

and in the foreground there was always his work—the most fascinating work in the fascinating world. Under his shy diffidence burned an eager fire—to find and to make, to analyze, to assemble, to create. To make new things out of old, to find lost secrets, to trail strange clues!

“What more, Billy,” cried David glowing, “what more could a man possibly desire?—*nothing*.”

Mr. Fish, whose gentle slumbers over a text-book had been thus rudely interrupted, looked up with the amused tolerance of a seasoned worldling.

“What more?” he repeated, “what more?—Gadzooks—the infant asks *what more?*”

CHAPTER X

David had been settled at Mrs. Carr's for almost a month when one morning he awoke with a tingling sense of the perfect rightness of everything. His first glance was for his work-table, a half hesitating glance as if he feared its solid proportions might have melted into nothing over night. The sight of it sent a warm glow curling along his spine. Any one who has ever made a new thing will understand this glow. It is known as the joy of creation and is, perhaps, humanity's tiny share of the great Glow of God when, having made the world, He “saw that it was good”.

David sat up and hugged his knees. Last night, working late, he had discovered something! It was a little thing, a tiny thing indeed, but what true inventor does not know the tremendous importance of the little? David knew very well that this small thing which he had found was as indispensable in the execution of his perfected scheme as the largest thing of all. More so indeed since it was the pivot on which the whole idea swung. Therefore he hugged his knees and felt extraordinarily happy.

He felt also very virtuous and this in spite of the fact that he had neglected every ordinary duty for the past week, lectures and letters home

included. Even meals had been forgotten; this to the cold astonishment of Mrs. Carr. Many and varied kinds of boarders had she known but a boarder who did not eat the meals he paid for was, to use the words of Mr. Fish, “a new one on her”. David wasn't sure whether he had had dinner last night or not but in any case, to judge by his present feelings, he would be able to even things up at breakfast. And in the meantime he would turn over and go to sleep again. But just as a reminder that no one sleeps to himself, a bang on the door was followed by the ungracefully hurried entrance of Mr. William Carter Fish. The disturber wore a green dressing-gown, which error of taste made him more startlingly like his name than ever, and, like Cinderella, had lost a slipper.

“Terribly narrow shave getting here!” panted he, “stepped on the squeaky board third step from top and old Icebox was out in a twinkling. Nearly had me spotted, by Jove! I don't believe that dashed woman ever sleeps! I could almost hear that frozen sherbet voice of hers, ‘No dressing-gowns allowed in the corridors, Mr. Fish, if you please!’”

“Well, you see she has to consider the rest of us,” said David—“oh, don't stint yourself, have another!” For in his agitation Mr. Fish had absent-mindedly appropriated a small handful of his host's best cigarettes.

“Thanks, I will. Say David, old thing, are you specially nice this morning?”

“I'm not sure,” said David cautiously. “It depends on what it is.”

“Oh, it's nothing much, something very pleasant, really. It's a girl. No,” hastily, as David disappeared into his pillow, “it's not the one you took last time. This one is much nicer. Girl you never saw before. Lovely creature. She wants to go to a show.”

The submerged David raised a hand “Take her,” he permitted graciously.

“Yes, but—you see I'm taking another girl. And this girl has to come