

Chris's eager gaze ran past the steps and the level loggia to the four mammoth white columns which held up, at an incredible altitude, a triangular pediment, heavily trimmed with dentals of wood, and the iron-railed balcony, jutting out from the second floor windows.

The beauty of dark slave-wrought iron, in contrast to the dazzling façade, made a lasting impression upon the ignorant boy who beheld it.

What worlds of difference divided his own humble life from the people who dwelt in so magnificent a home! thought the wistful observer. How beyond all possible dreams it would be that ever he harboured a friend there!

Chris's freedom for strolls such as this, and excursions to size up the town to which fate, in the person of Ossie, had dragged him, did not last very long. When Sis became certain that no coaxing or threats would force her young brother to school, she conferred with James Gaither on the subject of getting the boy some sort of a start in an office.

This position was secured in the real-estate firm of Page & Youngblood, and Chris, from being a sweeper of floors and an ignominious washer-out of the ubiquitous cuspidor, gradually rose to be an accredited rent collector, his field of operations confined for the most part to the cabins of improvident negroes.

Chris honestly did his best to keep his full com-