettable situation. These Zabonians were a truculent and suspicious lot, and if the crown prince were not present to greet their emperor they'd read some subtle insult into it, you could depend upon it. It was the custom for visiting monarchs to appear on the balcony overlooking the plaza in front of the royal palace to be cheered by the crowd which always collected there on such occasions, and it was also the custom, as the whole world knows, for the king to stand on the right side of the royal visitor and the crown prince to stand on the left. This was the etiquette. From it there could be no deviation. If the crown prince did not stand at the emperor's left hand tomorrow it would be instantly apparent to the crowd that a slight was intended, and then no power could hold back the hungry hounds of war; and war, just now, with Zabonia would be extremely inconvenient.

The prince frowned at the obese pink cupids that adorned the ceiling of the royal bedchamber. He was too weak to do much else.

The doctor had just issued an ultimatum. The prince must not be moved; to do so, the doctor assured him, would be suicide. The king protested, even pleaded. But the doctor, who, like most savants, was stubborn, shook his white beard.

"But he must appear before the crowd," said the king, wringing his own whiskers, which were plentiful and auburn.

"It would kill him," said the doctor with finality.

"If I weren't an only son I'd risk it," said the prince weakly, from his bed.

"You can bet you would," said the king.

His Majesty paced the chamber.

"Mumps!" he ejaculated. "And at such a time! The crowd will never understand it!" He was patently worried.

Then it was that the Count of Duffus, who was Gentleman in Waiting in the Royal Bedchamber, had a tremendous idea. He reduced his brain wave to an excited whisper and poured it into the king's ear. The king beamed and nodded, at intervals saying, "Good!" "Yes, yes, yes!" "Excellent!" "Splendid!" "Ripping!" "By all means!" "Stout fellow!" "Good old Duffus!" "The very thing." "Quite so, quite so!" "Admirable!" "Of course!" "Perfect!" and other expressions of approbation. The Count of Duffus, damp with the gentle dew of success, made off; and the king turned to the prince, a twinkle in his eye.

“Invaluable chap, Duffus,” said His Majesty. “Good idea of his. Should have thought of it myself, tho. The old dummy dodge!”

“The dummy dodge, father?” The young prince raised un-understanding eyebrows.

“You’ll see,” promised the king, “when Duffus gets back.”

It wasn’t often that the king talked with the prince so familiarly. Usually there was an atmosphere of formality about their relations; it was more as if they were a friendly but not intimate king and prince than a father and son. Sometimes, the prince had noticed, the king was unusually aloof; there had been days when the king had not spoken to the prince at all; on other days His Majesty was more expansive; today the king was positively clubby.

Presently the Count of Duffus did come back, and with him a package so large that it took two able-bodied footmen to carry it. With an air of having accomplished something noteworthy, the Count of Duffus stood the package upright by the prince’s bed and began most carefully to peel off the wrapping paper. He tore off the last piece of paper with a flourish, and the prince’s eyes opened so wide that his mumps hurt.

It was the waxen figure of a fair-haired, smiling young man in polo costume.

“Why, it’s I!” exclaimed the prince, who, mumps or no mumps, surprised or not, always expressed himself correctly.

“They do make those dummies more perfectly all the time,” remarked the king, who was admiringly examining the figure. “That nose is exactly like Ernie’s, now isn’t it?”

The prince lay staring at his effigy.

“I don’t see——” he began as distinctly as the mumps would let him.

“Oh, you will,” said the king. “Duffus, did Madame Hassler make much of a fuss?”

“Oh, naturally,” replied the count. “She thought I was balmy in the crumpet, probably. She said it was the prize figure in the waxworks. Big drawing card and all that. I had to pay her a hundred and seventy goobecs before she’d part with it.”

“That’s a lot of money,” said the king, a careful soul; “but it will be worth it tomorrow. I’ll make you a duke for this, Duffus.”

“Thanks awfully. Oh, look here, Your Majesty! You can move its arms!”

“Better and better!” exclaimed the king. “We can make it salute.” The king turned to his son, who was still more than a little bewildered. “Ernie,” said the king, “where do you keep your uniform as honorary colonel of the Royal Purple Bombardiers?”

“Whatever for, father?”

“For your understudy here, of course.”

The king’s expression just then indicated that he did not consider that his son was a lightning calculator.

“Don’t you get the idea, Ernie?”

“I think I begin to,” said the prince; “and, father, I don’t like it.”

The king shrugged well-nourished shoulders.

"It's the only way," he said. "We can't risk even the appearance of slighting that touchy old hippopotamus."

"Hippopotamus, father? I was not aware——"

"Oh, I mean that venerable muffin, the Emperor of Zabonia," cut in the king with a trace of impatience.

"But, father," said the prince, and his eyes showed that he was shocked, "he is a king!"

The king was contrite.

"Sorry, son," he said. "I shouldn't speak like that of royalty, I know. But I have so much on my mind these days, with this tiresome visit and your mumps and the shadow of war and heaven knows what."

"But, father," said the prince, following up his advantage, "please don't ask me to permit this monstrous thing. It's not honorable. It's not princely."

The king patted his son's silk pajamaed shoulder.

"Pish-tush, Ernie!" he said playfully. "I wish you wouldn't always be so devilishly idealistic. You're so high-minded one needs to get on a stepladder to talk to you. Wake up, Ernie. You're old enough now not to believe in Santa Claus any longer."

The king's tone grew more serious.

"I've dreaded this day, Ernie," he said, "on your account. You're such a naïve chap, you know. Still, the day was bound to come. It's like a fellow's first cigar—sickens him at first, but it's the only way to learn to smoke."

"Father," said the prince, "I don't know what you're talking about. All I know is that it's not right to try to impersonate a prince in this way. That grinning dummy there isn't I. It can't be I. Nobody will be fooled. And furthermore, I don't want to fool my people."

"Roll over and go to sleep, Ernie," said the king. "There are times when you give me a sharp pain in the region of the waistcoat."

From his bed the prince could see it all, the whole damnable imposition. First he could see emerge the full outlines of His Serene Highness of Zabonia. The prince could see plainly the celebrated red nose of that monarch; rather like an electric-light bulb in the center of a round cheese, thought the prince, who had a gift for simile. He wondered why the Zabonian emperor insisted on wearing that ridiculous skin-tight pink hussar uniform. Then the prince saw his father step on the balcony, to cheers. His Majesty was in the cream-and-gold uniform of a field marshal of the King's Very Own Royal Indefatigables, and he took his place at the emperor's side, bowing. Then came the stunning blow to the mumps-stricken prince. Another figure had appeared on the balcony, a very erect, dignified figure in the dashing uniform of the Royal Purple Bombardiers. The prince in the bed perceived that the thing on the balcony was himself!

As, horrified, he watched, Prince Ernest saw the thing's hand go up in a precise military salute. The great throng of people went wild. Their cheers made the palace tremble.

"Viva our prince!" he heard distinctly. "Long live Prince Ernest!"

A lean man with a hungry face had eluded the police and eeled his way to the top of a lamp-post in the plaza.

"There he is!" called the man shrilly. "Every inch a prince! Who's every inch a prince?"

Their answer filled the air with sound—"Prince Ernest! Prince Ernest! Prince Ernest!"

Lying there, Prince Ernest saw the dummy back majestically from the balcony.

"Long life to the prince!" screamed the man on the lamp-post. "He never turns his back on his people!"

The crowds took up the cry.

"Long life to Prince Ernest! He never turns his back on his people!"

"And jolly good reason," said the prince, "for they'd see the strings Duffus is pulling to make the thing salute."

The brow of the prince was no longer bland, no longer was it free from lines of disillusionment. He was thinking of what he had seen.

His voice was tragic, as he said, "So this is what it means to be a prince! A dummy serves just as well! A dummy; the sort of thing they have in cheap ready-made clothing stores—Very Nobby! Newest and Niftiest Cut! Take Me Home for Fourteen Goobecs. What a blind ass I've been! But it's not too late. I'm not going to go on with this miserable sham. I'm not going to be a stuffed uniform any longer. If a dummy can be a prince I don't want to be. Let them have a dummy in my place. I'm going to be a man."

He addressed these words to the emptiness of the royal chamber, and his tone was steeped in the vinegar of bitter realization. Prince Ernest was working himself up to quite a pinch of resolution, when the chamber door opened and in came the king. Behind him wobbled the vast bulk and incandescent nose of the Emperor of Zabonia.

"His Zabonian Serenity," explained the king, "insisted on coming to see you. His Serenity understands, of course, why political expediency made it necessary for you to be represented before the people by a—er—substitute. Don't you, Your Zabonian Serenity?"

"Zshur," rumbled the royal visitor; his voice was thick as if his words came through a blanket. "I didn't know," he added, "it wasn't the prince until the king told me."

Emotions were bubbling and sputtering inside the bosom of Prince Ernest.

"I'm ashamed," said the prince, "to deceive my people like that."

His Zabonian Serenity, who had taken a chair, arranged two or three of his chins and part of his expanse of jowl into a grin.

"Ernie," cautioned the king, "no nonsense now!"

The bottled-up feeling rushed from the prince in a torrent of passionate words.

“Father, I’m going to speak out! I’m through with this whole business.”

“What business?” The king looked puzzled.

“This prince business,” said Prince Ernest. “I saw it all while I was lying here. What am I? Nothing! Nothing, that is, but a—pardon the colloquialism—stuffed uniform. A prince? Bah, a dummy! That’s all I am! I step out and bow and smirk and salute while some other chap pulls the strings. The people don’t care a gingersnap about me. It’s my uniform they cheer. Stuff it with wax or sawdust or me, it’s all the same to them. Why, they’d cheer it if it were stuffed with mush! So I’m through, father! I can’t go on with this hypocrisy. Give the dummy my place. I’m sorry to shock you, father. You and the emperor probably have never thought about things in this way. But don’t you see, a prince is really only a dummy? Forgive me—but it’s true.”

The young prince was almost hysterical. The king did not appear to be in the least perturbed; he gave the prince a fatherly pat on his shoulder and winked at the Emperor of Zabonia.

“He’s only twenty-three and a few days,” explained the king, “so naturally he takes it a bit hard. I did myself—thought of entering a monastery—yes, really.”

His Zabonian Serenity chuckled deep in his cavern of chest.

“Ernie,” said the king, turning to his son, and speaking in his most kindly manner, “you’ve discovered what all kings discover sooner or later. You’ve found yourself out. Now your job will be to keep the people from finding you out. Isn’t that so, Your Serenity?”

“Zshur,” rumbled the visitor, sucking at a long amber-scented cigaret.

“But I don’t want to keep them from finding me out!” cried the prince. “I don’t want to go on living this ghastly farce. I am going to work.”

The king laughed jovially.

“Work?” he inquired. “At what, in heaven’s name?”

“Something honest,” replied Prince Ernest.

The king laughed and nudged the emperor in his imperial ribs.

“Ah, youth!” said the king. “Ah, youth! By the way, Ernie, how much did you spend last year?”

“Oh, I don’t know exactly,” replied the prince, mystified. “The Royal Bursar of the Most Privy Purse could no doubt tell you. Probably between three hundred and four hundred thousand goobecs, I fancy.”

“And how many motor cars did you have?” questioned the king.

“Eleven, if you don’t count roadsters.”

“Fair enough,” said the king. “We won’t count roadsters. Now, Ernie, suppose you were a young lawyer——”

“I wish I were,” said the prince.

“At this precise moment,” pursued the king, “you’d be in your office hoping some friend would fall down a manhole so you could sue the city for damages. You could consider yourself jolly lucky if you made eight hundred goobecs a year. If you were a

young doctor you'd be sitting around with your hands in your empty pockets praying for an epidemic. If you were a young business man you'd be in a terrible stew about your overhead or underfoot or whatever it is business men get into a stew about. Instead of having eleven motor cars, not counting roadsters, you'd be fortunate to have your bus fare. Now I'm a doting father, Ernie, but even I can see that you are no intellectual colossus. And yet you acceptably fill a job that brings you in three or four hundred thousand goobees a year, and eleven motor cars, not counting roadsters. Despite all that, you talk of going on strike. Really, Ernie, that's preposterous. Isn't it, Your Zabonian Serenity?"

The emperor nodded and puffed at his scented cigaret.

"Pre," he rumbled, "posterous!"

"You've a downy nest, my boy," went on the king benignly. "You'd be a chump to quit it. Come now. Look at this thing through a microscope instead of a pair of smoked glasses. Be a prince of the world, not one of the Red Fairy Book. If the people are dolts enough to let you keep the job, why put unpleasant ideas into their heads?"

"Oh, father"—the young prince was very pale—"forgive me for saying it, but I do believe you are a cynic!"

"Of course I am," answered the king cheerfully. "That's better than being the only other thing a king can be."

