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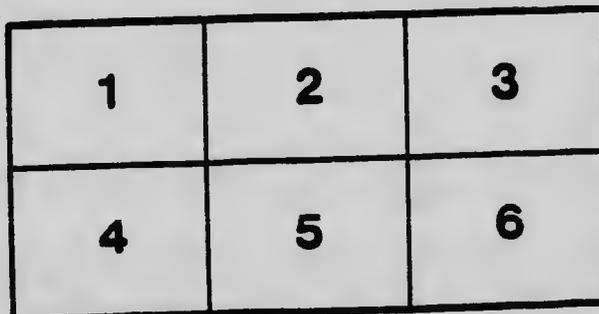
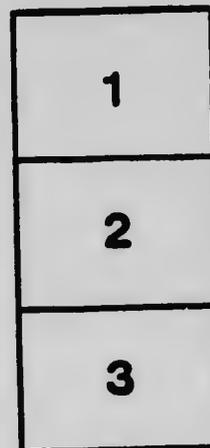
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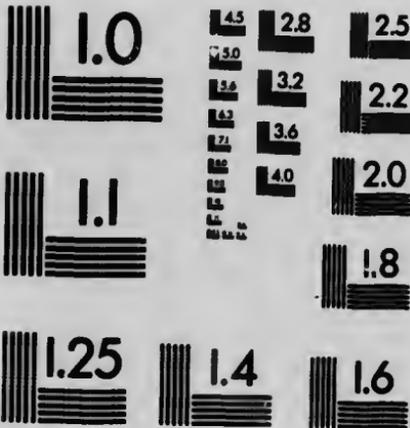
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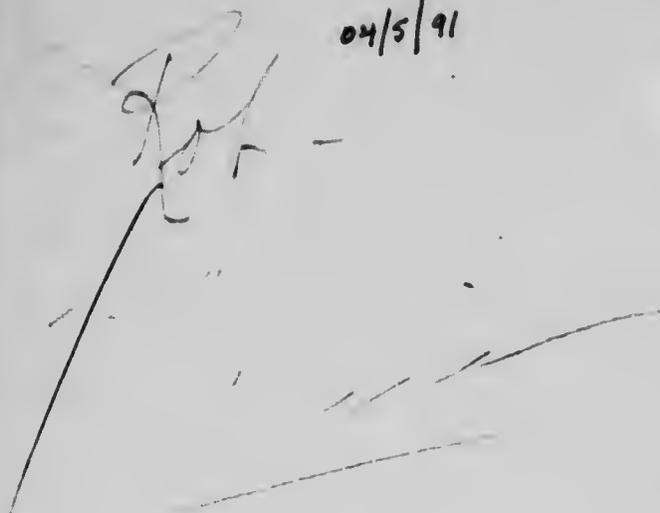


