

The Man with the Mandate

was not much, and it was as good as spent already in the cost of a passage and an outfit; but it was the earnest of more to come, and, above all, it franked the exile home to England. At the price of his honor, perhaps? Well, yes; but what was honor to a dry-goods clerk at eight dollars a week? He might have taken a different view two years ago, when honor stood for something in his creed; but not now, with the world against him.

Entering the sordid boarding-house, he mounted to his top-floor bedroom, aware that he had forfeited his supper of beef-hash, and that it was too late to go to the dining-room in quest thereof. His eyrie under the roof, flanked on one side by the apartment of a German car-driver and on the other by that of an Irish porter, was furnished with little else than a bed and a toilet-table.

On the toilet-table lay a telegram addressed to him—the first he had received since he had been in America. The unwonted sight caused his hands to tremble a little as he tore it open, but they trembled a good deal more as he read the fateful words:

"Your uncle and cousin have been killed in a railway accident. Come to England at once."