"What's that?"

"A blithering fool," answered the king. "How can a king with any sense respect his people? He sees them bawling their beery cheers first about some rather ordinary human being like yourself, for example, Ernie, and then he sees them cheering one of your silly uniforms stuffed with wax. The only way a king who pretends to be civilized can regard his subjects is as dupes."

The young prince lay scowling at the cupids. He was thinking deeply. He said at last:

"I know. You are saying this to try me. You are testing my faith in the inherent strength of royalty. It was weak of me to doubt. That dummy business today did hit me hard; but, after all, it was only a desperate ruse that by chance succeeded. You pretended it is quite the usual thing; but, of course, it isn't. I implore you to tell me that it isn't, father."

The king lit a cheroot and replied in an anecdotal tone:

"When I was your age, Ernie, I had a beautiful set of whiskers and a still more beautiful set of ideals about the sanctity of my position and all that. I still have the whiskers. My dear old father suggested that I grow the whiskers. 'You haven't much of a chin,' he said to me. 'I think you'd better keep your loyal subjects in the dark about that. A king can be human, but not too damn human. Also, there's another reason—whiskery men all look pretty much alike.' I did not understand then what he was talking about; but many years later, after his death, I did. I was scheduled to go to some dismal provincial town and knight some pestilential boulder of a mayor. I'd been performing a lot of royal chores, including the coronation mumbo-jumbo, and I was a bit fed up. The more I thought of going to that town the more bored I grew. But of

course I had to go. Was I not a king? I took myself and my duties terribly seriously, even as you do, Ernie.”

The king unashed his cheroot in a gold tray and went on:

“Yes, I felt that only a king full of blue blood could possibly knight a fellow properly. However, on the night before the ceremony I drank a magnum of champagne, and then made the strategic error of adding a few glasses of 1812 brandy. Alcohol is no respecter of royalty. In the morning I perceived that if I tried to knight the fellow I’d probably decapitate him. Here was a pretty kettle of whitebait. I was at my wit’s end when Lord Crockingham, my secretary, bobbed up with an idea. He’d had it on ice for some time, it appeared. He produced a whiskery blighter who opened oysters in a fried-fish shop; the fellow smelled most evilly of shellfish, but he looked exactly like me. In my condition at that time I could hardly tell him from myself. Crockingham coolly proposed that the whiskery oysterman should take my place. I was shocked inexpressibly. An oysterman substituting for a king! What a devastating and yet absurd thought! I felt just as you do now, Ernie.”

The king blew a smoke ring and continued:

“Well, Crockingham won his point, and we dressed up the whiskery blighter in my most garish uniform, told him if he said a syllable more than ‘yes’ or ‘no’ we’d murder him, and taught him a speech which went:

“‘My loyal subjects [pause for cheers] I am overcome by this reception. [Pause.] I can only say thank you, thank you, thank you.’ We packed him off in my pea-green uniform and next day the papers all said, ‘His Majesty performed his part in the ceremony with exceptional grace and dignity.’”

The prince in his bed moaned; the king, with a shrug, continued:

“Oh, I was all cut up for days! Felt deucedly unnecessary. But at last light dawned and the more I thought of the whole affair the more it entertained me. I ended by hiring the whiskery blighter at twenty-five guineas a week, gave him a room in the palace near the kitchen and a lot of oysters to amuse himself with and whenever I got tired of kinking I trotted to Paris or somewhere incog and left the corner stone laying to my oyster friend. He became rather better at it than I. Oh, I had to do it, Ernie! If I hadn’t had a genuine vacation now and then I should have got squirrels in the cupola, absolutely.”

The prince had aged perceptibly during this recital. His voice quavered as he asked, “And where is the fellow now?”

“Oh, I still use him,” answered the king. “Only last week I sent him down to Wizzelborough to lay the corner stone of the new cathedral. You were there, Ernie. Didn’t you notice anything peculiar?”

The prince’s reply was faint-voiced.

“I did notice that the cathedral smelled uncommonly oystery,” he said. He drew in his breath; his manner was that of a drowning man making a last desperate effort to save himself.

“Father,” he said, “I am crushed by what you tell me. I can’t believe that what you say is true of all royal persons. Something in here”—the prince laid a manicured hand

on the spot on the bosom of his lavender pajamas where he believed his heart to be —“tells me that there are still kings who respect the traditions of royalty, who are themselves and nothing else. I appeal to Your Zabonian Serenity to reassure me about this, to give me back my faith in myself and my position. They wouldn’t do a thing like this in Zabonia! Oh, tell me they wouldn’t!”

The Emperor of Zabonia tossed away his scented cigaret.

“You gentlemen,” he said in his slow, thick voice, “have confided in me. I’m going to return the compliment. I am not the Emperor of Zabonia. I’m just an old actor from the Imperial Stock Company who happens to look like the emperor. He is usually too tight to go to public functions or pay royal visits, so he sends me.”

In the morning the young prince pulled a velvet bell cord and his valet entered.

“Thursday,” said the prince, “I’m supposed to ride through the city and be pelted with flowers. It’s an old tradition or some such rot. Will you please take that dummy there in the corner, dress him in my uniform as Honorary Rear Admiral of the Royal Submarine Fleet, seat him in the royal carriage and drive him around in my place?”

The valet bowed. The prince picked up the morning newspaper and turned to the sporting page.

THE BATTLE OF WASHINGTON SQUARE

HE wore no collar. If he had, it would have been size 13½. He didn't, because collars cost twenty cents. Twenty cents paid his overhead expenses for a day: two meals of stew and coffee at Emil's Busy Bee Lunchery—music by the Elevated trains—and enough tobacco to make fifty cigarets.

His collarlessness did not worry him; he gave it no more thought than he gave to the art of poetry, the influence of Confucius on China, or his country's foreign policy, if any. How to get that daily twenty cents—that was what concerned him; that done, he let his brain rest, wrapped in a hazy blanket. Leaning against the wall of Hyde's Stable in West Houston Street, outside in summer, inside in winter, he accepted the universe. Blue smoke, seeping from time to time from his nostrils, was the only sign that he had not mummified.

His name was Joey Pell. He was nineteen years old. As a baby he had had rickets, and as a result he was bowlegged and undersized. His complexion was imperfect. Of the six children born to his parents, he was the last and the only one to survive the hazards of infancy in a two-room flat on Hudson Street. His mother sometimes said that this was enough to drive a person to drink. Her husband, a truckman chronically on strike, would remark, by way of repartee, that it was quite unnecessary to drive her to drink. She would reply, in part, that his own record as a teetotaler was not unimpeachable. At this point in the conflict little Joey knew it to be an act of prudence to slip out of the room that served as kitchen, living room and his bedroom. He was a timid, easily frightened child, and had apparently inherited none of his parents' bellicose corpuscles.

One day he went out and never came back, and his parents thereafter quarreled in peace, while he attached himself to the stable as an unofficial valet and general assistant.

He was afraid of horses, and he never conquered that fear entirely, but the stable was warm, and the men gave him dimes for helping with the harness, so he stayed there; his was not a soul for high adventure. They let him hang about the stable because he tried to be useful. There was only one sort of job he'd balk at—he would not go near mules. Of mules he stood in deathly fear, for when he was six he had seen a man trampled to death by an angry mule, and the look of fright that had come to Joey's face on that occasion had never entirely left it. His haddock-like, watery blue-gray eyes were still slightly apprehensive; his lips always seemed on the verge of a quiver. When he approached a person he sidled. He seemed to expect to be kicked, and not infrequently he was. When someone kicked him Joey Pell did not kick back. He just melted away from the vicinity of the kicker, with a look, hurt, and yet resigned, as if a certain amount of kicking were his lot in life.

He harbored no grudges and hated no one.

For one thing, his memory was not good enough for him to be a good hater; and, besides, it took venom and energy to hate, and he had neither. His lack of pugnacity

barred him from the society of the other boys of that part of the city, for they all aspired to be pugilists or, failing that, competent members of the Hudson Dusters, the Whyo Boys, the Gophers, or other gangs; their evenings were full of fisticuffs. Joey would have liked to be one of them, but, since they did not appear to want him, he accepted the fact.

Joey Pell had learned to read much later than the other boys, and reading was still somewhat of a labor for him. He rarely got beyond the comic strips in the newspapers; these he pored over with knit and sober brow.

What went on in the world outside his stable mattered little to him. Kings might be hurled into the dust, the dogs of war might growl and gnaw their leashes, black calamity might threaten the land—it was all one to Joey Pell. His stew, his coffee, his tobacco, his sleep—these filled his brain; it was not a large one, and he had room for little else. It may have been that the rumbling of events in the world reached his ear, but they never penetrated into his head.

The men in the stable had been growing more and more excited about something—a war of some sort, Joey concluded. It was much too remote an affair to concern him, anyhow.

Then, one day, something exciting happened to Joey Pell. He received a letter. It was the first letter he had ever received in his life, and he stood in front of the stable, fingering it gingerly with dirty hands. He was a little alarmed. Why should anyone write to him? Probably it was a mistake. He stared at the address again:

Joseph Pell
c/o Hyde's Stable
W. Houston St.
New York City

Himself beyond question. He wondered what he had done. He tore open the envelope and pored over the printed letter inside. He wondered why he should be called upon to present himself at a certain place and time. The letter confused him. So he took it to Phil Hyde, who owned the stable. Hyde glanced at it.

“Well, they got you,” Hyde said with a grin.

“Got me?”

“Yeah—you gotta fight.”

“Me fight? Fight who?”

“Say, stupid, don’t you know there’s a war on? This here means you’re drafted.”

Joey liked camp. For the first week he was in a daze; the officers who examined him seemed blurred and enormous. He was lanced by a fear that he must immediately shed blood, or have his own shed. It seemed a poor choice to Joey Pell. When he found that the day he must engage in actual combat was remote he began to enjoy the military life. Never before had he been so well fed, had he had such a clean, warm place to sleep, had he had such trim new clothes. He realized this, and he did what he was told to do, whole-heartedly; he was afraid that he might be put out of the Army.

The regular life suited him. It was pleasant to have someone else do all the thinking. He liked to do things by the numbers—one, two, three, four. He liked to march along, hep, hep, hep, hep, in step, shoulder to shoulder with the other soldiers. He belonged with them; they were his gang; it was a fine new feeling. They accepted him as one of them. He began to take trouble about his hair and finger nails, to take an interest in baths. His chest grew an inch, his biceps grew firmer.

Joey Pell learned many things at camp. One of them was bayonet fighting. At first it made him tremble and turn sick inside; but he got over that.

“Hey, you, with the pasty face!” the sergeant barked. “Put some life into it. It’ll make a man of you.”

Joey tried to do so. But he found it hard to be enthusiastic about stabbing even a dummy.

“Get mad!” roared the sergeant. “Hate ’em! Drive it into their guts! Curse ’em as you thrust. Give it to ’em—one, two, three!”

Joey was a good soldier; he was told to hate; he hated. He learned to drive the keen point of his bayonet into the straw intestines of the dummies; as he did so he gritted his teeth and sharply cursed. He came to hate each of the dummies with a personal hate.

The other soldiers in his squad did not talk much about the war. Mostly they talked of girls, and baseball, and prize fighting, and the bartenders they knew, and of what the lieutenant said to them and their own daring retorts to him. Sometimes, in sentimental moments, they showed one another pictures of wives, sweethearts or babies. When they did talk of the war they cursed the men they were to fight against, and told stories of their savagery.

As Joey listened he felt inside very much as he had felt that day when he saw the mule trampling the life from a man. His fear bred hate. These people were devils; it was a virtue to hate them, a good deed to kill them.

Grim monsters peopled his dreams. They were in gray, and were twice the size of ordinary men, and fiendish of face. In his dreams he fought them. As they bore down on him he drove his bayonet into their throats. The sergeant had no occasion to criticize his bayonet drill now.

Joey Pell was a one-idea man. Once his mind had been filled to capacity with the problem of keeping alive; now that problem was happily solved for him; so he had space for another idea. That idea was to be a good soldier, and, it followed, a sincere hater of the enemy. This became Joey’s obsession. He won an approving grunt from the sergeant by the ferocity of his attack in the bayonet drill.

Another fine new feeling came to Joey Pell on his first leave of absence in New York City. He realized that he was a hero. He saw that he was a person of importance. His had been a life without color, a humble life. Back in the stable he was less important than one of the horses; not the faintest beam of limelight had ever fallen on his small figure in that manure-scented obscurity. Men had treated him curtly; no woman had ever smiled at him. He had been unwanted. But now it was different. He was a soldier.

He had taken the three days' leave of absence because his turn had come, not because he wanted it; he'd no idea what use he could make of it.

