

# The Young Author's Luck

O'Neill's office was small. He did not need a large one. Young lawyers seldom do. There are several good reasons why they don't, but that has nothing to do with this story.

The office was also an inside one—that is, it looked out on a court, a great well-like space bounded by four walls—not blind, blank walls, but walls fairly bristling with staring, impudent windows.

Behind those windows myriads of busy men and women worked at schemes by which they hoped to enrich themselves and, sometimes, incidentally to impoverish others; schemes as far-reaching in their consequences as the stone which, thrown into a stream, sends a ripple to the farthest shore.

Still, though these schemes may have been interesting to a thoughtful man making a study of the great tragedy of life, neither the walls, nor the windows, were particularly so. Yet O'Neill passed a large part of his time gazing intently at the window opposite his own.

Time and again when he had seated himself at his desk, determined to add a chapter to the book destined to bring him fame, and what was of even more vital importance, to pay his most pressing bills, he found his glances wandering across the space which separated him from the desire of his eyes.

"I wish she'd move her desk," he muttered half angrily one day as he found himself as usual watching instead of working—watching the slender, modestly dressed girl who sat in the window working so busily that she had no time to discover that opposite her was a young man whose valuable time she was wasting. Or if she had, she had never revealed the fact. But the ways of a maid with a man are not always simple and she may have been wiser in her generation than he knew.

He had scarcely uttered the wish before he was fearful that it might come to pass, so he cried out hastily, as if anxious to propitiate some jealous eavesdropping god who might take him at his word: "No, I don't. I'll take it all back, dear little saint." In fairy tales men have been granted thoughtless wishes to their own undoing and she was the princess of his fairy tale.

Why, then, did he call her the saint? He hardly knew. He certainly could not have told why if asked. Yet he felt that it suited her better than any other name he might have used. Perhaps it was because she never seemed conscious of him—saints have a way of ignoring poor mortals; perhaps because she parted her dark hair, Madonna wise, over her rather pale face in a fashion that added solemnity to its youthful seriousness; perhaps because the man who sometimes stood near her dictating to her, looked such a sinner that by the law of contrast, he made one think of saints.

O'Neill, at least, thought he looked like a sinner and one for whom there was no hope.

"Old satyr!" he growled at him as, watching from the shallow depths of his bare little office, he saw him lay a too familiar hand on the girl's shoulder. "I don't like his polygamous eyebrows. By Jove! What a scoundrel!" For the satyr had suddenly stooped and kissed the saint.

O'Neill saw the start which showed how unexpected the caress was, could almost hear the frightened exclamation with which she sprang to her feet. In another moment she stood with her hat on, covering her typewriter, and then she was gone.

The young lawyer was hot with rage, fierce with righteous indignation. He flung himself into the corridor and started in blind zeal to do something, anything. The need for action was strong within him. But before he made the first turning he felt how impotent he was, for he realized instinctively that the saint would shrug from the publicity of a scene.

But he was determined that she should work no more for that man if he could help it. Doesn't a saint belong to the one who worships? And have not men of all times and of all nations come forth gladly to death rather than have their idols desecrated?

Adroitly enough, he learned who the man was, a lawyer, a politician, a professional corrupter of legislators. And the saint? Oh, a little typewriter, Miss Browne, who seemed rather demure for a man like Lawson, who was rather "a good fellow." Strange that when some men say "a good fellow" they are thinking of qualities never found in a summary of the virtues!

Then O'Neill wrote her a letter such as Glahad, had he lived in these strenuous days, might have written. He explained how he had seen the affront to which she had been subjected, regretted deeply that

as his own law practice was such a negative quantity he could not give her a regular position as his stenographer, but offered her desk room in his office and assured her that he would secure her work from the other lawyers in the building, who, like himself, needed work done, but whose meager incomes would not permit them to employ a stenographer the entire time.

The answer was a formal little note requesting him to call at her home to meet her mother.

He went, of course. The mother, soft voiced and gentle eyed, explained the saint. She was, indeed, an edition de luxe of her daughter, refined and glorified by life. But the young man was too young, too little of an artist, to appreciate that. Both women were so grateful he was not strange that he went again and often. And he found himself wondering at the truly marvelous way in which women can impart an atmosphere of home refinement to even a four room flat.

He ceased gazing across the court during his business hours, for she was not enshrined in his own office? She was busy, too, earning more money than when with the satyr, for O'Neill had proved a good solicitor, and he had secured her more work than she could do.

Her unflagging industry aroused his own zeal, shamed him into emulation, and the book, until then only dreamed of, was in the publisher's hands before he dared to tell her how long he had called her the "saint" when her real name was a mystery.

"But, why?" she said, opening wide her big, brown eyes, that perhaps looked more ignorant of his meaning than they really were. "I am not so very good. You know I have an awful temper."

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Oh, I could say my prayers to you! If I weren't such a beggar I'd ask!" Then he stopped. How could an unworthy man ask a saint to stoop, save in pity, and he did not want pity!

"I thought beggars were the ones who needed to ask," she said softly. "I am sorry," she faltered, though an acute observer would have thought that the eyes, shining like stars, were brightened by other emotions than sorrow, "for I have but little to give."

"So little! Oh, my saint"—impudently—"you can give me heaven—if you only will, if you only will!" "It isn't mine to give you, you sacrilegious boy, and if it were I would want to keep it for myself, but," and now he had to bend to hear, for her head was drooping and her voice came softly, tremulously—"but I think we could find it together."