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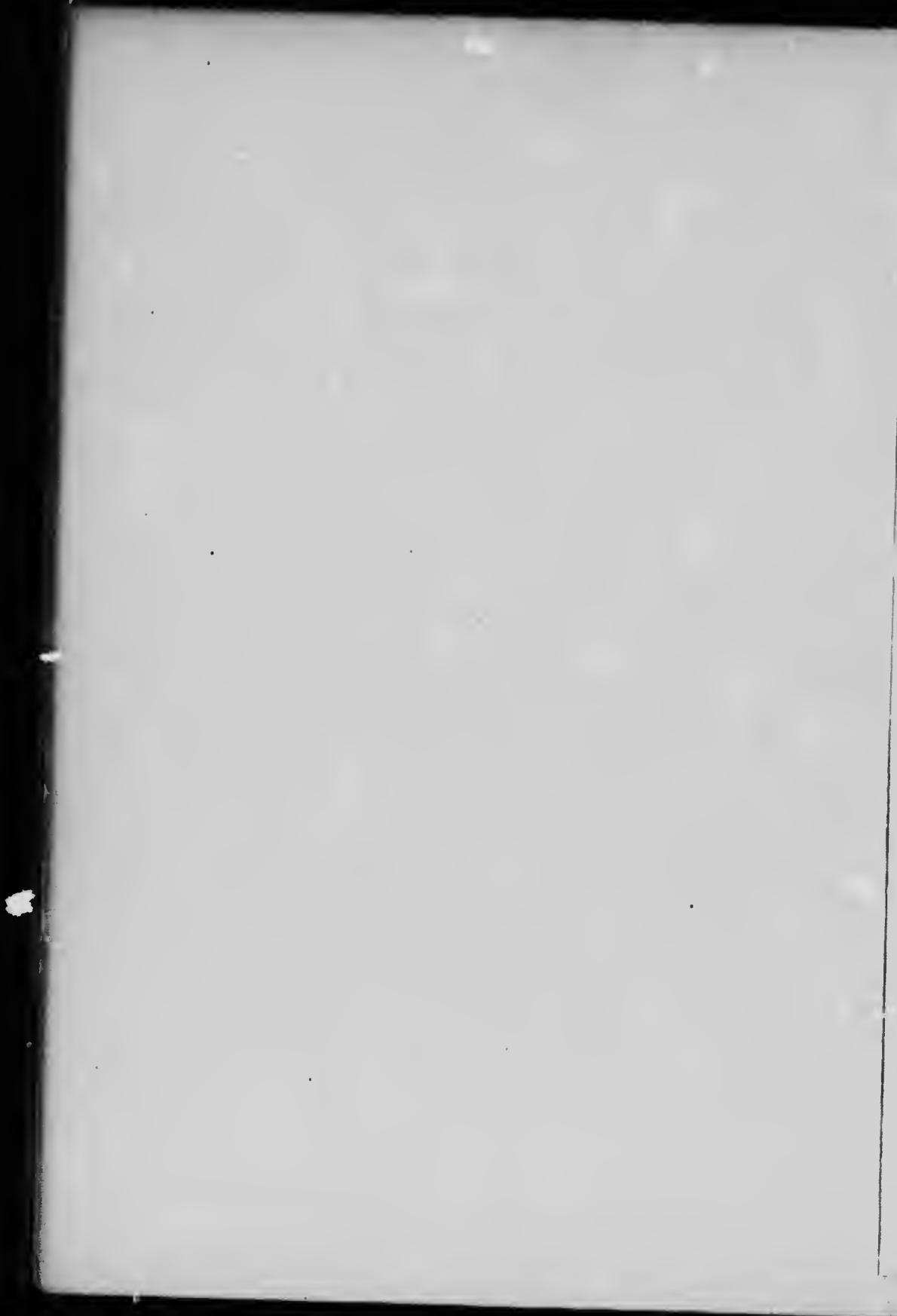
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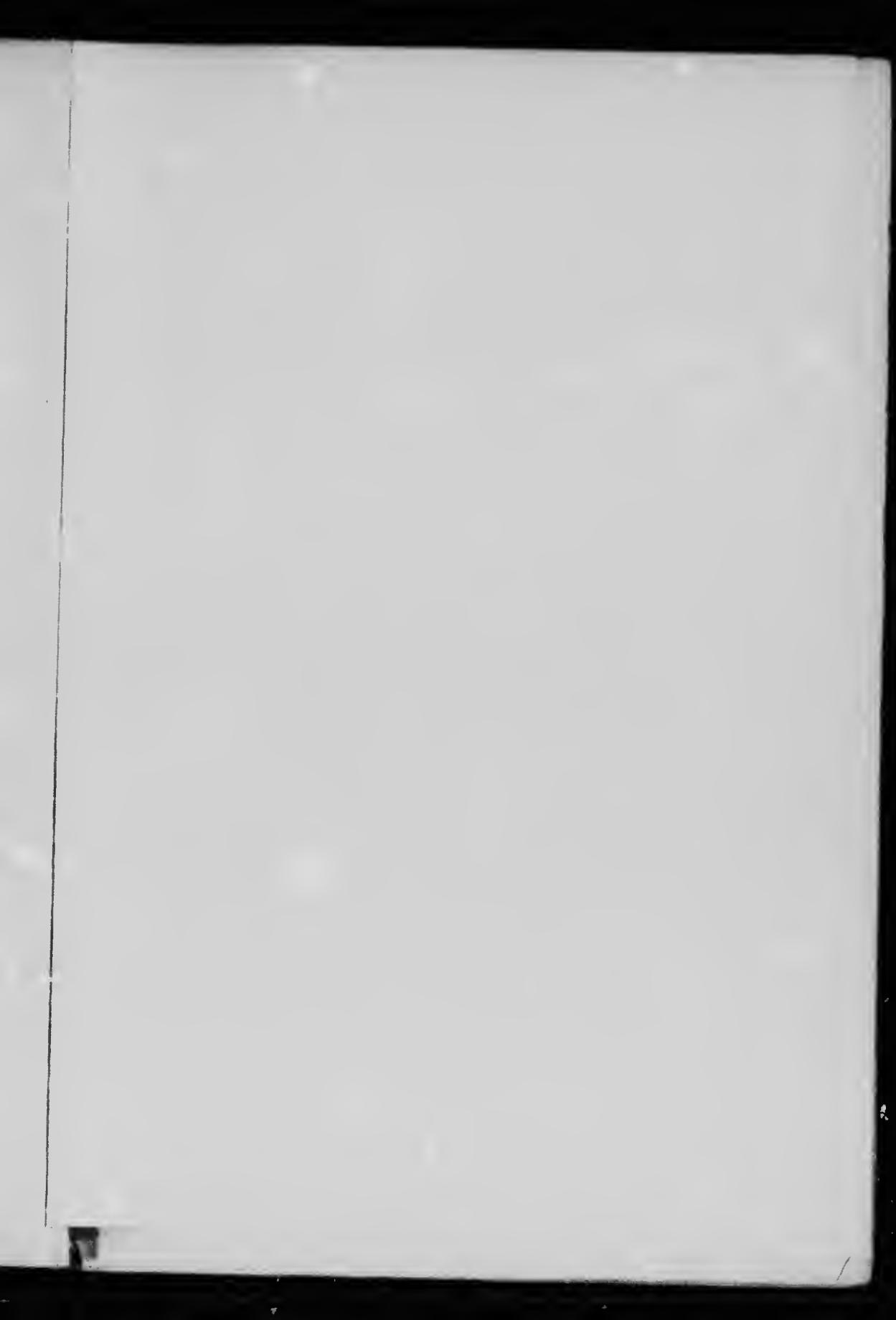


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**THE
ETERNAL MASCULINE
STORIES OF MEN AND BOYS**

17





Jack put the rod into the man's hand and held the hand carefully for a few trial casts.
[Page 18]

THE
ETERNAL MASCULINE

STORIES OF MEN AND BOYS

BY

MARY RAYMOND SHIPMAN ANDREWS

ILLUSTRATED

TORONTO
McLEOD & ALLEN
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In most men worth considering there appears to be, from three to ninety, an ineradicable boyhood. Give the lad, of six or sixty, a horse or a boat or a holiday, and he forgets the world and begins playing.

A list of such men whom one knows would be, happily, an encyclopædia. This book is dedicated to all such, between the lines of the names below. You whom I remember in Kentucky, and You in the West, and You across the room, smoking, and You in the crowded city, and You where velvet mountains rim the sky-line—will know that You are in this inscription. So the inscription goes, with many names unnamed, to a splendid phalanx of young Americans, lately boys in years, graduates of Yale, friends of mine:

E. Farrar Bateson, Lucius Horatio Biglow, Paul Howard McGregor Converse, Douglas Fitch Guilford Eliot, William Brown Glover, Allen Trafford Klots, Francis Ely Norris, George Richardson, Harold Phelps Stokes, Horace Winston Stokes, Francis Berger Trudeau, James Thornton, Francis Melzar Watrcus, and Paul Shipman Andrews.

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THE SCARLET IBIS

THE SCARLET IBIS

THE boy stopped sharply in the portage, and swung about and glanced inquiringly at Josef. Light as the sound was, quickly as the boy had heard it, Josef had heard first. He stood rooted in the path, a line of lean strength, in vague-colored clothes, his black locks tumbling from under his battered felt hat, a scarlet bandanna in the belt at his slim waist pricking the dim light with an explosion of color. His extraordinary eyes, very light blue, very large, with pupils dilated over the irises, as animals' eyes dilate, snapped electrically; his glance searched the woods to this side and that.