He was trudging along Fifth Avenue, bound for his stable below Washington Square, when he heard a voice calling, "Oh, soldier boy! Oh, soldier boy!"

He looked about; there was no other soldier in sight; so the lady in the limousine must be calling to him. Her car had come quite close to the curb; it was a magnificent car, huge and glittering with polished nickel. Inside, it was heavily upholstered, and so was the richly dressed lady who sat there, and who had called to Joey. She was smiling. Joey eyed her suspiciously.

"Can't I take you where you are going?" she asked.

"Ain't goin' nowhere," he mumbled. He felt suddenly hot, awkward, conscious of his complexion.

"Ah, then let me take you to the Home Trench," said the lady. Joey looked dubious; he wondered what her game was. "Don't you know about the Home Trench?" she asked. Her voice partly reassured him. "It's for soldier boys like you. It's in my own house on Fifth Avenue. I'm Mrs. J. Goodhue Wilmerding, you know. Come, get in."

She held open the limousine's door invitingly. Joey stumbled in. He sat, uncomfortable, bolt upright on the edge of the fat seat. The roses in the silver vase overawed him; he associated flowers only with funerals. From the corner of his eye he watched the lady. Perhaps, he thought, she was a spy who would try by honeyed words to get important military information from him. He resolved to kick her roundly in the shins and leap from the car if she tried any funny business on him, Private Joseph Pell.

"It is just wonderful," he heard her say, "of you boys to do what you are doing."

"Yes'm," said Joey Pell.

"Ah, if I were only a man"—she expelled a sigh—"but, since I'm not, I'm doing my bit as best I can. Last week at the Home Trench we entertained seven hundred and sixty-one soldier boys."

"Yes'm," said Joey Pell.

"I hope you'll like the Home Trench," she went on. "All the waitresses there are Junior League girls. They dance with the boys." Then she added, "With all the boys. Isn't it wonderful how this terrible war has brought us all closer together?"

"Yes'm," said Joey Pell.

"I wonder," she said, "if you know my son at your camp—Major Sears Wilmerding, on the general's staff?"

"No'm," said Joey Pell.

"You must introduce yourself to him when you go back."

"Yes'm," said Joey Pell, with mental reservations.

"You see, I consider all soldier boys my sons," she said. "Ah, here we are—at the Home Trench."

The motor car purred up to the curb before an opulent brownstone house on lower Fifth Avenue. Over the door was a sign, decorated with flags:

THE HOME TRENCH ALL SOLDIERS WELCOME

Joey followed Mrs. Wilmerding into the house. Inside, a pretty girl pounced on Joey, asked his name, and pinned a tag on his coat bearing the words "I am Private Pell."

Blinking, he stepped from the hallway into the large front room. It was filled with soldiers and girls. In one corner a phonograph was grinding out brassily "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag, and Smile, Smile, Smile." Some of the girls and soldiers were dancing—the soldiers for the most part stiff and self-conscious, the girls bright-eyed and putting much spirit into the task of making the soldiers enjoy themselves.

A little bobbed-haired girl captured Joey.

"I'm Peggy Sturgis," she announced, taking his hand, which hung limply by his side, and shaking it violently. "You're Private Pell, aren't you?"

Joey gulped, and nodded.

"I know some Pells at Tuxedo Park," she said. "Are you one of them?"

"No'm," said Joey.

"Shall we dance?"

He was too overwhelmed by this entirely novel experience to refuse. She towed and hauled and steered him about the crowded room, while the phonograph did its best with "Over There."

"I think," she said, "it's just wonderful of you boys to do what you are doing." Joey flushed. "I wish," she said justfully, "that I were a man. I'd be in the cavalry. Don't you just adore horses, Mr. Pell?"

Joey licked dry lips and nodded. He hated horses, as a matter of fact; but she had called him Mister, and that was another new and stimulating experience.

Other girls danced with Joey Pell that day. They told him, every one of them, how brave a thing he was doing. He drank a great deal of not very sweet lemonade, and only when the Home Trench closed for the day, at six o'clock, did he leave.

He was almost as much intoxicated as if the lemonade had been champagne, as he strode up the avenue, chin out, eyes narrowed sternly.

He wished earnestly that he might meet one of the enemy face to face at that moment. He felt capable of laying him low, barehanded. He saluted all officers with a sharp precise salute; he even saluted a passing letter carrier. His heart beat with unwonted vigor; he was a soldier; a somebody.

He surveyed suspiciously each passerby in the hope that he might discover a spy. He found no spy, but he did find an elderly gentleman who gave him a theater ticket, and a blessing. Joey took the ticket without embarrassment; he was getting used to gifts.

As he marched along he saw a sign:

FREE CHOW FOR THE LADS IN KHAKI

He entered the big brick building and was greeted by an aroma of disinfectant, liniment and athletes, and by a plump enthusiastic man, who slapped Joey on the shoulder and cried jovially, "Howdy, buddy! Greetings! Come right in and get your chow. Afterwards we're going to have a get-together and sing. You'll stay, of course." He patted Joey's shoulder with a big-brother gesture. "You sure are lucky to be in the Army," said the plump man. "It's mighty fine, the spirit you boys are showing. I wish I could be in khaki, but these darn flat feet of mine——"

He waved an apologetic pink hand toward his feet.

In the dining-room Joey ate copiously of beans, cocoa and pie. He stayed a while for the singing, and even added a cracked and unpractised tenor to the chorus, which, led by the plump man with the unfortunate feet, sang "Onward, Christian Soldiers," "K-K-Katy," and "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here."

Joey slipped away and went to the theater. A war play was being given—a moving piece with blank cartridge battles and air raids offstage, and a whole corps of villains in the persons of enemy officers, cold sneering devils with spiked mustachios and evil habits.

Joey hissed them loudly. He was so carried away indeed, that at one critical juncture in the play he contemplated swarming over the footlights and doing violence to the chief villain, a fiend in human form if ever there was one.

He was diverted from this by an opportunity closer at hand. Between acts a speaker urged the audience to buy bonds to support the war. The speaker was eloquent, and he pointed dramatically at Joey, who sat in the fifth row.

"Boys like him," said the speaker, "are giving their lives for you. Will you not give your dollars?"

Joey blushed with a happy pride; the eyes of the house were on him. Pretty girls passed subscription blanks. The man in front of Joey did not take one. He was a stumpy man with a round bristly head; Joey had had his suspicions of him.

"Don't be a slacker," the girl with the blanks said.

"I em nod a slecker," returned the man.

His voice was guttural; the enemy officers on the stage talked in that same tone, Joey had observed.

To Joey his duty was plain.

He leaned forward and hissed into the man's ear, "You buy one of dem, see."

The man looked around; his face was purplish and obstinate. He glared at Joey.

"I vill nod," he said.

Again Joey saw his simple duty; he punched the man squarely on his bulb of nose. The man punched back, but a dozen fists descended on him from all sides and he was hustled up the aisle by the ushers. As he passed, members of the audience took kicks at him. Joey was left in possession of the field. He glowed. On the way out, several men, strangers, shook hands with him; one man gave him a box of cigarets.

Joey Pell returned to camp in high spirits. The wandering, furtive, foggy look of his stable days was gone from his face; the droop was gone from his spine. He had found

himself; he was a soldier, a person to be admired, respected, and even feared a little. In his dreams he, single-handed, held the breach against a prodigious number of the enemy. They charged upon him, but he, though bleeding from a dozen wounds, did not retreat. He held them back; with rifle, bombs, bayonet, even fists, he hurled them back until he was ringed round by piles of the slain. The enemy fell back at last before his fury. Then came the general, who pinned a large medal on Joey's chest.

"You are a man," said the general, "and a soldier. Give me your hand."

Joey saluted, then fainted. In some dreams he never recovered; he was given a military funeral of considerable pomp. He even saw his tombstone, with the words carved on it:

PRIVATE JOSEPH PELL
He Died for His Flag

He saw Mrs. J. Goodhue Wilmerding, in black, sobbing. He saw Peggy Sturgis, inconsolable. He saw the pretty girls at the Home Trench in tears. He even saw the plump man with the traitorous feet turn his head away to hide his emotion.

In most of his dreams, however, he permitted himself to survive; badly wounded, of course. He saw himself nursed back to health by Peggy Sturgis, under the solicitous maternal eye of Mrs. Wilmerding. He saw himself given a good job by a grateful Government—something with a large salary and not much work.

He contrived to go to New York often. He invented sick sisters, dying mothers, important business of a private nature. He would step out into the rattling rush of the city with the tread of a conquerer. He liked the friendly, approving glances that were cast on him. His appetite for deference grew keen. It was an enormously fine feeling to swing with military step and carriage up Fifth Avenue on a crisp day, uniform pressed, shoes shined, and with campaign hat rakishly shading eyes that managed to look grim, warlike and noble all at the same time, and yet did not miss a single sign of interest or sympathy in a single passing face. It was a never-ending source of delight to Joey Pell that he could step to the curb and signal any of the handsome motor cars that were passing, and have the car stop for him, and be treated as an honored guest by the occupant and be driven wherever he wished to go. It was pleasant to know that he could not walk two blocks without having some well-dressed person stop his motor car and invite Joey to have a ride. He spent whole days being taken up Fifth Avenue and then back again. He got so that he accepted offers only from the most expensive cars.

Always he found a ready welcome at the Home Trench. Mrs. Wilmerding was so gracious, and Peggy Sturgis so interested and so eager that he should feel at home. And there were many other places that opened their doors to him—clubs and rest rooms and private homes. He was called "buddy," and told many times how proud everyone was of him; he was, indeed, not a little proud of himself.

He was attacked by an urgent desire to live up to what was expected of him, to be a hero in reality, to win medals, to do violence to the enemy; his hate, daily more bitter, demanded an outlet.

He began to ask the sergeants, "When do we go across?"

They did not know, so they looked mysterious. He began to be worried; he had a fear that the war might be over before he could get into it. He even ventured to ask the captain when the regiment would sail. The captain, who did not know, looked mysterious. Joey's worry increased. His dreams became haunted by visions of an early peace or by the specter of himself being left behind when his regiment did, at last, sail. Why didn't it sail? Surely he was ready.

The day toward which all Joey Pell's thoughts had turned did come. The sergeants looked more mysterious than usual; the officers whispered together and looked very wise. At retreat the captain announced the news with a suitable gravity; Joey quivered from the peak of his campaign hat to the nail-studded soles of his army shoes.

"The regiment sails from Hoboken May fifth."

In all his life Joey Pell had never heard more exciting, more gratifying words. May fifth was but six days distant.

Joey cajoled a one-day pass to New York from the top sergeant. It was one of the brightest days he had ever known. Everyone was so kind to him. At the Home Trench they were especially nice to him; Mrs. Wilmerding had him to dinner in her own dining-room, and they had turkey. To Joey for anyone to have turkey at any time but Christmas was unheard-of luxury; it made him surer than ever that he was a personage. They all wrung his hand when at last, reluctantly, he left, bearing a load of wristlets, sweaters, trench mirrors, candy and cigars.

The night before he was to sail Joey Pell did not sleep at all. He lay watching his equipment; now and then he examined it to see if it was all there and in perfect order; he did not want to take the most minute chance or to risk in any way being left behind.

He was in M Company, which was to go aboard the transport last. He sat on the chilly pier, chafing. He wanted to get under way; he could not be sure he was actually going until the Statue of Liberty faded from view.

He heard a sergeant's staccato order: "Detail—Privates Leary, Kochanski, Pell _____,"

He sprang up and stood at attention with the others.

"Go aboard," the sergeant ordered, "and feed the mules."

Joey held back when he reached the hold where the artillery mules were; they were restless and were scuffling and biting in the half darkness. He decided that he had done his duty in bringing the pails of water that far; others could give them to the mules. But a watchful corporal spied him.

"Here, you!" shouted the corporal. "Water them mules."

But still Joey held back.

"Say, you ain't afraid of them, are you?" demanded the corporal scornfully.

"Naw," said Joey, "not exactly, but——"

"Don't be yella!" shot out the corporal. "Are you a soldier or ain't you?"

Joey picked up the pails resolutely; decidedly he was a soldier. He shouldered his way in among the mules; they seemed gigantic, grotesque in the dimness. He set down

one of the pails. It was then that a mule lashed out with its steel-shod hoof. It hit Joey Pell squarely in the back of the head. Sharply a swift blackness fell on his brain.

At the military hospital in a deserted department store on lower Sixth Avenue, to which they rushed Joey Pell, the doctors said that his skull was crushed and that part of it was pressing on his brain. His regiment sailed without him; but Joey Pell never knew it.

