

figures where they posed like a sculptured group, the upper bulk of the man unmoving upon the table, the woman unmoving in the chair, and behind the chair, the son, also bowed and motionless.

Hiram Burbeck was dead. He, too, had been held to answer, but before the highest court,—for his harsh legalism, for his unsympathetic heart, for his blind leadership of the blind.

How strange were the issues of life! This leaflike shadow of a woman, her mortal existence hanging by a thread, had withstood the shock for which the minister had feared and risen strong above it. She still had strength to bear and strength to give. But the proud, stern father had crumpled and died.

Again there was the sound of sobbing in the church; but the intimates of Mrs. Burbeck quickly gathered round and screened the group of mourners from the eyes of the people who filed quietly out of the building. For a time the steady tramp of feet upon the gallery stairs, with the snort and cough of motor-cars outside, resounded harshly, and then the church was emptied. Rollie had taken his mother away. Rose, Dick, and Tayna were gone. The huge chair by the end of the communion table was emptied of its burden. That, too, was gone. All the wreckage, all the past, was gone.

The old sexton stood sadly by the vestibule door, his hand upon the light switch, waiting the pleasure of his pastor for the last time.

Absently, John Hampstead climbed the pulpit stairs and stood leaning on the pulpit itself, surveying in farewell the empty pews and the empty, groined arches. They had stood for something that he had tried to do and failed; but he would try again more humbly, more in the fear of God, more in the spirit of one who had turned failure into victory.