

shop of fiction was also the village-shop of fact. It was the mere truth that one could buy everything in this diminutive emporium, that the multifariousness of its odours excelled that of the odours of Cologne, and that the proprietor, who had never seen me before, instantly knew me and all about me. Soon I was in a fair way to know something of the proprietor. He was informing me that he had five little children, when one of the five, snuffling and in a critical mood, tumbled into the shop out of an obscure Beyond.

"And what's your name?" I enquired of the girl, with that fatuous, false blandness of tone which the inexperienced always adopt toward children. I thought of the five maidens whose names were five sweet symphonies, and moreover I deemed it politic to establish friendly relations with my monopolist.

"She's a little shy," I remarked.

"It's a boy, sir," said the monopolist.

It occurred to me that Nature was singularly uninventive in devising new quandaries for the foolish.

"Tell the gentleman your name."

Thus admonished, the boy emitted one monosyllable: "Guy."

"We called him Guy because he was born on the fifth of November," the monopolist was good enough to explain.

As I left the shop a man driving a pony drew up at the door with an immense and sudden flourish calculated to impress the simple. I noticed that