

look?" Mr. Stevens caressed a close-shaven upper lip. "The change hasn't worked me any good yet, but I'm waitin' to hear the returns come in from your friend Carew, an' if he's been gettin' the welcome buzz from just one little friend o' mine I'll call it an even break. Well, I don't mind if I do. I'm takin' a chance, though, for I haven't been in a bar yet without gettin' the merry come on, and I'm about out of language explaining I'm more at home takin' up tickets on a steamboat an' checkin' freight than breakin' records in a Peterboro'."

"And what went broke on the *Fairy Queen*?" I inquired, as we drank our ale.

"Key in the cross-head! It sent the piston clean through the cylinder and smashed the cylinder head. Cracked the side of the cylinder, too. And you never saw such a run on the bank as that hungry passenger push of geezers made on my till for company's cash to hire rigs to take them into the town! There wasn't a five-acre lot Rube that wasn't goin' to miss a ten-thou. deal in real estate on account of not gettin' to Limestone on schedule time. And there wasn't one didn't give me the Lefty Louie tip that he hadn't any ready cash in his kick. That young fellow Brown, of Fisherville, was the only thoroughbred in the lot. He hadn't a teardrop comin'; an' hired a rig out of his own wad, that wasn't so wide but what you could span it with both hands. An' that's why I'm goin' to dine with him at the *Inn* to-night an' see that he is reimbursed."

We went into the photographer's, and had just come out of the studio when Mr. Stevens excused himself for a moment and turned back. I waited for him, and when he reappeared I observed that the olive-green trousers were no longer across his arm.

The florist had but a short dozen of roses in his case; but he would send out to the green-house post-haste for some American Beauties, he said, and dispatch them for instant delivery to the *Inn*; and as they were for the table he would put in *lots of green*, he said. So I turned in at the haberdasher's with the short dozen boxed under my arm; Mr. Stevens remarking that he, too, like Jimmy, needed a fresh negligée shirt, and a collar, and a tie. And my taste in Jimmy's behalf was rather flattered when Mr. Stevens selected precisely the same pattern in shirt and tie, and precisely the same sort of collars that I selected for Jim.

"I should think," I murmured casually, "that with your double-breasted blue coat and white trousers and shoes, and all those other details of similarity, it would be pretty hard to distinguish you from my friend to-night."

Whereupon Mr. Stevens promptly stated that he had the shoes, and that he would buy the white flannel trousers forthwith. Which he did.

"And how fares Miss Green?" I asked, as we stepped briskly toward the *Inn*. "Brown of Fisherville said——"

"Don't repeat it!" interrupted Mr. Stevens, placing a large and kindly but warning hand on my arm. "I've had a yellow streak of green, with all the middle shades pitchforked into one never-to-be-forgotten hat along with pink an' orange an' blue. First it was the pale Ivy, an' last it was the dark green garment of your right honourable friend that lifted the big Cup."

Mr. Stevens paused abruptly in speech and stride and gazed apprehensively toward a girl in a loud hat that we almost heard approaching us. With a huge sigh of relief as she passed by he stepped out again, and said:

"I thought it was I. G., on account of the tile. That headgear of Miss Green's caused enough runaways an' smash-ups an' sudden deaths between here an' Brewer's Mills to make the road one long labour day parade of funerals for a week. It put a hearse out of business, an' started the swiftest gallop to the tomb that ever flew down the pike! I believe it was that hat that queered the machinery on the *Queen* when the girl was rubbing at it over the brass. You see," added Mr. Stevens, confidential-wise, in a lower tone, "I couldn't shake Ivy at Brewer's Mills. I stayed at her folks over night, an' this morning nothin' would do but she must get down to see the races, too, havin' some *more* folks in this town; though what with the pony smashing a shaft, an' then a whiffletree, an' sheddin' shoes whenever he looked around an' got a sight of that hat, there wasn't any race comin' to me except what the horse put up. It took as long to get here as travellin' from Brickville on the Stop-an'-Carry-One. But I shook her at last!" he added, with a note of real pride, that was tempered, nevertheless, by a strategic glance to left and right as we crossed a street. "She didn't like the idea of my gettin' the 'musstache' off; not on account of the musstache so much, I guess, as my goin' into the barber shop; an' she anchored pretty close to that harbour door. But I wasn't the fleet to be bottled up. I'm an old sailor, Boy. There was a back door out of that port; an' it's up to Miss Green's folks to pilot her back to Brewer's Mills. . . . Well, Holy Mackerel! What's *this* procession?"

We had crossed the bridge and turned toward the *Inn*. A tall figure raced toward us, and some yards behind him followed a straggling mob of men and boys, more or less out of breath. It was A. C. Potts, alias A. Mutt, alias Gyp the Blood, with the law and the populace at his heels.

As he came almost upon us, Stevens filled his view. For a moment he seemed to swerve the other way. Then, as Stevens stood statue-still, with a stare Potts swerved toward us. He dashed at Stevens with an