



WITHOUT THE LAW

(Continued from page 5)

go near the Settlement again, until the campaign was over, at least. I left the house and went back to the Mulanny home, with the last charge thrown at him that his ambitions, and the mayoralty meant more to him than I did, or the needs of the people from whom I had sprung. It was while I was there, Mr. Courtenay, that some evil impulse made me write to Jim, and tell him of my trouble.

"Yesterday, Mr. Courtenay, this letter came from Jim."

Daniel P. read it, gravely.

"... you did right to tell me," it said. "I wouldn't have used it against him without you had wrote me this way, but I guess its coming to him. I've sent the proof of the 'Garbut' affair to Jerry McGinnis: he'll put it across right enough. Don't you worry, sis. He'll get his... There was more along the same line. The cherub handed it back to Mrs. Price. "Have you any knowledge," he asked "of this proof to which he refers?"

Gwenyth Price said in a low voice: "Yes, Mr. Courtenay. After the letter came I was frightened—terribly. I realized that I had betrayed my husband. In a panic of desire to save the situation I went direct to Jerry's office. He was very courteous and smooth. He said he had heard from Jim, and had the picture... some print from a negative, Mr. Courtenay. I could not ascertain its nature, except that Jerry assured me it would come out in the 'Clarion' to-morrow—election day morning—and queer Darrel's chances. I pleaded with him, then, Mr. Courtenay, but he said, after a time, that he had given it to a newspaperman already, and could do nothing. I left, as you may imagine, much distressed. This morning early he 'phoned me—Jerry McGinnis did. He had been working to help me, he said, and the newspaperman was willing to meet me to-night and talk things over. Jerry was sure we could stave things off if I made my plea direct. He would arrange matters, and call for me with a car at any place I might wish to-night. I asked him where we would dine. He said that must remain a secret, in fairness to his friend, who feared some trick on the part of Darrel. I told him I would let him know, Mr. Courtenay. It was just after that I 'phoned you, because I did not know to whom else I could go! I dare not confess to Darrel; he has said things now that show me where he stands and how much of forgiveness—and love—I may expect!"

DANIEL P. Courtenay tilted back his chair again, put his head on one side, his finger-tips together. After a time he consulted his watch. Then he said:

"I—ahem—have to go out for half-an-hour, Mrs. Price. This office will be undisturbed. There is a sofa there which you will find not uncomfortable. You are going to lie down, and forget all this; and presently I am going to take you to lunch, where there is music and the cooking is good. There are eight hours of daylight yet!"

Daniel P. Courtenay stepped out of his private office, into the railed-off enclosure that separated the place apportioned for visitors from the meagre general office, with its one stenographer and its diminutive junior clerk.

"Miss Calethorpe," chirped Daniel P. "If anyone asks for me I shall be out for half-an-hour. Mrs. Price meanwhile is to await me here, and not to be disturbed."

"Yes, Mr. Courtenay! And there is someone there to see you; he wouldn't give his name or state his business."

The lawyer turned briskly to an inconspicuous figure seated on the long bench that had held such a variety of characters in its period of service.

"Well, sir?"

"Mr. Courtenay, could I have five minutes of your time? I have a proposition here—"

"Stocks, bonds, books or philanthropy?"

"Well, Mr. Courtenay, with a year's subscription to our magazine we give—"

"Sorry, friend—hope the next prospect is a more cashable one than this. Good-day!" He smiled, nodded, and went his way. Daniel P. held to the theory that it cost nothing to dismiss a canvasser with an inward glow of friendliness when one could not give an order.

As it happened, they took the same elevator to the ground floor. The lawyer left the man in the lobby, apparently consulting a book of "prospects." Part way along the street Daniel P. met an acquaintance; stopped to exchange greetings. His eye, happening to turn during this manoeuvre, beheld the canvasser come from the building, glance up and down the street, and slip into a runabout at the curb.

"Since when did canvassers take to flivvers?" asked Daniel P., in self-communion.

His appointment kept him just over the half hour. With an inbred habit of punctuality, he hurried his steps back to the office.

"Any messages, Miss Calethorpe?" he asked the prim stenographer.

"No, Mr. Courtenay—except that Mrs. Price left word for you."

"Left word?"

"She went off fifteen minutes ago, Mr. Courtenay. Someone 'phoned for her, and she came out and said to tell you someone was sick—Mul—Mul—"

"Mulanny?" suggested Courtenay.

"That's it, Mr. Courtenay! Mrs. Mulanny, and she must go at once. That perhaps you would send a message to her there, or she would ring you later. There's the address on that slip!"

"Humph!" snapped the lawyer. "Who was it 'phoned—man or woman?"

Miss Calethorpe raised her eyebrows at the junior.

"A man, sir," said that youth readily.

"An' he 'phoned from a pay station!"

"Good lad!" approved Daniel P., and entered his office. He sat for a while in thought. Then he telephoned the Price home. Mr. Price, he was told, was at Committee Room No. 1. The cherub rang Committee Room No. 1. Mr. Price was out at lunch, and had several appointments, but would return about three. After that he would be too busy to make any further appointments. Who was speaking—Mr. Curtain?—Sorry, Mr. Curtain, but Mr. Price had distinctly given orders...

"It's all right," said the cherub, with gentle firmness. "I don't want an appointment. I just want to see him. I'll drop around about three!"

FROM the smoke-laden atmosphere of his father's campaign headquarters, Jerry McGinnis made his way to the outer air in a moment when the elder McGinnis was preoccupied. In this his filial sense of duty suffered eclipse; his orders being that, as his father's lieutenant, he must be at his elbow now unless definite orders took him elsewhere.

He found ready excuse for his defection. The unattainable had always lured Jerry; the infatuation that had long been with him—dating from the days when his political slum work brought him in contact with the converging but different activities of Gwenyth Bender, and so with her own rather magnetic personality—after her marriage—became intensified. The unattainable again! And now the Mulanny affair of that recent night, when his sympathies were subordinated to his admiration; when the death-bed vigil brought a sense of maddening intimacy, set him afire! Alone it would have had power to draw him from the path of filial duty; added to it was the knowledge that both paths might lead to this goal. To have her go with him alone, to meet the newspaperman—a purely fictitious creature—this was the first move. Jerry had the print himself and with it, tucked

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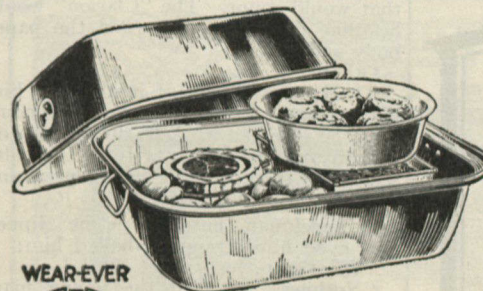
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