The boy had been trained under Josef and knew his ways; he stood stock-still as the guide listened, as he sent that concentrated glance ahead into the confused masses of shadow and brightness and foliage and water of the Canadian forest. It flashed, that blue search-light, straight through tangled branches

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and across bulks of emerald velvet, which were moss-covered bowlders; it went on deep into the inscrutable forest—Josef's glance. And the boy knew that he was seeing things in those mysterious depths, and reading them as wild creatures see and read the woodland, as the boy himself, trained woodsman though he was, might never hope to do. With that, the tense pose relaxed, the wonderful eyes came back from their exploring and—gentle, friendly, shy—met the boy's eyes. Josef smiled.

“M'sieur Jack hears the m'sieur talking?” he asked in French.

Used as he was to his guide, the boy was surprised. “What m'sieur? What do you mean, Josef?”

Josef waved a careless hand. “There is a m'sieur and a guide. The landing-net dropped, just now. It was that which one heard. They fish in the little river, around the next turn, at the Rémous des Jurons—Profanity Pool—one will see in a moment. The m'sieur, *par exemple*, is large—a heavy man.”

This in quick, disjointed sentences, as Josef talked—much the same way as he sprang from one rock to another in a river crossing, feeling his way, as-

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sure himself of a footing before he tried the next. Josef was shy even with his own young m'sieur, whom he had guided for seven years, since M'sieur Jack was a lad in knickerbockers. It was of his nature to talk in a hurrying low voice, in short phrases, meeting one's glance with the gentleness of the brilliant, great, light eyes, guardedly, ready to spring back into the cave of his reserve as an alarmed wild creature might hide in its den. Yet he loved to show M'sieur Jack this gift of his, this almost second sight in the woods. It gratified him now when the boy spoke.

"How in thunder do you know all that?" he demanded. "I'm not so blamed slow, and yet I can't hear any one talking."

Josef held up his hand dramatically, very Frenchly. "Listen—*écoutez!*"

Jack listened, Josef smiling at him broadly, alert, vivid. The little river ran at their left, brown-pooled, foam-splashed, tumbling over rocks, blurring all sounds. Overhead, in the tall white birches, in the lower spruce-trees, the wind rustled, and brushed with a feathery music the edges of the

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tinkling water noises. It seemed, as one walked along the portage—the old, old Indian trail—all beautiful peace and stillness; but when one stopped to listen there was a whole orchestra of soft instruments playing, and any one sound was hard to disentangle. Jack threw his whole soul into the effort before he made out, through the talking water and the wind sounds, an intermittent note which he could place as a man's speech some distance away.

"I hear it," he cried out.

Josef smiled indulgently; he liked to teach woodcraft to his young m'sieur; also M'sieur Jack was a good scholar; there was no other m'sieur of the club, young or old, to whom he would give the bow of his canoe in going through a difficult rapids; he had done that with M'sieur Jack. Yes, and also M'sieur Jack could tell if a male or female beaver had gnawed the chips around a birch-trunk by the tooth-marks in the wood; Josef had taught him that. And M'sieur Jack was also *capable* to portage a canoe like a guide, tossing the heavy boat to his shoulders unaided and swinging off down a trail as silently, as swiftly as an Indian; and he could tie up a *pacqueton*

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—and make camp in a rain—and skin a moose; these things and others M'sieur Jack could do, and Josef was proud of him. But M'sieur Jack could not see into the woods like Josef and he was not as quick at hearing sounds—of that also Josef was proud. So he smiled and waited for the question sure to come. “What the dickens makes you think he's a big man—*un homme pesant?*” asked Jack.

They were moving forward along the trail, Jack leading, and throwing his sentences in an undertone, as instinct teaches one to speak in the woods, over his shoulder to Josef. And for answer Josef flung out his muscular arm, in its faded blue calico sleeve, and pointed ahead. Jack stumbled on a root as he followed the pointing hand, and, recovering, caught sight of a tan-colored sweater far in front, even now barely in range of sight, hung on a tree by the path.

“It is not warm to-day, *par exemple*; a m'sieur who is not somewhat fat would not feel the walking in this portage—so as to take off that,” Josef reasoned softly, in jerks.

“Did you see that—away back there? Well,

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I'll be—" staccatoed the lad, and Josef grinned with pleased vanity. "Josef, you're a wizard," the boy went on. "But never mind, my son, you'll get fooled some time. I'll bet he didn't drop the landing-net. I'll bet it was his leader-box or his cigarette-case. No landing-net. *À bas*, landing-nets! You'll see!"

And Jack kicked at a rotten stump and sent it crashing in slow ruin, as if the vitality in him were overflowing through his long legs. So the two, the boy born into a broad life which faced from babyhood the open door of opportunity, and the boy scarcely five years older, born to a narrow existence, walled about with a high, undooed wall of unending labor—these two swung on brotherly, through the peace and morning freshness of the forest, and in the levelling reality of nature were equals.

The river sang. One saw it—out of the corner of the eye as one walked—brown in the pools, white where it tumbled over the rocks; the rocks speckled it with their thousand gray hummocks; grasses grew on them; a kingfisher fled scolding across the water and on down-stream; in the trail—the portage—it was all shimmering misty greens, with white sharp

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ranks of birch-trees; the wind murmured and blew against one's face. Through such things the two stalwart lads walked on and were happy. The unconcerned gray stones of the rapids, which had looked exactly the same on the morning when Pharaoh's daughter had found little Moses in the bulrushes, would look exactly the same, likely, two thousand years from now—for world-making is a long business and the Laurentian hills are the grandfathers of the planet, and stones reel off twenty centuries with small aging—these immemorial nobodies of an obscure little Canadian river had seen nothing pass by in their long, still lives blither or more alive than the two lads, gentleman and peasant, with their "morning faces" and their loping pace of athletes.