His was a curious case, the doctors said. They were able to relieve some of the pressure on his brain, but not all of it. He continued to exist. But he existed as a vegetable does. The part of his brain that gave him memory did not work at all. He had no past, no yesterdays. Each day when he woke, it was as if he were freshly born. Certain habits remained—eating, dressing, simple motion. But he was quite unsensitive to impressions. Each day they told him his name, and a moment later he forgot it. He never asked how he happened to be there; he never asked about anything; he simply sat in the corner of the private room they had given him, quiet, apathetic.

For two years the brain of Private Joseph Pell lay fallow. His mind simply closed up shop and went on a vacation. So, while he sat there, impervious to anything, in a perfect vacuum, his regiment fought, the Armistice was signed, his regiment returned, there was a triumphal march up Fifth Avenue, the regiment was demobilized, and the great city swallowed it once more. The soldiers who had been clerks returned to their counters, the soldiers who had been truckmen returned to their trucks.

It was May fifth, two years after Joey Pell's accident. The attendant on duty near Joey's room had gone to the floor below to play cards with another attendant. Joey Pell in his chair grew sleepy in the drowsy spring morning air. His head nodded forward on the bosom of his hospital nightshirt. He fell asleep. A fire engine bellowing past in the street below screamed with its siren under his window. The impact of the sound startled him awake. It jerked him upright in his chair; the sudden movement tipped the chair over and Joey Pell pitched backward to the floor; his head struck violently a sharp corner of his iron bed.

He lay for a moment where he had fallen; then slowly he pulled himself to his feet and stared, puzzled, about him. What was he, Private Joseph Pell, doing in this room on the day his regiment was to sail for the Front? Then he remembered; they had made him go among the mules; one of the mules must have kicked him and stunned him; certainly his head still buzzed; the fools had carted him to this hospital, thinking he was badly hurt; as if a kick in the head could hurt a soldier! Decisively Joey Pell tore the nightshirt from his body. His regiment was going to sail that day at noon, and he was going to sail with it.

He saw that he must act swiftly, but with caution. In the next ward soldiers were drowsing. Their uniforms hung on pegs by their beds. Joey commandeered the first uniform he came to; its owner was asleep. He was a very much bigger man than Joey, and the uniform was half a dozen sizes too large, so that it draped around Joey's meager frame in great folds. The purloined shoes were elevens, and Joey customarily wore fives. The hat came down over his ears; no matter; once aboard the transport, Joey knew he could get a new outfit. He hunted feverishly for his pack and his rifle. He

could find no pack, but in a storeroom he did find a rifle. It was not his, for it was rusty and dusty, and his own was always clean and well cared for. He took it anyhow.

He had seen a clock, and saw that it was ten. He had two hours to get to Hoboken. He had no idea where he was and his knowledge of geography was limited, so he was not at all certain where Hoboken was; in Jersey, somewhere, he fancied. He slipped out of the hospital; his idea was to find the Hudson River and get a ferry. He saw from the street signs that he was at Sixth Avenue and Eighteenth Street; he breathed a sigh of relief. His problem was simple; he had only to hail a passing motor car and ask its driver to take him to one of the downtown ferries. He turned toward Fifth Avenue.

A man was coming along the street toward Joey. He was a well-dressed man, and he was escorting an appreciable paunch. Joey smiled at him; the man scowled and increased his pace.

Joey reached Fifth Avenue. People were hurrying along. They did not smile at Joey Pell; they hardly glanced at him; when they did, it was with scant interest and no friendliness. He wondered about it.

A big motor car cruised slowly past; there was a lady in white summer furs in the back seat, and there were orchids in the silver vase. Joey held up his hand as a signal for the car to stop. The lady looked at him obliquely.

“Give us a lift,” called Joey Pell.

The lady leaned forward and said something to the chauffeur; the car jumped ahead and sailed at a swifter rate of speed down the Avenue. Joey looked after it; he scratched his head.

He signaled another car; it did not stop. He signaled another; it did not stop. He signaled others; none of them paid the least heed to him. He stood, perplexed, on the corner. Something hard prodded him in the ribs; it was the night stick of a policeman.

“Move along there, Jack,” ordered the policeman. “I been watchin’ you. If you wanna panhandle, go over on Broadway; Fifth Avenue is closed, see?”

“But——” sputtered Joey.

“Don’t give me no argument,” said the policeman sternly. “Beat it.”

He gave Joey another prod with his club. Joey moved down Fifth Avenue; he was a little giddy. He wished he had time to show that big stiff of a cop that he could not talk to a soldier that way, but time was going fast, and his regiment sailed at noon.

Joey Pell hurried along. He had no time to speculate about why no one smiled at him. He had an idea, and that was to go to the Home Trench, which was near Eleventh Street; Mrs. Wilmerding always had a car or two on hand; a word to her, and he’d be driven to Hoboken at top speed.

He ran up the steps of her stately house. Someone had taken down the Home Trench sign, he noticed. He tried to open the door, but it was locked. That was odd, he thought; it had always been open from eight till six. It must be stuck, he thought. So he pressed the bell. A jowlish man with side bars came to the door and surveyed Joey in his tentlike uniform coldly.

“Well?” inquired the man.

Joey started to enter, but the man barred the way.

“Where are you going?” he demanded.

“Goin’ in,” said Joey. “Wanna see Mrs. Wilmerding.”

“You’ll have to be announced,” the man stated. “What are your name and business?”

“Why—er”—Joey stammered—“just tell her it’s Joey Pell—Private Pell. She knows me.”

“Wait here,” said the man, and he closed the door.

Joey Pell waited. It was all very strange, he thought. He could look in through the window and see the long front room; usually it was crowded with soldiers; this day it was empty; not quite empty, however. At a desk sat a well-nourished lady—Mrs. Wilmerding, unquestionably. Joey Pell felt greatly relieved.

The door opened a trifle. The side-barred man was there. “Mrs. Wilmerding is not at home,” he said.

Joey decided that the man was joking; that this was a new system of entertainment.

“Say, kid,” he said, “you ain’t looked very hard. I can see her right in there.”

“She’s not at home,” said the man; his voice was frigid.

“Say, cut the kiddin’,” said Joey. “My reg’ment sails at noon and I gotta get to Hoboken.” The butler appeared to be closing the door.

“Hey, Mrs. Wilmerding! Mrs. Wilmerding!” Joey called loudly.

She came out from her drawing room; her face was unsmiling.

“Jeffords,” she said to the butler, “what does he want?”

“I told him you were not at home, madam,” the butler said.

“Mrs. Wilmerding,” broke in Joey, “I gotta get to Hoboken—quick—see?—and I thought you could help me.”

“I advise you to apply to the Veteran’s Charity Bureau, in Madison Avenue,” she said, and shut the door.

Joey stood on the steps for two precious minutes. He wondered what he had done to offend her. But he knew he had no time to puzzle it out. He again started down the Avenue. And again he noticed that the faces of those who passed him were uninterested, without friendliness.

Out of the sea of faces swam a familiar one—Peggy Sturgis.

He saluted her and said, “Hello, Miss Sturgis. Well, I’m off.”

She did not return his salutation; she looked at him queerly, as if there were something curious about him.

“I beg your pardon?” she said.

“Say—you ain’t forgot me already?” blurted Joey Pell.

“I’m sorry,” she said coolly, “but I’m afraid I have. One met so many soldiers you know. I hope things are going well with you. Goodby.”

She was gone before he could catch his breath. What terrible thing had he done, he wondered. But he had no room in his mind for much wondering; his immediate problem was to get to Hoboken by noon. He pushed on toward Washington Square.

As he progressed along, at a half run, he overtook two men who were also going toward the square. Joey saw that they, too, were in uniform—but it was not khaki; it was a garish uniform, strange to him. He stopped short. But it was not the uniforms of the men that stopped him; it was their talk. They were talking in the language of the enemy. Joey Pell had learned to recognize it. Joey knew at once that they must be spies. He slackened his pace and followed close behind them. Fear hit him. If he captured the men he'd miss the transport. But it was his duty, he saw that, to capture them; he would do his duty.

Across the broad square he followed the two men. They headed for a crowd assembled in the southeast corner of the square. Joey did not take his eyes off them till they neared the crowd. Then he looked up, and his heart turned a somersault. His fingers closed tight on his rifle. The crowd was forming in a military formation, and they all wore the same strange garish uniforms as the two spies; and furthermore, they were speaking the same language. Joey stopped and stared.

The uniformed men carried a banner; it bore words in a foreign language. The truth came to Joey Pell in a sickening flash: the enemy had captured New York! How or when, he did not know. But there they were; they held Washington Square. He watched them, petrified with horror and hate. He tried to decipher their flag, but it meant nothing to him. He could not read its inscription:

YOUNG MEN'S UNIFORMED
GYMNASTIC AND SINGING
SOCIETY OF THE REFORMED
LUTHERAN CHURCH

He could not tell from their speech that they were assembling to march to the funeral of a deceased member. One thought filled his brain: the enemy had captured New York. Now he understood why the people had ignored him; they were afraid to do otherwise.

His hands tightened on his rifle; there was no question what his duty was; they were two hundred to one; but he was a soldier.

He fumbled at his belt for cartridges, then groaned as he realized he had none. Crouching behind a tree he drew from its scabbard the bayonet; his teeth bit into each other as he fixed the bayonet in its socket.

Then he jumped from behind his tree. His voice, high and shrill, sounded through the square.

"I'll show you, you devils; I'll show you!"

The surprised members of the uniformed gymnastic and singing society saw his fantastic figure come running toward them. At first they thought he was joking. Then, when they saw the leveled bayonet, they thought him crazy. Straight into the midst of

them charged Private Joseph Pell. His big hat came down over his eyes, so the lunge he made with his bayonet at the chest of the leader of the society missed its mark and the point became entangled in the sleeve of that astonished young gymnast and singer. The men were sure he was a madman now. They knocked him down on the granite pavement; Private Joseph Pell's head hit one of the blocks.

So ended the Battle of Washington Square, the briefest battle in history, and yet the only one where the American Army's casualties were 100 per cent.

THE LAST OF THE FLATFEET

HIS name was Ugobeecheebuggocheebeepawpawkeepiswiskiweeweechinoobee. In Flatfoot Indian this means, of course, Little-Big-Fat-Brown-Muskrat-Sitting-on-a-Pine-Stump-With- His-Tail-just-Touching-the-Ground. At the school on the reservation whither he was taken, screaming, at a tender age, the teacher, in the interest of simplicity and patriotism, renamed him George Washington Ug.

After some months had passed, the teacher voiced a regret that he had done this; it hardly seemed fair to the Father of His Country. Closer acquaintance with the young aborigine forced the teacher to conclude that it was entirely unlikely that Ug would ever be first in war, peace, or, indeed, anything. Privately the teacher expressed the opinion that if Ug were to unveil his boxlike head in the open air Ug would be in acute peril from woodpeckers. The juvenile Ug seemed absolutely impervious to the pearls of knowledge with which he was pelted. So the teacher decided to change his name to Walter Muskrat.

It was then that the salient trait of Ug's character shone forth. He refused flatly to be Walter Muskrat. Somehow the idea had seeped through some chink in his cranium that George Washington was, or had been, a great white chief entitled to many feathers and rich in horses, squaws and scalps, for whom it was an honor to be named. Ug announced without passion but with palpable determination that he intended to remain George Washington Ug. What was his, was his, he intimated. Arguments, cajolery, threats left him equally unmoved. He refused to answer to any other name, and he refused to eat. Before his wooden-faced obduracy the teacher at length surrendered; Ug remained George Washington Ug.

To the task of civilizing Ug, the teacher, a zealous soul, gave particular attention. It was a matter of pride with that teacher that the civilizing job should be a thorough one, neat, efficient, and with no rough edges; for Ug, it seemed quite probable, was destined to be the last of the Flatfeet. To civilize a Flatfoot! That was an ambition worthy of any man, thought the teacher. It had never been done; full well the teacher knew this. Had he not been trying for thirty years? He had seen no end of Flatfoot youths issue forth from his schoolroom, to the outward eye finished products, glowing with the high polish of civilization and possessed of well-cultivated tastes for derby hats, bank accounts, a reasonable amount of morality, safety razors, hymns, suspenders, lawsuits and the other essential habiliments of civilization, only to backslide into barbarous practises at the first suitable opportunity that presented itself.

"There's a broad streak of atavism in the Flatfoot," said the teacher. "He reverts to type as easily as the rattlesnake sheds its skin. On Saturday night he may be seen in a derby hat and rah-rah clothes, peaceably eating a nut sundae in a drug store and discussing Ty Cobb, ship subsidies and self-starters with the clerk. On the following Monday, like as not, he is back in moccasins and feathers, doing some forbidden tribal dance, whetting up his hunting knife and wistfully regretting that the Government has such narrow-minded prejudices against a little scalping.

