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a blank. He never spoke of it. And he was a man who prided himself upon his utter divorce of reason from emotion. To him the word spelled itself out in problems. I charged him once with being guilty of emotion when roaring around the den with the Son of Anak pic-a-back. Not so, he held. Could not he cuddle a sense-delight for the problem's sake?

He was elusive. A man who intermingled nameless argot with polysyllabic and technical terms, as would seem sometimes the veriest criminal, in speech; face, expression, everything; at other times the cultured and polished gentleman, and again the philosopher and scientist. But there was something glimmering there which I never caught—flashes of sincerity, of real feeling, I imagined, which were sped ere I could grasp; echoes of the man he once was, possibly, or hints of the man behind the mask. But the mask he never lifted, and the real man we never knew.

"But the sixty days with which you were rewarded for your journalism?" I asked. "Never mind Loria. Tell me."

"Well, if I must." He flung one knee over the other and laughed shortly.

"In a town which shall be nameless," he began; "in fact, a city of fifty thousand, a fair and beautiful city wherein men slave for dollars and women for dress, an idea came to me. My front was prepossessing, as fronts go, and my pockets empty. I had in recollection a thought I once entertained of writing a reconciliation of Kant and Spencer. Not that they are reconcilable, of course, but the room offered for scientific satire—"

I waved my hand impatiently, and he broke off.

"I was just tracing my mental states for you in order to show the genesis of the action," he explained.

"However, the idea came. What was the matter with a tramp sketch for the daily press? The irreconcilability of the Constable and the Tramp, for instance? So I hit the drag (the drag, my dear fellow, is merely the street), or the high places, if you will, for a newspaper office.

The elevator whisked me into the sky, and Cerebus, in the guise of an anaemic office boy, guarded the door. Consumption, one could see it at a glance; nerve, Irish, colossal; tenacity, undoubted; dead inside the year.

"Pale youth," quoth I, "I pray thee the way to the sanctum sanctorum, to the Most High Cock-alorum."

"He deigned to look at me, scornfully, with infinite weariness.

"Gwan an' see the janitor. I don't know nothin' about the gas."

"Nay, my lily-white, the editor?" "Wich editor?" he snapped, like a young bull-terrier. "Dramatic? Sportin'?" "Society? Sunday? Weekly? Daily? Telegraph? Local? News? Editorial? Wich?"

"Which, I did not know.

"The Editor," I proclaimed stoutly. "The only Editor."

"Aw, Spargo!" he sniffed.

"Of course, Spargo," I answered. "Who else?"

"Gimme yer card," says he.

"My what?"

"Yer card— Say! Wot's yer business, anyway?"

"And the anaemic Cerebus sized me up with so insolent an eye that I reached over and took him out of his chair. I knocked on his meagre chest with my fore-knuckle and fetched forth a weak, gaspy cough, but he looked at me unflinchingly, much like a defiant sparrow held in the hand.

"I am the census-taker Time," I boomed, in sepulchral tones. "Beware lest I knock too loud."

"Oh, I don't know," he sneered. "Whereupon I rapped him smartly, and he choked and turned purple."

"Well, whatcher want?" he wheezed with returning breath.

"I want Spargo, the only Spargo."

"Then leave go, an' I'll glide an' see."

"No you don't, my lily-white! And I took a tighter grip on his collar. No bouncers in mine, understand! I'll go along."

Leith dreamily surveyed the long ash of his cigar and turned to me.

"Do you know, Anak, you can't appreciate the joy of being the buffoon, playing the clown. You couldn't do it if you wished. Your pitiful little conventions and smug assumptions of decency would prevent. But to simply turn loose your soul to every whimsicality, to play the fool unafraid of any possible result, why that requires a man other than a householder and law-respecting citizen."

"However, as I was saying, I saw the only Spargo. He was a big, beefy, red-faced personage, full-jowled, and double chinmed, sweating at his desk in his shirt sleeves. It was August, you know. He was talking into a telephone when I entered, or swearing rather, I should say, and the while studying me with his eyes. When he hung up he turned to me expectantly.

"You are a very busy man," I said.

"He jerked a nod with his head and waited.

"And after all, is it worth it?" I went on. "What does life mean that it should make you sweat? What justification do you find in sweat? Now look at me. I toil not, neither do I spin—"

"Who are you? What are you?" he belowered with a suddenness that was—well, rude, tearing the words out as a dog does a bone.

"A very pertinent question, sir," I acknowledged. "First, I am a man; next, a downtrodden American citizen. I am cursed with neither profession, trade, nor expectations. Like Esau, I am potageless. My residence is everywhere; the sky is my coverlet. I am of the dispossessed, a sansculotte, a proletarian, or, in simpler phraseology addressed to your understanding, a tramp."

"What the hell—?"

"Nay, fair sir, a tramp, a man of devious ways and strange lodgments and multifarious—"

"Quit it!" he shouted. "What do you want?"

"I want money."

"He started and half reached for an open drawer, intending a gun-play, undoubtedly, then bethought himself and growled:

"This is no bank."

"Nor have I checks to cash. But I have, sir, an idea, which, by your leave and kind assistance, I shall transmute into cash. In short, how does a tramp sketch, done by a tramp to the life, strike you? Are you open to it? Do your readers hunger for it? Do they crave after it? Can they be happy without it?"

"I thought for a moment that he would have an apoplexy, but he quelled the unruly blood and said he liked my nerve. I thanked him and assured him I liked it myself. Then he offered me a cigar and said he thought he'd do business with me.

"But mind you," he said, when he had jabbed a bunch of copy paper into my hand and given me a pencil from his vest pocket, "mind you, I won't stand for the high and flighty philosophical, and I perceive you have a tendency that way. Throw in the local color, wads of it, and a bit of sentiment perhaps, but no slumgullion about political economy or social strata or such stuff. Make it concrete, to the point, with snap and go and life, crisp and crackling and interesting—tumble?"

"And I tumbled and borrowed a dollar.

"Don't forget the local color!" he shouted after me through the door.

"And, Anak, it was the local color that did for me.

"The anaemic Cerberus grinned when I took the elevator. 'Got the bounce, eh?'"

"Nay, pale youth so lily-white," I chortled, waving the copy paper; 'not the bounce, but a detail. I'll be city editor in three months, and then I'll make you jump.'

"And as the elevator boy stopped