Around a turn they halted as by one brain order. Something moving. In Broadway a man in rapid motion is lost in a sea of men in rapid motion; in the woods a man lifts a slow finger and is so conspicuous that the mountains seem to shout a startled "Look!" The man at the edge of Profanity Pool leaned forward and lunged at his flies hanging

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tangled around his rod; he said "Damn!" The two boys, whom his movement had brought to a standstill, unseen, motionless in the shade of the narrow portage, shook with silent laughter.

With that Jack stepped forward, breaking a twig purposely, and came out on the rocks. The man looked up and saw him, a bright-faced, tall lad, claret and brown as to complexion, clean-limbed and strong as to build. Something in him drew a smile to the man's face—it was not unlikely to be so.

"*Bon jour*," Jack said with a haul at his cap, and stuffing it into his pocket further; and then "Good-morning, sir. Any luck?"

The man stared at him. "Didn't you hear what I said?" he inquired.

And Jack, pausing one second, went off into a shout of deep laughter which set the mountain echoes ringing, and Josef, discreet in the background, stepped back a pace so that the strange m'sieur might not see him laughing also. When M'sieur Jack laughed it was impossible to keep as serious as one should.

Squatting in the shadows beyond the m'sieur was

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something shading off into rocks and foliage; a face stared over the bushes of the "*thé sauvage*"—the Indian tea shrub with its dim pink flowers. So hidden, so motionless was the man that Jack did not see him for the first instant—but Josef had seen him; there had been a brief half-nod of recognition on both sides before the messieurs had spoken. Jack caught sight of him.

"It is you, Adelard Martel?" he demanded; Jack was likely to know most of the guides in the club. "Why haven' you got a big fish for your m'sieur? They are here," he threw at him cheerfully.

But the man did not answer with a smile, as most people answered Jack Vance. The dark, furtive eyes shot a resentful glance at the large man who still struggled with his fishing-tackle. "M'sieur—is not lucky," he brought out with the broad, soft accent of a *habitant*, and looked down sulkily, displeased, and then flashed up an angry glance. "There was a big one—*b'en gros*—three minutes ago. He rose to the fly. One would have had him grabbed—*poigné*—in a second. But *v'là*, M'sieur slipped and fell backward and knocked me the landing-net out

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of my hand, and the big one saved himself—*se savait. Comme ça*”—with a swift gesture of disgust.

“The landing-net?” The boy turned and looked at Josef and laughed, and Josef’s big light eyes flashed satisfaction.

The strange m’sieur broke in with a nod toward his guide. “Something wrong with that fellow,” he commented. “He seems angry that I can’t catch fish.”

Jack leaned over and swept in one of the curly, bobbing snells of the m’sieur’s leader as he answered. “May I help you?” he asked with friendliness of a brother craftsman. “It’s the dickens of a job to do this alone. Adelard ought”—and he stopped and shook his head fatherly at the sullen-faced guide. “He’s sore as a crab because you haven’t had luck,” he explained. “They’re all that way. It’s a personal question—if their messieurs are lucky, you see. He’ll be another question when you take a five-pounder.”

The big man lowered the butt of his rod suddenly, thereby mixing up all the whirls of catgut which Jack had skilfully untangled; he looked at the boy

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with a heart-broken expression; he looked as if he were going to cry.

"But I can't," he said sorrowfully. "I don't know how to fish. And I want to so much. It's my first vacation in six years, and I haven't got but a week. I thought it was easy to fish, that anybody could do it. And I don't know how to tie the leader on, and the reel falls out of the—the reel-plate or something. And if I touch the automatic spring it all snaps up before I can wink, and the leader runs down the rod through the rings and it's the very devil. I hit a rock and broke a tip the first thing and had to put in another. It took me half an hour to put the stuff together and then that happened. And the flies tangle—all the time. And my guide despises me! I thought fishing was fun!"

The man's voice was a wail in the last sentences. Something in the boy's friendly youthfulness had made it possible to pour out this tale of woe where with another wayfarer the unlucky fisherman would have kept his bitter counsel. His instinct was not wrong. The thought shot into Jack's mind that here was a poor man, probably not able to afford vaca-

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tions, who had put his hard-earned money into one and was failing to get the good of it. Like a young knight to a maiden in distress the boy rushed to the rescue.

"Now that's just too darned bad," he brought out heartily. "But you know, sir, it's easy enough to set it all straight. Fishing *is* fun—almost the best fun going. I don't want to butt in, but—you see I've been at this sort of thing all my days"—one thought involuntarily of Methuselah—"and I can't help knowing the trick. I'm not a crack exactly, but—well, it's second nature to me, and I'd simply love to show you if you wouldn't think me fresh to offer."

"Fresh!" the older man repeated. "If you would give me a few points I'd bless you. But you're off on a trip yourself—I can't take your time"—and the boy cut in there with joyful assurances, which there was no mistaking, as to his pleasure in helping.

"We're just on a casual two days' tramp, Josef and I," he explained. "Nothing to do so's you'd notice it. We left the canoe and the pack down at the lake and dashed up here for a fish or so." By this he had the stranger's rod in hand, a Leonard

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rod, the boy knew at a glance, about four ounces in weight, the last word in expense and perfection of rods. "Gosh, he blew himself!" was the inward comment Jack made. Josef was somehow present at the psychological distance from the butt as the boy held it in his hand, and while he set the reel more firmly into the plate and pushed the nickel ring down strongly Josef's delicate, coarse finger-tips were untwisting the three bright flies from an extraordinarily thorough tangle. Adelard Martel watched sulkily out of the Indian tea-bushes; the large m'sieur watched, wondering. With that the lines were free, and Jack swung the butt about into Josef's ready hand, and suddenly had the junction of leader and fish-line in his mouth and was chewing at it with energy.

"Tied wrong," he commented thickly, and then had it out and drew the softened strings from their knot. "If you don't mind, sir, I'll show you how to put a leader into a snell." He held the loop of transparent cord in his left hand and poised the green line above it. "Like this—down you go inside—up you go outside—across you go—then down

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outside, up— and pull her tight. There you are!” He slid the cross-loop down, and with a jerk it was all undone. “Just as easy to take out as to put in, you see. Want to do it yourself, sir?” And the man, as enchanted as a small boy, fumbled a bit and learned the knot. “Now we’re off,” Jack announced, glancing backward to assure his recover, and sent a skilful line into Profanity Pool.