“But,” concluded the teacher, “I’ve got hold of Ug early enough to civilize him so it will stick. The last of the Flatfeet is going to be the best of the Flatfeet. I’ll train Ug so that he will never want to take off his derby hat. After all, the derby hat is the symbol of civilization. No man can possibly be wild in a derby hat.”

So he labored over Ug. Time passed, as it is apt to, and Ug’s chest measurement and appetite increased, and the teacher watched hopefully for signs of mental and moral development. That Ug would ever become a profound thinker, the teacher harbored grave doubts; there was scant indication that the chunky, square-faced boy would ever become a Flatfoot Aristotle. Indeed, in darker moments the teacher sometimes opined that the only way to implant seeds of knowledge in that brown head was by means of a major operation involving trepanning. It was not that Ug preferred sin to syntax; docilely enough, and readily, he accepted the leading facts of an elementary education—to wit: That in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue; that six times nine is invariably fifty-four; that one must spell “separate” with an “a” till one’s hair turns gray; that homicide is not only illegal but unethical; that the femur is the longest bone in the human body; that when a fat man gets into a tubful of water the water will overflow. Having accepted them, he forgot them.

“However,” said the teacher, “if I can teach him to be a law-abiding member of his community, who will work and keep sober, it will be enough. A man can be civilized without being a mental Hercules.”

He continued most earnestly to train Ug in the way, by civilized canons, he should go. When Ug was fourteen a most encouraging event happened. With his own delighted eyes the teacher observed the behavior of Ug that day at recess in the school yard when Ug became involved in a quarrel with Henry James Curly Bear, a sprig of the Blackfoot tribe, and a youth of superior size and brawn. Henry James Curly Bear, whom no amount of effort had been able to redeem from savagery, had kicked Ug roundly in a dispute over the somewhat knotty technical problem of whether Jack Dempsey was a greater fighter than Ty Cobb was a ball player. Ordinarily such an act meant instant and spirited fistic battle, for traditionally the Flatfeet are of martial cast and care no more for Blackfeet than one male bulldog cares for another male bulldog confined in the same coal bin. The teacher made ready to launch himself into the fray and drag the opponents apart. To his surprise and joy he heard Ug say in ringing tones:

“I will not fight you, Henry James Curly Bear. The teacher says only bad people fight. Good people sue in the courts. If you kick me again, Henry James Curly Bear, when I say my prayers tonight I’ll tell our heavenly Father on you, and He’ll fix you, Henry James Curly Bear.”

Young Curly Bear expressed the opinion that Ug was afraid of him. This Ug gently denied.

“The Good Book,” said George Washington Ug, “says that it is wicked to fight; and, anyhow, why don’t you take somebody your own size?”

Then, not without a show of dignity, Ug turned his back on young Curly Bear and retired from the scene. The teacher felt the warming flush of pride.

“Score one for civilization,” he said.

As he walked toward his home that evening the teacher was decidedly in a self-congratulatory mood; overnight, almost, it seemed that Ug had begun to respond to the efforts of the teacher. With such gratifying thoughts in his brain, the teacher passed a grove of live oaks, a secluded spot. To his ears came sounds. He stopped. Louder grew the sounds, and stranger; they appeared to issue from the grove. Now he heard a wail, shrill and laden with some emotion akin to anger; then he heard a chant, weird, almost frenzied. The teacher cautiously pushed aside some underbrush and peered into the grove. An unpedagogical expression leaped to his lips, for he saw the person from whom the sounds came, and he knew their import.

The chanting lips were the lips of his pupil, George Washington Ug. As Ug chanted he danced—a wild, abandoned dance full of twists, turns, bends and wriggles. Gone were Ug's pants; they hung on a stump; and so did his derby hat. In his black hair stood feathers, plainly the tail feathers of a recently despoiled rooster. In his hand gleamed the blade of a jackknife, and he made menacing gestures at what the teacher thought at first was a bit of red string but which closer scrutiny revealed to be an adult earthworm of the night-crawler variety. A concentrated and bloodthirsty scowl was on the face of Ug as he twisted in the dance, and chanted:

“Koopeekis koopeekis
Bobbochee cheebobo
Toowanda bonda bonda bonda
Bopokum kobokum.”

At this point Ug dispatched the earthworm by biting off its head. Chagrin and horror overwhelmed the watching teacher, for he knew that the chant meant:

“Help me, O bloody war spirit, to strangle my enemy, Curly Bear, even as I strangle this serpent. Give me the strength to mash him, smash him, scalp him and cut him into very small bits.”

It was the forbidden snake dance. By such heathenish rites, the teacher knew, Flatfoot braves in the unregenerate days of yore had whipped themselves into a fury before going on the warpath.

The teacher descended, outraged, on Ug, confiscated the worm on the spot, and chastised Ug corporeally on another spot. What, demanded the teacher, did Ug mean by this? Ug, frightened, replied that he didn't know. Once, years and years before, when he was little more than a papoose, he had seen his father and the other men of the tribe do this dance in a secret spot. He had not thought of it since; but on this evening, as he was wandering past the grove, smarting under the insults and kicks of Henry James Curly Bear, an earthworm had crossed his path; and suddenly, somehow, the idea had come to him to do the dance. He could not explain why.

“It just came over me, like, teacher, please,” he said.

That night the teacher thought long over the problem of civilizing Ug.

“I must do more than make him accept the ways of white men,” the teacher said. “I must make him like them. But how? First, I must get hold of his imagination. I must find the secret spring in his nature to which he will respond with genuine enthusiasm.”

The teacher was unlike many teachers in this: He did not think that every little Indian was exactly like every other little Indian. He set about the task of prodding for

Ug's own particular secret spring. It took days, but he found it at last. It was pride; ardent patriotic pride.

Mostly, when the teacher was talking of fractions or verbs or such things, Ug was in a species of torpor, with dull face. But when the teacher conducted the class in history and civics and spoke of Uncle Sam, Ug, the teacher noticed, straightened his backbone and brightness came into his black eyes. The clue was enough for the astute teacher. He dilated on the power of Uncle Sam and his love for all in the country, but particularly for his wards, the Indians, and most particularly of all for a certain youthful Flatfoot named George Washington Ug. Ug was impressed; that was plain. He became passionately devoted to Uncle Sam; he appeared to derive unlimited comfort and inspiration from the fact that a benevolent old gentleman in a tall gray hat, a star-spangled vest, striped trousers and a goatee was his friend and protector. Tho Ug's notions of what a ward is were slightly fogbound, he was very proud of the fact that he was a ward of Uncle Sam. He rather looked down on the white farmers whose land adjoined the reservation; they were mere citizens; he was a ward. No longer, when larger Indians kicked him, did he plan to massacre them as they slept. Instead, he said, "Just you wait! I'll tell my Uncle Sam on you some day when I see him." And he wrote down their names in a small note-book.

From the day that Ug discovered Uncle Sam he became a changed Flatfoot. Gladly he embraced the ways of the white man. "Uncle Sam won't like you if you don't do this or that," the teacher would say; it would be enough.

No longer with reluctance did Ug wash his ears. He attended church cheerfully; he brushed his derby hat without being told; he contributed an occasional penny to the missionary box; he learned empirically that it is unwise to use the fingers in eating custard and he desisted from doing so; he voluntarily abandoned the notion of keeping a family of pet skunks under his beds; he discontinued the practise of putting grasshoppers down the necks of smaller Indians during Sabbath school; he expressed at various times ambitions to be a railroad engineer, a moving-picture actor and a big-league shortstop; he told lies only when it was necessary, and sometimes not then. The teacher felt that Ug at last was headed in the right direction; the last of the Flatfeet was destined to be completely civilized.

When Ug was twenty the teacher decided that the job was done. It was true that Ug's scholarship was still of dubious quality; he was still under the impression that Utah is the capital of Omaha and that six times six is forty-six. But his devotion to Uncle Sam, his burning patriotism—they were unimpeachable. Love of his country and its institutions was in his blood; it broke out in a rash of small flags in his coat lapels. Ug was given a diploma full of curly penmanship, and a new derby hat, a gift from a proud teacher, and sent forth into the world. He was not worried about his future; Uncle Sam would take care of him. Perhaps he'd raise pigs; that seemed like a genteel occupation and one not involving undue labor. Anyhow, whatever he did, if he was a good Flatfoot, washed his ears regularly, paid his bills, resisted any wayward impulses to commit assault, battery, arson or theft, and in general respected the edicts of his Uncle Sam's representatives, all would go well with him. He had, as one of his most valued possessions, a newspaper picture of the Atlantic Fleet riding the high seas; and, Ug liked to reflect, at a word from him to his uncle, these giant war canoes, with

cannons as big as redwood trees, would come chugging up the mountain streams leading to the reservation to protect the rights of Ug and strike terror to the hearts of Ug's enemies. Of course, Ug must merit this protection by leading an unblemished life. This idea was the only thing George Washington Ug carried away from the school in addition to his diploma and his new derby hat; but the teacher was satisfied that it was enough.

There was no doubt about it—Ug was a good Indian, a credit to his teacher and an estimable member of society. His room-and-a-half frame house on the edge of the reservation he painted red, white and blue. He bought a tin bathtub. He planted hollyhocks. He carried a nail file in a leather case and used it openly and unabashed at the gibes of the less refined Indians. He refused to have dealings with traffickers in illicit spirits; indeed, he obeyed all rules, laws, ordinances and regulations punctiliously. On the wall of his dwelling, opposite the rotogravure of the Atlantic Fleet, was a large picture of the Washington Monument, for the teacher, when pressed, had told Ug that this was one of the homes of his Uncle Sam. Ug had sent to himself from Chicago a very civilized suit of blue serge with braid-bound lapels and freckled with small pearl buttons. He wore a rubber collar on Sundays, on formal calls and on the Fourth of July, which he believed to be Uncle Sam's birthday.

He even decided to shatter the best traditions of the male Flatfoot and work a little.

The work he selected for himself was of a sort in keeping with the importance and social position of a ward of Uncle Sam. George Washington Ug became a model. He permitted himself to be photographed by passing tourists, and for this privilege he charged a dime. It was worth it. Ug was a perfect specimen of Flatfoot beauty. His head had sharp corners, because when he was a papoose it had been strapped to a board, this being the Flatfoot contribution to the science of child-rearing. His face was a mocha prairie, with nostrils like gopher holes. He had eyes like bits of new patent leather. In figure Ug was inclined to plumpness; in general outline he resembled a hot-water bag at high tide.

It was natural, as one of the fruits of civilization, that Ug should aspire to be a capitalist. Accordingly he saved his dimes and, after prayer and meditation, invested them in a pig. It was not much of a pig, and it was given to whimpering. Ug had no special fondness for dumb animals, especially pigs; but he kept his charge under his bed and waited for him to increase and multiply. It was Ug's hope and plan that the pig would be the nucleus of a far-flung pig ranch. After consulting his school history book Ug named the animal General Grant.

Then he left the pig to browse about in the chickweed in the back yard and toughen its snout by trying to root under the hog-tight fence, while Ug himself added more dimes to his store by lurking in the vicinity of the railroad station and displaying his charms to the lenses of amateur photographers in passing trains.

The lightning of calamity struck Ug one afternoon at six minutes past five. Returning to his domicile, Ug discovered that General Grant was not snuffling about the back door, as was the General's habit. That the General could have burrowed under the fence was impossible. So Ug searched the house. He looked everywhere—under the bed, in the bathtub, in the phonograph-record case. General Grant had vanished. Ug

retained enough hunting instinct to look for tracks, and he found them. They were nail-shod boot tracks and they pointed in the direction of the farm of one Patrick Duffy, white farmer, just across the boundary of the reservation. To him went Ug.

Mr. Duffy came out from his supper with egg on his overalls and fire in his eye. He was a high, wide, thick man, with a bushel of torch-colored hair, a jaw like an iceberg and fists like demijohns. Ug removed his derby hat, bowed, and inquired politely if Mr. Duffy had seen a pig answering to the name of General Grant.

"I have," said Mr. Duffy, grim of voice.

"Where is he, please?"

"In my pen," responded Mr. Duffy.

"I'll take him away," said Ug.

"You will not," said Mr. Duffy.

"But he's mine," protested Ug.

"He was," corrected Mr. Duffy. "Now he's mine."

"Since when, Patsy Duffy?" Ug was growing agitated; he had heard tales of Mr. Duffy.

"Your thievin' pig," declared Mr. Duffy, "come over and et my prize parsnips. I was goin' to show 'em at the state fair. They was worth eleven dollars—to me, anyhow—not countin' the honor an' glory. Now they're et. I'll be keeping the pig."

"You give me back my pig, Patsy Duffy!" cried Ug.

"You give me back my parsnips," returned Mr. Duffy coldly.

"But General Grant didn't eat your parsnips," said Ug. "He hates parsnips. And, anyhow, he was home all day. You took——"

"Look here, Injin," said Mr. Duffy severely, "I ain't got time to stand out here debatin' with you."

