

down what I said and later he — he kind of edited my copy before I handed it in. He — he was almighty good to me. And I — I worked awfully hard. Like Hell. Night classes when I was n't on night duty, and books. Then, Sheila, I began to get kind of crazy over words." His eyes kindled. And his face. He straightened. He forgot himself, whatever it was that weighed upon him. "Are n't they wonderful? They're like polished stones — each one a different shape and color and feel. You fit 'em this way and that and turn 'em and — all at once, they shine and sing. God! I never knowed what was the matter with me till I began to work with words — and that *is* work. Sheila! Lord! How you hate them, and love them, and curse them, and worship them. I used to think I wanted *whiskey*." He laughed scorn at that old desire; then came to self-consciousness again and was shamefaced — "I guess you think I am plumb out of my head," he apologized. "You see, it was because I was a — a reporter, Sheila, that I happened to be there when Hilliard was hurt. I was coming home from the night courts. It was downtown. At a street-corner there was a crowd. Somebody told me; 'Young Hilliard's car ran into a milk cart; turned turtle. He's hurt.' Well, of course, I knew it'd be a good story — all that about Hilliard and his millions and his coming from the West to get his inheritance — it had just come out a couple of months before . . ."