Perhaps no harder place to fish was in the club. The pool, a black hole in the river, was thirty odd feet long and varied in width from twenty to five feet, irregularly. At the right a large log stretched over the water lengthwise, and under its shadow lurked the big trout. Also under it were snags where, once hooked, the fish ran to hide, and catch the line about the wood, and tear loose. One must keep a fish away from this log at all hazards. Yet across from it were sharp rocks apt to cut fish-line.

“The hole is chock-full of Scyllas and Charybdises, all right,” Jack remarked, pointing out the geography to his pupil. “I reckon Profanity Pool isn’t a misnomer. Lots of cuss-words spilled into this water, they do say.”

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He cast, varying his line, varying his direction, with easy skill, over the dark, wild water, all the time telling how and why.

“With the forearm, you know, sir. Don’t put your shoulder into it. And stop a second on your recover, when the line’s back of you. Don’t monkey with it too fast—give it time to straighten out; and don’t slap the water with the flies. That scares ’em. Let the tail-fly touch first, and just as it’s touching lift the tip of the rod a scrap—see!” He illustrated with finished delicacy. “Then it goes down softly. Hi!”

A liquid swash, a break of white foam, an upward snap of the wrist—a trout was on.

“That’s too blamed bad—I didn’t mean to take anything,” he murmured regretfully, but he played it all the same, and in three or four minutes Josef had landed it and held it up wordlessly—a *Salmo fontinalis* of a pound and a half, with scarlet fins and gold-and-silver-spotted stomach. The stranger was tingling with excitement.

“That’s something like!” he brought out, and then meekly, anxiously, “May I fish now?”

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And Jack, smiling his old-young smile, put the rod into the man's hand and held the hand carefully for a few trial casts. Then "Let her go," he commanded, and the large m'sieur, trembling with eagerness, was fishing. Jack, standing by with his hands in his trousers pockets, his whole soul on the performance, criticised with frankness. "Now, that's rotten, sir. Don't recover that nervous way; that's what tangles 'em. Just—sort of—rhythmic; back slow—pau^r—cast; lift the tip a scrap as you touch; just a shiver of the wrist does it. Now—tip up—don't sag the line; draw the flies along, and wiggle 'em alluringly as they come; don't let 'em go under—bad, bad! You can't fool fish if you drown your flies. Oh, well—the tail-fly may sink a bit if you're after big ones"—and so the illustrated lecture went on, Jack thoroughly enjoying himself in the rôle of instructor. "Ginger!" he brought out suddenly in an interval, "my brother would throw a fit if he saw me teaching fishing. He's a shark at it, you know. He's forgotten more than I ever knew. Josef"—turning on the guide—" *M'sieur va s'amuser de moi en professeur de la pêche, n'est-ce pas ?* " And Josef,

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showing his teeth in a short grin, answered promptly, "*Oui, M'sieur,*" and attended to business.

The large m'sieur was learning fast. One saw that he had not missed a word of the boy's lesson or the reason for any point of piscatorial finesse. He made mistakes certainly, and was awkward, as is any beginner at the wonderful world-old game, which has to get into the nerves and the blood before one plays it well ever. Yet he took hold as a trained mind takes hold of whatever problem, with a certain ability and sureness.

"I rather think you must do some things very well, sir," Jack remarked encouragingly, after a bout of unflinching reprimand as to vicious tendencies of the scholar. "You caught that idea about not getting the line to rise, at once. You must be used to doing things well."

The stranger lifted his keen, clear blue eyes a second and shot a glance at the boy. "Possibly one thing," he answered briefly, and cast again.

Half a dozen small trout lay on the rocks, strung on a forked willow branch, the vivid, pointed leaves crisp on one side of it, cut by the resentful Adelard,

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now charmed by the turn of events and eager to be included in them. But the big fish did not rise.

"Bad time of day," Jack explained. "Hole's fussed up, too. Have to let it get quiet before the sockdologers will take notice." He turned to the older man with a certain brotherly manner of his, a manner which lacked in no point of respect, but was yet simply unconscious of any difference of age—a manner which made older men like the lad and like themselves better, too. "If I were you," advised Jack, "I'd stop now and come back early to-morrow morning, by gray light, and have a try at them. Maybe you'd get an old h ne then."

A short lecture followed on the taking down of rods, and the etiquette of winding a leader about one's hat, so that the pull is always from the last fly.

"Where are you going now?" asked the large m'sieur as he and Adelard stood, their *butin* packed, ready to move on.

Jack laughed and looked at Josef, who laughed also and shrugged his shoulders. "We don't know exactly," the boy said. "We're just 'loungin' 'round and sufferin',' like Brer Fox. I rather think we'll

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ramble up-stream and take the new trail the guardian cut last winter to Lac Creux. I've never been there. And then come back and put up our tent on your lake for the night, if you don't mind, sir. It's down there now, with the canoe, at the mouth of this little river," and he stamped a boot caressingly into the brown water, as one pats an animal in speaking of it.

"Put up with me over-night," suggested the m'sieur. "I've plenty of room; it would be a great pleasure. Then you needn't bother with your tent or your kit."

The clear eyes met the man's with frank, pleased surprise; Jack never got used to the astonishing goodness of people in wanting him about. "Why, we'll do that with bells on, if you'd really like us, sir," he agreed heartily.

Ten minutes later the two lads were swinging again through the shifting mystery of the portage, following the narrowing river farther and farther up-stream, while the large m'sieur and Adelard, now in a pleasanter humor, progressed down-stream to the lake and the camp.