Ug was trembling with an emotion he knew to be sinful and contrary to all moral precepts. An ax lay on a near-by woodpile, and Ug's eyes leaped from it to the bushy head of Patrick Duffy and then back to the ax again; for a second, civilization tottered. Then Ug, with a movement of resolution, replaced the derby hat on his black locks.

"All right, Patsy Duffy," he said with dignity. "Just you wait! I'm going to tell my uncle on you." And Ug turned away.

"You can tell your aunt, too," Mr. Duffy called after him, "and all your cousins. But the pig stays here, and if I ketch you pesterin' around here, Injin, I'll boot you for a gool."

Ug made his way cabinward with cloudy brow. Here was injustice, flagrant injustice. He was a ward of Uncle Sam and he didn't propose to be treated like that, even by Patsy Duffy.

"It's not the pig; it's the principle of the thing," muttered Ug as he tramped along.

It was not that he was sentimentally attached to General Grant; the pig, indeed, had grown to be more of a pest than a pet. But the pig was his property, and another man

had dared to take him. Ug shook his fist in the direction of the Duffy house.

“You’ll rue the day, Patsy Duffy,” said Ug; he had seen melodramas. Then Ug chuckled to himself. He had reached the cabin and his eye had fallen on the picture of the Atlantic Fleet; he was picturing to himself Patsy Duffy shelled into submission by its big guns.

To his teacher, as the nearest representative of Uncle Sam, Ug went and stated the case of the kidnaped General Grant. The teacher listened sympathetically, but he shook his gray head; he knew Patsy Duffy, his gusty temper, his heavy fist, his plethoric bank roll, his political power. He pointed out to Ug that the recovering of kidnaped pigs was not a pedagogical function; furthermore, Ug was no longer a schoolboy, but a man of the world. Ug suggested a direct appeal to Uncle Sam. The teacher said emphatically that that would never do. Uncle Sam was much too busy to be bothered about one pig. He never, the teacher assured Ug, concerned himself personally with any matter involving less than a million pigs; his hired men looked after lesser cases, the teacher said, congratulating himself secretly that “hired men” was a rather good stroke. The law, suggested the teacher, was on Ug’s side; his best advice to Ug was to consult the law in the person of Marcellus Q. Wigmore, attorney and counselor, in his office in Timberlake City. Yes, that was the civilized thing to do. Uncle Sam would approve; yes, yes, consult the law by all means.

Ug, a shade disappointed but not at all downhearted, greased his hair, dusted off his derby and walked the sixteen miles to Timberlake City. The majesty of the law, as embodied in Attorney and Counselor Wigmore, was enthroned in two cobwebby back rooms over a hay-and-feed store on Main Street. Ug was permitted to sit in the outer room until he was impressed, and this did not take long, for it was a musty, intimidating, legal-smelling place lined with books of repealed statutes and reports of drainage commissions, important-looking books with bindings suffering from tetter. Then Ug was summoned into the presence of Attorney Wigmore, a lean, dusty man of prehistoric aspect, with a dazzling bald head, an imposing frock coat and a collar like a spite fence.

He pursed shrewd lips and said, “And in what way may I have the honor of serving you, sir?” in a solemn court-room voice.

Ug, overawed, got out, “Patsy Duffy stole General Grant.”

“Ah?” said Mr. Wigmore. “Ah?”

“He said he et his parsnips,” hurried on Ug. “But General Grant never et them. He hated parsnips—honest.”

“Ah,” said Mr. Wigmore, “an interesting historical fact. But how, may I inquire, do the tastes of the late general concern me?”

Ug poured out his story of the abduction of his pig. Mr. Wigmore said, to himself, “Patsy Duffy? Ah, yes; ah, yes.” Then he addressed Ug, as if he were a jury.

“My dear sir,” said Attorney and Counselor Wigmore gravely, “this is indeed a pretty legal problem. Hur-r-rumph! Yes, a pretty legal problem. I hesitate to give an *ex-cathedra* opinion on a question involving so moot a point of jurisprudence. Hur-r-rumph!”

Ug listened, confused but fascinated. The eyes of Mr. Wigmore searched the grimy ceiling.

“Hur-r-rumph!” he said, with a bass judicial clearing of the throat. “Let us put the case in its simplest terms. We have you, the plaintiff, the party of the first part; we have one Patrick Duffy, defendant, party of the second part; we have one General Grant, pig, *casus belli*, party of the third part; we have certain parsnips, party of the fourth part. It is alleged by the party of the first part that the party of the second part did feloniously steal, make away with and confiscate the party of the third part because said Duffy alleges said General Grant did unlawfully eat, devour and consume or cause to be consumed the party of the fourth part. The plaintiff contends that he can prove an alibi for the aforementioned General Grant and that the said General Grant is innocent of the overt act imputed to him by the party of the second part. Is that not correctly stated, sir?”

“Yes, sir,” said Ug, by now dizzy.

Mr. Wigmore consulted a book weighing ten pounds. For minutes he regarded the pages darkly. Then he spoke:

“Hur-r-rumph! To speak *ex capite*, your case is not unlike the case of Bullpitt *versus* Nudd, 67 Rhode Island, 478, in which the honorable court ruled that the unlawful abduction of animals was *contra bonos mores*; and, if I remember correctly—and I think I do—fined the defendant two dollars and costs. Your case, sir, clearly involves a definition of *meum* and *tuum*; and, speaking *cum grano salis*, it has a precedent, if my memory is not at fault, and I do not believe it is, in the case of the International Knitted Knight Klose Korporation *versus* Gumbel *et al.*, 544 South Carolina, 69, although I must warn you that it will be a question of adjudication just how far the doctrine of *caveat emptor* conflicts with that of *cave canem*. You can see that for yourself, can’t you?”

Ug, utterly numb of brain, nodded.

Mr. Wigmore thoughtfully rubbed a bony chin with a thumb.

“*Inter se*,” he observed, “it will take much study to determine what your remedy is. Your pig was caught *in flagrante delicto*, according to the defendant, which would make him *particeps criminis*, would it not?”

Ug gulped.

“It might,” said Mr. Wigmore, “be possible to obtain a writ of *habeas corpus*. Or again we might have the defendant indicted for abduction. Possibly a question of riparian rights is involved. I hesitate to say without consulting an authority on torts. Have you ten dollars?”

Ug had. He produced it and saw it vanish into a recess beneath the tails of Mr. Wigmore’s long coat.

“Pray wait here,” said Mr. Wigmore, “while I go into conference.”

Mr. Wigmore went into the other room and the door closed behind him. He watched the men pitching horseshoes in the street below for ten minutes, and then returned, with grave face, to the sanctum where Ug waited, perspiring freely.

"My dear sir," said Mr. Wigmore blandly, "my advice to you is—drop the case."

Ug stared.

"And not get my pig back?" he quavered.

"What," said Mr. Wigmore philosophically, "is a pig more or less in the cosmic scheme?"

"But he's mine! I want my pig!" Ug was nearly in tears.

"Possession," remarked Mr. Wigmore, showing impatience, "is nine points of the law. You came to me for advice. I gave it to you. You have received it. The law says nothing that would help you. Forget the pig."

"But that isn't fair! He's mine! Patsy Duffy is a thief!"

Mr. Wigmore grew stern.

"Take care, young man," he said. "There are laws against slander. Mr. Duffy is a respected member of this community. His brother is the sheriff, his brother-in-law is the county judge and his son is the district attorney. Good afternoon. What a bright warm day it is, isn't it?"

Ug found himself on Main Street, stunned. He had appealed to the law and it had failed him. It didn't seem possible that so learned a man as Marcellus Q. Wigmore could be wrong, and yet Ug found himself embracing that heresy. It seemed to him that he had a right to get his pig back. He decided to appeal to another of Uncle Sam's representatives, the superintendent of the reservation.

He was a genial soul, the superintendent, who professed often and loudly a love for the Indians. The winds of politics had wafted him from his cigar store in Altoona, Pennsylvania, where Indians, except wooden ones, are something of a rarity, to his present position. He greeted Ug warmly, almost affectionately, slapped his back and asked after his health. Ug replied that he was in a persecuted state of mind, and pigless, and narrated the story of the loss of General Grant. The superintendent was horrified, sympathetic, indignant simultaneously.

"How dare this fellow Duffy take the property of one of my Indians?" he demanded with heat. "I'll show him! Now don't you worry, young fellow. I'll take this matter up myself, personally, see?" And he patted Ug out of the office.

Ug waited a week. But his pig was not returned. He summoned up his courage, bathed his rubber collar, and once more tremulously visited the superintendent. As he approached the office he noted that the superintendent was busy with some visitor. Ug paused in his approach. He could see the visitor now. There was no mistaking that beacon light of red hair and those haystack shoulders. Ug grinned; doubtless at that very moment the superintendent was castigating Duffy for purloining the pig. Then Ug perceived that that could hardly be the case, for Mr. Duffy emitted a bull bellow of a laugh, and Ug heard with dismay that the superintendent laughed with him. Ug crept nearer the window. He saw that on the table between the two men were cards and piles of chips and a brown bottle. Ug departed as softly as he had come. He did not go back to the superintendent again. Somehow he had divined that it would be of no avail.

He went to the teacher. What could he do now? Write to one of the men in Washington to whom Uncle Sam had intrusted the task of looking after the Indians, the teacher suggested. Ug returned to his cabin and struggled with pen, ink and paper all evening. By morning he had produced a smeary note:

Indian Commissioner,
Washington, D. C.

Hon. sir: I had pig—boughten by me for \$3.45. His name was General Grant. Patsy Duffy stealed him. General Grant did not et them parsnips. He hates parsnips worse than the dickens. White man has not right to take Indian pig I guess. I want my pig back. Please tell Uncle Sam.

Your loving son,

GEORGE WASHINGTON UG
Flatfoot Indian.

Having dispatched this missive, Ug waited quietly, and with assurance. From time to time he glanced at the Atlantic Fleet, and reflected with pride that at a word from him that terrible machinery would be set in motion against that red-headed Duffy man. In eleven days he received a letter—a long, important-looking document with an eagle in the corner. Excitedly he tore it open. It read:

Dear sir: In reply refer to No. 73965435, file 4534, section 23x.

Your communication has been received and will be acted upon in due course.

Chief Clerk of the Chief Clerk,
Department of the Interior.

Ug was not entirely pleased by the letter. He had hoped for a short, firm order to Patrick Duffy that would lead to the immediate restitution of his pig. Then, too, there was something so cool, aloof, impersonal about it, considering that he was a relative of Uncle Sam. He wondered how long “in due course” was. When it proved to be more than two weeks Ug, growing restive, wrote a post card to the Indian commissioner:

Hon. sir: How about my pig?

Your loving son,

GEORGE WASHINGTON UG,
Flatfoot Indian.

He received a reply in a week:

Dear sir: In reply refer to No. 656565, drawer; pig.

A careful search of this department has resulted in the finding of no pig, pigs or other animals belonging to you, and we are therefore at a loss to understand your esteemed favor of the nineteenth.

Chief Clerk of the Bureau of Missing Animals.

Ug groaned aloud when he read this. He bought a fresh bottle of ink and gave himself over for two days to the arduous task of literary composition. The letter he sent away to Washington read:

Hon. sir: Now look here please. I am good little Indian. I had pig. Name, General Grant. Patsy Duffy, bad man but white, he steal that pig. He say G. Grant et his parsnips. This is a fib. I keep all laws and teacher says I am sibbleized. Please tell Uncle Sam I want back my pig.

Your loving son,

GEORGE WASHINGTON UG,
Flatfoot Indian.

Ten days later a very fat letter came for Ug, and he took it triumphantly. He even bought a can of condensed milk for General Grant's home-coming party. In his cabin he opened the letter. It read:

Dear sir: In reply refer to No. 4399768554333; section 29, subsection 9.

Your communication has been received and placed on file. Nothing can be done because of insufficient information. Please answer the inclosed questionnaire and return same to above.

What is your full name?

When and where were you born?

What proofs have you that you were?

What are your father's and mother's names, date of birth, age, sex and cause of death, if any?

What is your tribe?

What is your sex?

What is the full name of the pig in this case?

What is its sex?

Has it any distinguishing marks? Send map of same.

Give dimensions of pig, using inclosed measurement chart.

Did you yourself steal the pig in the first place?

If not, inclose bill of sale.

Inclose statement signed by five witnesses proving that pig is not fond of parsnips.

Inclose photograph of pig and sample of parsnip alleged to have been eaten by same.

Inclose full description of Patrick Duffy, giving name, age, sex and photograph—without hat.

Chief Clerk, Bureau of Claims, Flatfoot Section.