And then—oh, the strange unreasonableness of man!—he did the very thing that he had condemned the satyr for doing. But his eyebrows, to be sure, were not polygamous, and the saint, in her goodness, forgave him; so, perhaps, there was a difference.

O'Neill's work, mostly clever magazine articles and editorials, has been in such demand since his book, "Strikes and Socialism," proved a success that he needs the entire services of the saint, whom his friends call Mrs. O'Neill. And the heaven which they share is colloquially known as "the Happy Flat."

### Honor to the Queen.

Leaving Toronto Lord Dufferin proceeded to Montreal, where a series of public functions awaited him. Not the least interesting of these was the unveiling of the Queen Victoria monument in Victoria Square. Here his lordship delivered an oration upon the Queen, which, now that Her Majesty has left us, carries with it added interest. He spoke of the statue as "this breathing representation of that grace and dignity, that frank and open countenance, that imperial majesty of aspect which in her lifetime rendered the presence of the Queen of England more august than that of any contemporary sovereign. To you," he said, "I lay the charge of preserving for yourselves and the thousands that come after you this fair image of our Queen, this gracious impersonation of the majesty of Britain, this stately type and pledge of our imperial unity, this crowned and sceptred symbol of those glorious institutions which we have found so conducive to the maintenance of individual liberty and of constitutional freedom." Then followed a personal appreciation of the Queen: "It was my good fortune in early life to be allowed to serve near the person of the sovereign. At that time no domestic calamity had thrown its ineffable shadow across the threshold of her home. It was then, as a spectator of her daily life, its pure joys, its refined and noble

occupations, its duties never neglected, but their burdens shared by the tenderest of husbands and the most sagacious of friends, it was then that I learned the secret of that hold which Her Majesty possesses over the hearts of her subjects in every part of her extensive Empire. And in later days when death had forever shattered the visions of her early happiness and left her to discharge alone and unaided, during the long years of widowhood, in the isolation of an empty palace, the weighty and oppressive functions of her royal station, renewed opportunities were afforded one of observing with what patience, patriotism, and devotion to the public service her brave and noble nature bore each burden and discharged each daily task. From gaieties, from the distraction of society, the widowed sovereign may have shrunk, but from duty never. When, therefore, you cast your eyes up to this work of art, let the image of the woman, as well as of the Queen, be enshrined in your recollection, and let each citizen remember that in her whose sculptured lineaments he now regards he has an example of prosperity borne with meekness, of adversity with patience, of the path of duty unflatteringly followed, and of a blamelessness of existence which has been a source of pride to every English heart, and has shed its holy light upon a thousand British homes."—Toronto Star.

### Looking for the Shining Lumps.

"Well, but I don't see the use of all this fuss about getting ready to do something. The most successful men I know of plunged straight into the work they had on hand, and won. It is not so much the preparation for beginnings as it is the actual beginning that counts."

The young man looked his friend squarely in the eye, as he said this, as if he considered the argument closed. For a moment there was silence.

"The other day I passed a great shipyard," the friend replied very quietly. "Near the yards are a number of enormous piles of coal. I had seen them many times before, and they did not surprise me very much. What did make me wonder was the fact that, clambering over these coal heaps were a number of well-dressed, refined men. They were carefully examining lumps of coal and picking out those which had the most lustre."

These were put into baskets and carried away. I could not help asking why they did this, and learned that a new man-of-war had just been completed, and that a trial was to be given her. In order to secure her acceptance by the government, the vessel had to reach a certain speed at this trial. It was important that everything should be as favorable as possible. Her success depended on the fires under the boiler. So these learned men, with their high collars and eye glasses, were searching for the very best coal. Success or failure depended on it. Common coal would not do. I think that this tells the story of all success. Men do not win by haphazard methods. Ask any of them and hear what they say."

That was all of the story. I noticed that the young man who had argued so strenuously for plunging directly into business without adequate preparation became thoughtful, and I observed also that he argued no longer, but began to put more energy into his work of getting ready for life. Who doubts that that work counted?—Edgar L. Vincent in March "Success."

### Fed on Gold.

Everett, March 4.—Everett is first on the list with the discovery of a steer with a golden tooth. This interesting find has been made by an executioner in the employ of the McGhie Meat Company in the mouth of a beef animal he butchered. The molar was literally covered with flakes of gold which had become tightly fixed to the ivory. The steer came from a Snohomish county ranch. Several butchers say they intend making a systematic search of the streams along the banks of which the cattle feed, believing the steer in quenching his thirst drank in the gold. The gilded tooth is on exhibition in the window of a Hewitt avenue apothecary.

### Gives His Reasons.

London, March 2.—H. H. Asquith, M. P., in a letter to the chairman of the East Fife Liberal Association, explained his reasons for supporting the new Liberal league of Lord Rosebery's home rule policy, and points out that even Gladstone's magnificent courage and unrivaled authority failed to solve the problem, because of the rooted repugnance of the majority of the electorate of Great Britain to grant a parliament to Ireland. Mr. Asquith proceeds:

"Eight" years have since elapsed and nothing has been done to conciliate, and not a little has been done to stiffen this adverse judgment of the British electorate. If we are honest we must ask ourselves the practical question, whether it should be a part of the programme of the Liberal party, if it is returned to power, to introduce a bill for home rule. The answer to this question, in my judgment, is no; not because we think the Irish problem to be either settled or shelved, but because the history of these years, and especially of the most recent years, has made it plain that home rule cannot be obtained by methods enjoying the sanction and sympathy of British opinion. To recognize facts like these and to act accordingly is not apostasy; it is common sense."

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