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About six o'clock that evening the large m'sieur, whose name, incidentally, was Bradlee, spread a gray camp blanket on the pine-needles in front of his immense walled tent, and stretched it with care to the foot of a peculiarly luxurious stump—a stump of the right shape and angle and consistency to make a good back for a man to loll against. There is a large difference in the comfort of stumps. Mr. Bradlee sighed an unbroken sigh of satisfaction as he felt his weight settle rightly into curves of stump and of pine-needles and knew that his confidence in both had not betrayed him. It was the only manner of Morris-chair he had about, and it seemed of importance. He had been tramping all the afternoon, and he was tired and wanted luxury; he found it on the gray blanket, with his back against the spruce stump. Luxury, it is said, is a matter of contrast; this man's scale of such things possibly began at a different point in New York; here in Canada, after a day's heavy labor in portage and canoe, after coming back grimy and sweating and black-fly-bitten and footsore—after those things, a plunge in the lake and dry flannel clothes and a gray blanket

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and a stump realized luxury. So he sighed contentedly and shifted his leg to feel how comfortably the muscles ached in repose, as he drew his crowning happiness out of his pocket, that long brown happiness called a cigar. Yet he was conscious as he lit it, and pulled the first delicious puff, that he was still unsatisfied.

"I wish that cub would come," Bradlee murmured half-aloud.

Behold, around the corner of the spruce point which guarded the bay, dark on the silvery water, a canoe shot forward, swift, silent. Bradlee with one long pull took his cigar from his mouth and held it as he watched. It was a picture to remember—the blue sky with pink and copper cotton-batting clouds; below that the band of dark woods, sunlight gone from them, crowding to the lake; below that the gray shimmer of water and the dark bulk of the canoe, and the double paddle flash of the stroke of the two powerful lads under which the canoe leaped toward him out of the hills. The indescribable intoxication of the Canadian mountain air was about him, immense, pervading; he heard the beat of the

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paddles and the long swish of the water after each bound of the canoe; now Jack missed a stroke and shot his paddle high in the air in salute, but did not break the infinite quiet with a spoken word.

"Most boys would have howled their heads off at sight; this one respects the sanctuaries," thought the man.

With that the springing boat was close and he got up and stood at the water's edge and the bow crushed, with a soothing sound which canoe people know, up the wet sand. Jack arose, stretched his legs, and stepped out, tall and dirty and happy; bare-headed, bare-armed, the gray flannel shirt décolleté around his strong neck, his face streaked with mother earth, and with blood of murdered black flies, but bright with that peace which shines from faces which nature has smoothed for a while.

"Glad to see you, young man; hope you have an appetite," spoke Bradlee cordially, and felt the place all at once illumined by a buoyant presence.

"*Have I?*" responded Jack. "Just you watch me, sir."

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Shortly, on the sand by the lake-edge, under a wide-branched pine-tree, the table was spread, with trout still sizzling in the frying-pan and flap-jacks and maple sugar and thin fried potatoes and other delicacies of camp, which Adelard and his confrère, Louis, brought in relays, laughing joyfully at the enormous hunger of the young m'sieur. Then, while the guides ate their dinner, while the night settled down like some mammoth bird into its nest over the lonely miles of mountains and the quiet stretch of lake, the man and the boy sat by the bubbling birch fire and "smelled wood smoke at twilight," and talked fishing. Jack was very great at expounding, and it was seldom he had such a chance; he made the most of it. The older man listened as to the Law and Gospel; it was a memorable evening. The Bradlee fishing-tackle was had out and looked over.

"You've got some splendid things," Jack announced in his uncompromising young voice, and regretted to himself the unnecessary extravagance of a poor man. "But the trouble is, there's a lot that's—excuse me for saying it—trash. I reckon you just

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went to a shop and bought what they told you, didn't you?"

"Exactly."

"Too bad." Jack's wise head shook sorrowfully. "Wish I could have been along. I could have saved you hunks of money. An automatic reel's a crime, too, you know. Not sportsmanlike. However—you'll know, yourself, next time."

"Thanks to you," said Bradlee humbly.

"Oh, gee, no," protested Jack. "You'll just learn, doing it. Let's see about that cast for to-morrow morning. Now, I'd admire to have a Parmachene Belle—that's good in these waters."

The fine, big, new fly-book was opened, and the man flapped a thick leaf or two and nervously drew out a brown fly. Jack had been teaching him the names.

"Oh no!" the boy threw at him. "That's a Reuben Wood. Hard to remember till you get used to them, isn't it, though? Here is your Parmachene—see, with the white and red feathers? Put her on for a hand-fly, wouldn't you, sir?"

Bradlee obeyed with pathetic promptness, fum-

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bling a bit, but getting fly and snell together ultimately.

"That's—all—right!" approved the boy. "Now—let's see. A Silver Doctor—this fellow? Don't you think? I've had great luck with that fly. It's a pretty decent fly." The owner of the fly-book took his orders and annexed the Silver Doctor to the leader.

' Now—tail-fly. That's important. Let—me—see."

But the willing horse suddenly took the bit in his mouth. Bradlee pointed out a patch of scarlet with his forefinger. "I want that one," he stated.

The boy laughed. "The Scarlet Ibis?" he inquired, like a kind but pitying father. "That wouldn't do, I'm afraid. That's too—crude, you see. That's good for very dark days and very wild waters, where no one has ever fished, and they're not educated. I'm afraid they'd know better than a Scarlet Ibis at Profanity Pool."

But the man, so docile up to now, acquired a setness about the mouth. "I want the Scarlet Ibis. I like the name of it, and red is the color I like, and I have an idea it will bring me luck."

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There was something in the large m'sieur, when he spoke in this way, which made one see that he was accustomed to manage things; this was different from the meek scholar of the kindergarten class in fishing. Jack yielded at once and with cordiality.

"Of course, if you've got a hunch," he agreed with his young-elderly benevolence. "Maybe it will bring you luck."

And the large m'sieur, smiling inwardly, felt that he had been allowed the Scarlet Ibis by an indulgent superior, yet liked the lad no less.

When the thick mists that had blanketed the lake all night were blowing in streamers along the shore and curving to the alders in the damp morning wind; when the forest was a black mass below, but dividing above into spires of spruce-trees under the mystical glow which fast loosed the night-bound shadows; when the grasses in the little beaver meadows were stiff with cold, wet silver, the man and the boy, leaving the guides in camp, started up-stream to Profanity Pool. It was hard to follow the portage at first, so dark it was; a hush was through the woods; no breeze stirred here away from the lake;

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no little beast rustled; no bird fluttered; the underworld was fast asleep. One felt like a knight of Arthur adventuring into a Merlin-guarded forest.