It took Ug three days, seven pens, two bottles of ink—one spilled—two smeared shirts and much grunting to answer the questions, but answer them he did. He mailed the letter and waited.

The Indian Bureau replied in two weeks that his communication had been received and given careful attention; but, inasmuch as it appeared to involve a pig, it had been referred to the Department of Agriculture. The secretary to the secretary to the Secretary of Agriculture wrote Ug that the case had been referred to the Bureau of Animal Husbandry. Ug, puzzled, sent a hasty post card to say that General Grant had no husband, but this information was ignored. Instead, he received a letter saying that because of the legal aspects of the case it had been passed on to the Department of Justice. Ug sighed and waited. The Department of Justice referred the case, it notified Ug, to the ninth assistant attorney-general, who gave it some days of study and sent it back to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who wrote Ug to know if it was a pig or a rig that he had lost. Ug wrote “Pig, Pig, Pig!” on a post card and sent it to Washington. Day followed day. No letter came to Ug. He finally could stand delay no longer. He decided one night to play his trump card. He wrote to Uncle Sam:

Dear Uncle Sam: You know me. I am George Washington Ug, a very sibbleized good Indian; wear derby hat; go church; say prayers; don’t fight. Now this Patsy Duffy, bad white man, took my pig, General Grant, and I don’t know how he get that way. Please send large gunboats and make Patsy Duffy give back my pig please.

Your loving neffew,

GEORGE,
Flatfoot.

Doubts, worries, irritations melted away as Ug read and reread his letter. It was all up with Patsy Duffy now. Uncle Sam could not resist that letter, even if it did involve less than one million pigs. It involved an injustice to his ward, and Uncle Sam would not permit that. Ug smiled as he wrote on the envelop in his big, round scraggly hand, “Uncle Sam, Washington, D. C.”

The reply came more promptly than replies to any of his other letters; Ug knew it would. He picked up the official envelop almost reverently. He carried it past the other Indians in his hand. He wanted them to see that he, Ug, had received a letter from his Uncle Sam. He postponed the pleasure of opening it, just as a child saves the best cake till last. He opened it after some blissful reverie in his own cabin. As he read it the brown face of Ug became like a cup of coffee to which a great deal of milk has suddenly been added. The letter was short, formal. It was from the Post Office Department, and it read:

No such person as Uncle Sam is known in Washington, D. C. In the future please give full name and street and number.

Ug felt as if he had been tomahawked. He took himself, his dismay and his *café-au-lait* face to the teacher.

“What is Uncle Sam’s last name?” he asked.

The teacher didn't know. Ug had caught him in an unguarded moment; the admission had slipped out; the teacher flushed, flustered.

"What is Uncle Sam's street and number?" asked Ug. His small eyes now held suspicion.

The teacher didn't know.

"Ug," he said in his most kindly manner, "you're a grown man now. I think, perhaps, I ought to tell you. Uncle Sam isn't a man; that is to say, he isn't like you or me. He's a sort of—well, a sort of spirit."

"Like God?" asked Ug.

"Oh, no, no, no, no, no! Not like God."

"Like Santa Claus?"

"Yes, yes; that's it," said the teacher hastily. "Rather more like Santa Claus."

"Teacher," said Ug, and his face was as set as a totem pole, "three years ago you told me that there was no Santa Claus."

The teacher looked away from Ug. The subject was very unpleasant to the teacher.

"You've been a good boy, Ug," he said.

"I've tried to be," said Ug, picking up his derby hat.

Homeward through a quiet evening went Ug, very slowly; his square head was bent forward till his chin obscured his rubber collar; the path across the meadow was well defined by the rising moon, but Ug's feet now and then strayed from it; he walked like a man very tired. Not far from his small red, white and blue cabin Ug stopped short. Something was moving in the grass near the path. Ug bent toward it. It was a large, glistening, red earthworm. Ug's hands went up to his head, and when they came down one of them held his derby hat. A sharp motion and the hat went skimming out into the alfalfa. A hen, the property of a white neighbor, disturbed in her beauty sleep, cackled. Ug made other sharp motions. One of them stripped off his blue-serge pants. Another ended the earthly days of the hen by quick and vigorous strangulation. Still another plucked out the feathers; and yet another nipped the earthworm by the nape of its slimy neck before it could slither back into its burrow. Then the quiet night heard sounds—the sounds of a wild martial chant in a barbarous tongue:

"Koopeekis koopeekis
Bobbochee cheebobo
Toowanda bonda bonda, Patsy Duffy,
Bopokum kobokum."

The owls and the gophers, the only witnesses, saw a plump square-headed man, with feathers in his hair, a knife in one hand and a wriggling worm in the other, twisting and turning and dancing a primitive abandoned dance in the moonlight.

Patsy Duffy, smoking his corncob on his porch in the cool of the evening, heard the distant sounds too. He heard them draw nearer. He did not understand what was happening till a fantastic figure bounded, as if it were India rubber, to his porch. He recognized Ug. It was not the Ug he had known.

It was an Ug with eyes that blazed, an Ug that spoke the chopped untutored speech of his ancestors.

“What the devil!” growled Patsy Duffy, starting up.

“White man, you steal um pig! Me heap bad Injun! You give um pig or you catch hell!”

“I’ll boot you——” began Patsy Duffy, but he had no chance to finish his threat. Ug was on him, clawing him like a demon; one brown hand gripped the red hair, the other flourished the long-bladed jackknife. Down they went, with Ug on top. A shrill cry like the note of a drunken whippoorwill caught in a buzz saw cut the night; his breath and his spirit deserted Patrick Duffy; he knew that cry; years and years ago it had struck cold fear to the hearts of white pioneers; it was the war whoop of the Flatfeet.

“You let me up!” sniveled Patrick Duffy. “I was just havin’ a little joke with you; honest I was, Ug.”

Even a braver man might well have been cowed by the ferocity of a Flatfoot on the warpath. Ug rose. He scowled at the prostrate Duffy.

“White man,” said Ug, “if I catch you near my tepee I’ll scalp you.”

But Ug knew from Patrick Duffy’s eyes that that eventuality would never occur.

Across the moonlit meadow a figure made its way; in shape it was not unlike a hot-water bag at high tide. Certain feathers in its hair cast grotesque shadows; it went forward with a conquering swagger, and this was no mean feat, considering that the figure held clasped tight in its arms a fat, squirming pig.

THE MAN WHO COULD IMITATE A BEE

IT was not until his twenty-second year that Hervey Deyo realized that he was taking life too seriously. Then the realization struck him sharply.

He had been a serious infant and had nursed more from a sense of duty than pleasure; his juvenile marble and hoop games had been grave affairs, conducted with nicety and decorum; he learned to read shortly after he was breeched and at seven presented a slip at the public library for the Encyclopedia from A to Z. The librarian demurred, but he gently insisted; he was permitted to carry it home volume by volume. At twelve he had resolved to be a scientist and furthermore a great scientist. He determined to pursue the career of ornithologist; there was something so dignified and withal scientific about a science that called the sparrow *Passer Domesticus* and the robin *Erithacus Rubecula*. He made rapid progress. On his thirteenth birthday he took a bird walk at dawn and was able to record in his note-book the scientific names of forty-nine birds, including the ruby-and-topaz humming-bird (*Chrysolampis Mosquitos*) which is rare around Boston.

At fifteen he wrote a daring monograph which proved beyond cavil that it would be possible to revivify the extinct great auk (*Plautus Impennis*) by a judicious and protracted series of matings between the penguin (*Sphenisciformes*) and the ostrich (*Struthio Camelus*). This theory was hotly challenged by a German savant in a seventy thousand word exegesis; Hervey Deyo crushed him under a hundred thousand word rejoinder and thus at a tender age came to enjoy a certain decent celebrity in the world of ornithology. At seventeen, still in the University, he was becoming known as a first-rate all-round bird man; he rather looked down on old Fodd at the Natural History Museum who was a beetle man and particularly on Armbuster who was a mere bee man; yes, Armbuster and his bees decidedly wearied Hervey Deyo. As if bees counted!

Something revolutionary happened to him in the spring of his twenty-second year. The mild spring evenings, biology, inexorable Nature conspired against him; his mind began to reach out for contacts with new things outside the world of birds. He made the disturbing discovery that he could be interested in things unfeathered; girls, for example.

He made this discovery at a tea to which he had gone, most reluctantly, with his mother, who was intensely serious about her social duties. He found himself sitting on a divan beside a girl; her hair was blonde and bobbed and she had an attentive little smile. To be polite, he explained to her the essential differences between the European redstart (*Phœnicurus Phœnicurus*) and its cousin, the American flycatching warbler (*Setophaga Ruticilla*). As he talked the notion grew on him that teas were not the bore he had thought them. It disconcerted him when the girl rather abruptly left him to join a fattish young man who had just entered. Hervey Deyo could tell at a glance that the newcomer had not the intellect to so much as stuff a lark.

His alert mother spied his lonely state and steered him to another corner and another girl. He sought to fascinate her with an account of the curious circumstance that

the male loon (*Gavia Immer*) has three more bones in his ankle than the female of that specie; he told her this in strictest confidence, for it was the very latest gossip of the world of ornithology. He could not but note that after fifteen minutes her attention seemed to wander. Presently she murmured some vague excuse and slipped away to join a laughing group in another part of the room. He followed her flight with a glum eye.

The group appeared to have as its center the fattish young man and it was growing distinctly hilarious. Hervey Deyo had a pressing, but, he told himself, wholly scientific interest in learning what conversational charm or topic made the fattish young man so much more interesting than himself. He edged his chair within earshot.

The fattish young man was not talking; he appeared to be making a series of odd noises through his nose, varied now and then by throaty bellows.

"Norrrrrrrrrrk. Norrrrrrk. Wurrrrr. Wurrrrr."

The trained ear of Hervey Deyo was puzzled; clearly they were not bird noises, yet they had a scientific sound; perhaps the fattish young man was a scientist after all, a mammal man.

"Norrrrrrrrrrk. Norrrrrrk. Wurrrrr. Wurrrrr."

The girl with the attentive smile solved the mystery. She called across the room.

"Oh, Bernice, do come over here. You simply must hear Mr. Mullett imitate a trained seal!"

Hervey Deyo felt actually ill. So that was the secret of Mr. Mullett's powers; that was the magnet!

"Norrrrrrrrrrk. Norrrrrrk. Wurrrrr. Wurrrrr."

Hervey Deyo couldn't stand it. Stiffly he went out and as he took his hat and stick he could still hear the laughter and the fainter,

"Norrrrrrrrrrk. Norrrrrrk. Wurrrrr. Wurrrrr."

In a fury of disgust he went to his laboratory and so violently stuffed a grackle (*Euphagus Ferrugineus*) that it burst.

Next day he realized that something annoying had happened, was happening to him; he could not keep his mind on his work; it kept straying, despite him, to the little girl with the attentive smile. She had been interested in his talk of birds until the accomplished Mr. Mullett, imitator of trained seals, had made his untimely appearance. His teeth gritted together at the thought.

That afternoon he surprised his mother by suggesting that he accompany her to a tea; she was glad his social consciousness seemed to be aroused at last. They went.

"Who is Mr. Mullett?" he asked her as they rode tea-ward in her motor car, a product of the seriousness applied by Mr. Deyo, senior, to his brick business.

"Mr. Mullett? Why, he's one of the Brookline Mulletts," his mother said. "Why?"

"Is he an animal man?"

"No; he sells insurance."

"He seems popular."

“Oh, he has some parlor tricks.”

“I beg pardon, mother? The allusion escapes me.”

“Parlor tricks,” repeated his mother. “He imitates a trained seal; it appears to strike the younger people as excessively comical. I believe he can also swallow a lighted cigaret.”

Hervey emitted a polite moan.

“Must one do parlor tricks?”

“They have their uses,” said his mother.

The girl with the attentive smile was at the tea and Hervey Deyo captured her. Her name was Mina Low. He was congratulating himself on having interested her in his new monograph on parakeet bills, when she sprang up with a little cry of pleasure.

“Oh, Mr. Deyo, there’s Ned Mullett. Let’s get him to imitate a trained seal. He’s perfectly killing.”

“I do not know seals,” said Hervey Deyo, severely. “They fail to attract me. I am a bird man.”

He left the tea with a heavy heart while the talented Mullett was bellowing,

“Norrrrrrrrrrk. Norrrrrrk. Wurrrr. Wurrrr.”

Lying in his bed that night the brain of Hervey Deyo entertained two thoughts. One was that Miss Low was a singularly charming girl; the other was he could not interest her by birds alone. How then? He analyzed the situation with the same care and logic that he applied to the dissection of a humming-bird. His conclusion was revolting but inescapable. He must master a parlor trick. He shuddered at the notion, but he was resolved.