Even when the two fishermen reached the pool it was dark enough to make the footing uncertain as one crossed from rock to rock, to the sand-bar where the Indian tea-bushes grew, their small old-rose-colored blossoms frosted with dew, and over them in the dim light the same mysterious stillness, as if the night's sleep were not yet ended. Also it was very cold; the chill crept through sweaters and flannel shirts, through flesh and blood and into the bones and the marrow, as they sat down to put the rod together. Instinctively they spoke in low voices, not to waken the drowsy forest. Then arrows of sunlight shot and caught in the tops of the spruces and crept ever downward. One could see the quiet pool now, and the dark, wet log lying lengthwise, and the brown water; not a stir of life on that level surface, yet under it the great trout must be waking.

The large m'sieur, casting, with his whole heart in his forearm, suddenly was aware of a small tentative resistance somewhere on the leader thread-

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ing a shimmering way across the pool. Like an electric connection his wrist thrilled in response and the delicate mechanism answered again with a light jerk.

“Steady,” spoke Jack’s deep, authoritative voice. “Something’s after it—don’t jerk. It’s a big one. Recover—don’t get flustered—slow. That’s a peach. Draw the fly slowly—it’s dark yet—let the tail-fly go under a little—not too quick—he’s after it—let him take hold. *Strike!*”

With an appalling suddenness Bradlee was aware of a mighty pull of unseen live strength applied to the gossamer structure of his rod and line, and his wrist flew up antiphonally with a good will which luckily did not break everything concerned. The fish had taken the fly under water, as a big one will; he was on—Bradlee had hooked him. But there was small time to dwell on that point, for the fight had begun without preliminaries. Straight for the log ran the invisible streak of force, and Jack cried out in horror:

“Keep him away—don’t let him get under.”

The large m’sieur’s lips curled back from his teeth, and his eyes gleamed savagely, as he lifted the tip

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and held the struggling fish on the very edge of the danger zone. The boy, following every pulse-throb, murmured "Good work," and with that there was a sound as of a mighty garment ripping and the trout was off headlong to the foot of the pool.

"Give him line—quick," the boy thundered.

And Bradlee, lowering the rod a bit, let the line run out—and behold the trout turned suddenly in his tracks and rushed back. Only luck saved him on that manœuvre; before Jack had cried breathlessly "Reel up," the man had the tip lifted and his finger on the spring—for he was learning fast—and the line was snapping back in handfuls—yet there was slack for at least two seconds and it was pure chance that the fish did not shake loose. There was a space of quiet after this—dangerous quiet. The big trout was "sulking." Somewhere down in the bottom he lay, planning fight in his cloudy fish brain, and it was equally dangerous to let him go on and to stir him up. He might be burrowing under a rock with a sharp edge which would cut the leader; he might rise at an inopportune touch and get free with one unexpected effort; everything was dangerous.

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"Just wait," Jack advised. Two minutes of masterly inactivity and then, out of patience, enraged, the enemy rose to the top and flung himself this way and that, tearing, rushing, shaking his head from side to side in a very hopeful effort to shake out the fly. Fisherman's luck certainly carried the large m'sieur through that peril, for the most expert rodsman can do little but hold on to his tackle in such tornadoes. The fit wore past, however, and was succeeded by a determined attempt, in a series of rushes, to get under the big log. Jack stood close at Bradlee's side and counselled him through the sharpness of this battle, and Bradlee's keen mind bent to the execution of his orders with all there was in it. Add to this that the trout was uncommonly well hooked inside the throat, and one sees that the event was not impossible. The time came at length when it was evident that the prey was tiring. The rushes were shorter and executed with less vim, and the great back came up to the surface at times and flopped over limply.

"Gee!" commented Jack, "it's the best fight I've seen in moons. He's a sockdologer, sure Mike! All

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of four pounds, sir—look at him—did you see him then?”

With that there was a sharp revival of energy and a dash to the end of the pool, and a double back, repeating the manœuvre with which operations had begun. The last ten minutes of playing a fish have a peculiar danger in the relaxing effort of the fisherman. Not only does the creature struggle less vigorously and so throw one off guard, but the strain has told and one is tired, and then, often, comes an unexpected strong rush which proves successful—the fish is gone.

The large m'sieur, ignorant of what to expect, did not presume, did not relax, and was not taken off his guard. The boy glanced at the set face many times with benignant approval, as the man, silent, intent, fought the flagging fight as earnestly, as watchfully, as at its beginning.

“Them's um,” Jack indorsed proceedings, as the big fish flopped listlessly at the surface, and the fisherman yet held his line delicately taut, yet led the live weight *at it* and this way and that. “Them's um. Don't take your eye off him or he'll fool you yet,”

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and finished with a manner of squeal: "Holy mackerel, but he's a he-one—I'll bet he's close on five."

At which premature gloating the trout rose for one last fling and shook his mighty head and slashed with his tail and threw his strong, flexible body in a hundred directions at once, whipping the brown water into foam. The boy, crouching with the landing-net at the water's edge, followed the infinitely quick scintillations with his eyes; the man, lifting, lowering his rod, keeping the line not too tight, not too loose, followed them, as mere human muscles might, with his playing wrist; with that the long, shining body, brown and gold and silver and pink and scarlet and spotted, stopped struggling, floated limply half out of water, and the large m'sieur, flushed, anxious, drew him slowly inshore. Jack, with the net deep in the pool four feet to the right of the defeated king of it, waited till he was close—yet not too close—till a clock in his brain sounded the psychological second, and then—swoop; the net rushed through the brown water, deep under the trout and up with a sure curve. There was a mad flopping and struggling, but the big fellow was

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in the meshes and Jack lifted him up, both fists gripping the handle of the heavy-weighted net, and held him so at arm's length high in air.

"Gosh!" said Jack.

The large m'sieur did not say anything, but he lowered the butt of his rod with hands that shook, and brought out a sigh that appeared to wander up in stages from his boots. His face radiated a solemn happiness several flights farther down than words; his eyes were glued to the landing-net with its freight of glory. He sat down on the rocks with his boots casually trailing in the water and sighed profoundly again.