“The end justifies the means,” he muttered.

He rose early and attacked the problem with the weapons of science. In his notebook he carefully wrote down all the animals and the sounds they made, with comments and remarks on their value as entertainment.

Ant-eater *Wheeeeewhooooowheeee* (difficult).

Buffalo *Roooooor roooooor* (uncouth).

Bull *Horrrrr rorrrr rorrrr* (too like buffalo).

Beagle *Irrrrp yirrrrrp yirrp* (lacks dignity).

Elephant *Arrraoooow arrraoooow* (hard on one’s throat).

He went through the list of the mammals and the result was disappointing. None of them seemed so interesting as a seal, and besides, he did not wish to lay himself open to the charge of plagiarism. He could not, of course, employ the calls of birds, although he was rather good at that; it seemed sacrilegious to employ ornithology as a parlor trick.

He turned his attention to the noises made by inanimate things; he jotted down in his book “fog-horn, buzzsaw, locomotive, saxophone.” He was considering them with furrowed brow when Armbuster agitatedly burst in. He disliked Armbuster; he gave

himself too many airs for a mere bee man; Hervey considered it rather an imposition when Armbuster was given an adjoining laboratory at the Museum.

“Have you seen her, Deyo?” cried Armbuster.

“Her? Who?”

“My queen. She’s escaped.”

“No,” said Hervey Deyo coldly. It was annoying to have one’s thoughts broken in upon to be asked about a wretched bee.

“If you do see her, be sure to tell me,” said Armbuster.

“Certainly.”

The bee man vanished.

Hervey Deyo again bent over his note-book; he added the words “dentist’s electric drill,” and was considering whether Miss Low would regard an imitation of it as unpleasant, when a faint sound caused him to turn his head. A large bumblebee was crawling up the window-pane grumbling to herself. Hervey Deyo watched, listened. His first thought was to capture her and return her to Armbuster, and he reached out his hand toward her. She bumbled noisily and eluded him. It came to him as a flash of inspiration that his problem was solved. He’d imitate a bee!

He knew it was not honorable to keep her, but he did. He spent the afternoon chasing her up and down the pane with a gloved hand; she muttered and grumbled and buzzed. “*Bzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzz.*”

He smiled a smile of grim triumph; what was a trained seal’s raucous bellow to this? Softly he imitated the sounds she made; patiently he practised; before dusk came he was satisfied with the perfection of his imitation, and yet not entirely satisfied. The thing lacked a dramatic quality; it came to no climax. He could buzz loudly and softly, angrily or soothingly; but there was no grand finale. He felt that one was needed; Mr. Mullett ended his seal imitation with a crescendo roar.

A thought, murderous and ruthless, shot into one of Hervey Deyo’s brain cells. Normally he was neither murderous nor ruthless; quite gentle, indeed. But love brings out the primal man; for the sake of Mina Low he would, for a second, be atavistic. He chased the protesting bee across the pane; he got her into a corner; his gloved hand closed on her; she buzzed frantically; he closed his thumb and forefinger smartly together; he cut her off in full buzz with a sharp incisive sound like a torch plunged into a pond. A perfect climax! Hurriedly, furtively, he fed her corpse to a live flamingo in a cage in the corner. On his way home he passed Armbuster in the hall; Armbuster was distractedly searching for his queen; he was peering under a rug. Hervey Deyo did not meet the bee man’s eye.

In his room that night he practised assiduously his new accomplishment.

“*Bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzrf!*”

He attained perfection in that final shrill, staccato “*bzzzzzrf.*” His mother, hearing the sounds, came to the door to ask if he was ill. He called her in.

“Listen,” he said.

“*Bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzrf!*”

He obliged them.

“Bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzf!”

They encored him. One of the guests was the fattish young man, Mr. Mullett, but the spotlight had shifted from him and he sat eating morosely and regarding Hervey Deyo with bilious, jealous eye. During the dessert Mr. Mullett essayed to bark like a seal, but Mrs. Murgatroyd looked at him disapprovingly and he never reached the roared climax; he buried his chagrin in the peche Melba. Hervey Deyo, observing, smiled quietly to himself.

After dinner he had a tête-à-tête with Mina Low. For her own special and private diversion he twice repeated his imitation; on the second occasion he ventured to take her hand and she pretended to be so absorbed in the imitation that she did not notice.

Three nights later he called on her at her home. It was with difficulty that her young brothers were finally dragged off to bed; the imitation fascinated them and Hervey Deyo was forced to do it no less than seven times. He was getting to be a virtuoso. He could keep it up for five minutes at a time, now pretending that the bee was in the lampshade, now under a glass, now behind the piano, and even up the pant leg of the youngest Low boy. When he and Mina were at last alone together, he pretended that the bee was buzzing very near her blonde, bobbed hair; in capturing it, he kissed her. Their engagement was announced the following Friday.

The notice in the local newspaper pleased and yet vaguely disturbed Hervey Deyo. It described him thus: “Mr. Hervey Deyo is well known in local society; he is a gifted scientist and has gained a reputation for his ability to imitate a bee.”

As he reread this he could not but feel that some reference should have been made to the fact that he was the author of an authoritative work on the cuckoo (*Cuculus Canorus*), that he was a Doctor of Philosophy, and that in the fall he was to become Chief Curator of Birds in the Museum. Still, he reflected, newspapers haven’t room to print everything; they strive to print what to them are the salient facts.

He and his fiancée went about a great deal and the party at which Hervey Deyo did not give his imitation of a bee was adjudged a sterile affair. Frequently he congratulated himself in those days that it took a man of science to know when to be serious and when not to be. They were married in August, and no less than seventeen friends sent the happy pair various representations of bees as wedding gifts; they received bronze bees, porcelain bees, silver bees, gold bees, and a pewter bee; his colleagues at the Museum gave him a handsome bronze inkstand made to resemble a bee-hive.

On his return from his honeymoon, Hervey Deyo threw himself into his bird labors at the Museum with energy; he was a bird man, even a first-class bird man, and so far his ambition was gratified; but it still burned with a hot unappeased flame. He wanted to be the biggest bird man in the world. However, after his marriage he permitted himself certain digressions from the relentless pursuit of this aim. There was a constant demand for him socially and, as Mina was fond of teas and parties and bridge and balls, he found himself giving rather less time to his birds than formerly. He was by no means averse to a measure of social life.

“A great scientist can afford to have his human side,” he assured himself.

Wherever he went with Mina, be it tea, party, bridge, or ball, he was invariably pressed to give his imitation of a bee. He would bow; he would let them insist a bit; invariably he gave it.

“Bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzrf!”

No stranger ever came to the city who did not, sooner or later, hear “that screamingly funny fellow, Deyo, and his perfectly killing imitation of a bee.” His fame spread.

He had been married a number of years and had a child or two when he came home one evening visibly excited.

“My dear,” he called to his wife, his voice full of excitement tinged with awe, “tonight I am to meet Professor Schweeble. He just came to town. Think of it! Karl Humperdinck Schweeble!”

“Schweeble?” said Mina, blankly.

“You don’t mean to say you never heard of Schweeble!”

“I’m afraid not.”

“But I’ve spoken of him score of times.”

“Oh, perhaps you have,” she said, yawning. “I thought he was a bird.”

“Why, Schweeble is the biggest bird man in the world,” he exclaimed. “It will be a big night in ornithology when Schweeble and Deyo shake hands. He must know my work; of course he must. He can’t have missed that great auk monograph and the cuckoo book.”

He was so excited he could hardly tie his dinner tie.

“Schweeble,” he kept repeating, “the great Schweeble. I’ve wanted to meet him all my life. He comes just at the right time, too, just when my paper on the *Pyrrhula Europaea*—bull-finch, my dear—is causing talk.”

“Don’t forget your goloshes,” admonished Mina.

Hervey Deyo, red, proud and flustered, was introduced half an hour later to that great Bohemian savant, Professor Schweeble, at the University Club. Professor Schweeble made him a courtly bow.

“Charmed, Doctor Deyo,” he said. “I haff heard much gebout you.”

Hervey Deyo bowed deeply; he was warm and crimson with pleasure.

“Oh, really?” he murmured.

“Yezz,” said the distinguished visitor, “who haff not heard of Deyo, the bee man?”

Deyo . . . the bee man!

“I?” Hervey Deyo was stunned, “I, a bee man? Oh, no, no, no, no, no!”

“Pardon. Pardon many times. You are but too modest,” said Professor Schweeble, wagging his index finger at the stricken Deyo. “But surely you are that same Deyo who makes the sound like the bee.”

Hervey Deyo stuttered; he would have flung out a denial. But the other scientists had gathered about.

"Oh, come, Deyo," they urged him. "There's a good chap. Imitate a bee for the Professor."

Hervey bit his lips.

"How iss it?" encouraged Professor Schweeble. "*Bzzzzzzz*."

"No," cried Hervey Deyo, wildly. "Not like that. Like this. '*Bzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzrf!*'"

"Ah, most droll," said Professor Schweeble. "You have talent; you are a comedian. You should go on the stage."

Hervey Deyo could not articulate. Professor Schweeble addressed him in the tone Hervey knew so well, for he employed it often; it was the tone of tolerance a scientist adopts to a layman.

"Have you ever taken an interest in birds, Doctor Deyo? There are some fine birds a clever fellow like you could learn to imitate."

Hervey Deyo did not enjoy that dinner.

He was up at daybreak and he attacked his work with a cold and terrible energy. He stuffed a whole family of bobolinks (*Dolichonyx Dryzivorus*) and dissected snipe (*Gallinago*) by the dozen. He sat up till his eyes ached writing a masterly treatise on the habits and home life of the adult pelican (*Pelecanus*).

"Deyo, the bee man, eh," his lips kept saying. "I'll show 'em who's a bee man. I'll show 'em."

But he found it impossible to withdraw from social life; the adulation he received as the most perfect imitator of a bee extant had come to be necessary to him; he continued to go out to social functions; he continued to be asked to imitate a bee; he continued to comply. Mina's smile had less and less of an attentive quality in it; she began to find excuses for not going with him; but he insisted that it was her duty; she could not give him adequate reasons for evading it.

He was forty when he went down to New York to attend a dinner—a very special dinner—of the Ornithological Congress of the World, then in session. For months he worked to prepare a paper that would definitely place him at the head of his science, now that Schweeble was no more. It was on the mental habits of grouse (*Tetraoninae*). He rose to read it, but some bibulous lesser bird man in the rear of the hall called out, "Forget the grouse. Give us the bee." Others took up the cry.

"Forget the grouse. Give us the bee."

The whole room took up the cry.

"Forget the grouse. Give us the bee."

"Yes, yes, the bee. We want the bee. We want the bee. WE WANT THE BEE."

Ornithologists have their light moods.

He twisted the table-cloth in a great despair; a furious refusal stuck in his throat; habit was stronger than he.

"*Bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzrf!*"

They sang “He’s a jolly good fellow which nobody can deny.” A jolly good fellow! It was the last thing in the world Hervey Deyo had ever wanted to be. This, then, was his fame.

He returned to his home city. His house was silent when he entered it. On his desk was a note.

“Dear Hervey:

“I’ve taken the children and gone to live with Mother. I love you as much as ever, but I can not live with a bee. If I should hear you buzz just once more I should go mad Don’t forget to put on your goloshes.

MINA."

He went out of the house. Deliberately he did not wear his goloshes; it was a slushy night. At seven they took him to the hospital with a severe case of influenza.

In the morning a careless nurse left a newspaper where he could reach it. An item struck his eye.

“Hervey Deyo is dangerously ill in St. Paul’s Hospital. He is the man who can imitate a bee.”

When he read this, Hervey Deyo let the paper slip from his fingers, and sank back on his pillow. When the doctor came in, he found him lying staring at the ceiling. A glance told the doctor that Hervey Deyo had not long to live; the doctor sought to rouse him from his torpor, to fan the flickering flame of his interest; he turned on his professional bedside smile.

“Ah,” said the doctor, “thinking about bees, I’ll wager.”

“No,” Hervey Deyo got out feebly, “not bees.”

“But, surely, I’m not mistaken. You are Deyo, the famous bee man.”

Hervey Deyo struggled to muster up vitality enough to cry, “I’m a bird man.” But he could not.

“Come, now,” said the doctor, genially, “won’t you imitate that bee for me?”

Hervey Deyo tried to glare a negative, but had not the strength.

“I’ve heard so much about it,” said the doctor. “And I’ve never heard you do it, you know.”

On a faint ebb of strength, Hervey Deyo managed to say, "Really?"

“No. Never.”

Hervey Deyo with a final effort gathered together all the little, last strength in him.

“It—goes—like—this.

“Bzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz, bzzzzzzz bzzzz bzz bzzf!”

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *Apes and Angels* by Richard Edward Connell]