"I caught him," he stated.

"Sure," agreed Jack. "You took him, that's as certain as the Pyramids. What's more, you did it in style. The way you played that fish, sir, was good enough for anybody. You may not have experience," Jack allowed candidly, "but I'll be hanged if you haven't got promise. You're a wonder, sir—a plain wonder."

By now Jack was squatting before the net, laid on a flat stone; his hunting-knife was out of the leather-

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fringed caribou-skin sheath on his hip, and he had it in his right hand, the dull side of the blade down, while with his left he gathered the net tighter around the still flopping great trout. The wet, dull nose, the staring eyes were uppermost. Jack gave a sharp rap on the back of the neck two or three times repeated, and the king of Profanity Pool, with a long shiver, was still. Then with big-handed dexterity he drew back the meshes and pulled him out, a splendid, shining creature twenty-two inches long.

The large m'sieur, watching the boy's expert work, made a sudden movement. "What fly is he on?" he threw at Jack.

Jack, carefully withdrawing the net from its twists and double twists around the tail, around the leader and the flies, bent swiftly, examining. There was the Parmachene Belle, tied in a yard or two of wet net-meshes; there was the Silver Doctor, having run in a half-second a complicated course through a system of the same and caught itself in the snell of the Parmachene. That was all. The lad gave a whoop that set echoes ringing in the dark hills about Profanity Pool and the gully of the little river.

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"Gosh!" shouted Jack, while the large m'sieur grinned triumphantly, "it's the Scarlet Ibis!"

Three months later, on a day in November, a tall young man in good clothes, with a clean face and a hat, swung along a street up-town in New York City. The setting and the costume were changed, yet a person who might have met the bareheaded, gray-shirted, earth-streaked woodsman and his guide in the Canadian forest in August might still have known this correct city character as Jack Vance. The freedom of the woods had not yet left his buoyant heels, nor the breeziness of the hills his physiognomy; by these signs he was the same. But his mind was working harder than it had on that morning when he and Josef had found the large m'sieur fishing by Profanity Pool; his eyes were absent-minded and intense; if one might have listened to his thoughts as his long pace lifted them and him over the pavement, it might be that some such sentence as this would have come to the light:

"Now how in thunder am I to tell if that's interstate commerce or if it isn't?" Jack was thinking.

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With the same whole-heartedness that he had put into his fishing, into his woodcraft, the boy had now flung himself into the study of the law at that hot-house for starting the delicate green sprouts which are to grow into trees of justice, the Harvard Law School. He was in New York for what he would have described as a "bat" of some days, yet his work fermented in his brain in his holiday. He was finding law, as one mostly finds things done with all one's might, a joy and delight. Yet for all the fun of it he was badly puzzled just now, and anxious as well as eager. After exhausting the sources of information he needed more light.

"If I only knew a man who had a practical hold on it," his mind went on, throwing out tentacles to search for help, "an older man—a clever man, a man who—" he stopped short; a brain tentacle had touched something in the dimness. Why had there come to him in a flash the familiar atmosphere of the woods, of fishing, of Josef and the little river and—in a flash again he had arrived. "Profanity Pool! The large m'sieur—Mr. Bradlee! He said he was a railroad man—he said I was to call him up and lunch

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with him; he said if ever he could help me about anything he'd do it—by the sign of the Scarlet Ibis. Ginger! I'm glad I thought of him. The very chap!"

He dashed into a drug-store and rushed to the telephone-booth. Here he was—Bradlee—W. R. H.—that was the man. Wall Street—yes. And he took down the receiver and gave a number. It was a bit roundabout getting Mr. Bradlee. It seemed that the approach to him was guarded by an army of clerks and secretaries.

"He must think he's mighty precious," Jack complained to himself.

One must send a name—"Mr. Vance," Jack said simply. So that when at last a voice out of the long wire was speaking, the words "Yes—this is Mr. Bradlee," came with impersonal iciness. But Jack was not given to being snubbed; his theory of the friendliness of mankind prevented that, along with other discomforts. "Oh, hello, Mr. Bradlee," he threw back eagerly. "I hope I'm not butting into business. This is Jack Vance."

"Who?" The chilly tone was a bit impatient.

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"Jack Vance—of the Montagnard Club—we went fishing—don't you remember —?"

The identification was cut short by a shout at the other end of the telephone in which there was no iciness or impatience at all. "Oh—Jack Vance—why, Great Scott, boy, it's you, is it? I'm delighted to hear your voice. I was thinking about you yesterday and of how you fell down on the fly question. The Scarlet Ibis was crude, was it? What have you got to say about that now?"

Jack's great pealing laughter went down the telephone wires in response. "You certainly pasted me on that, sir," he agreed cheerfully, and then, "I want to know if I can bother you with a question or two about railroads," he began, and explained the situation briefly. He had been assigned to argue a case in one of the moot courts—the mock trials of the students—of the law school; it was his first case; he wanted to win it "the worst way"; he was at a standstill about a railroad question; he needed the point of view of a practical experience.

"You're a railroad man, aren't you, sir?" Jack asked.

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There was a second's hesitation at the other end of the wire, and the answer came as if the speaker were smiling. "Well, yes—I'm called that." And Mr. Bradlee's friendly voice went on: "Tell you what, my son—we can't discuss law over the telephone. Will you come down to lunch to-morrow at the Lawyers' Club?"

"Why, I'd simply love to do it, thank you," Jack agreed joyfully.

"Good. One o'clock. Come to my office. Possibly I may find—somebody who will help me advise you. We've got to win that case if it takes a leg—it's a sort of Scarlet Ibis case, I consider, you see." And with light-hearted laughter again at both ends of the wire the telephone was hung up.

Promptly at one next day a tall young man of fresh color was handed along with distinguished courtesy from one to another of such an array of officials as guards the valuable time of magnates in great offices.

"Gee!" remarked Jack casually as he landed at last in the private office and the very presence of Mr. Bradlee. "Gee, this is 'some' different from

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Adelard Martel and the tent, isn't it, Mr. Bradlee?"

On the wall of the office, in a frame behind a bulging glass, hung one of the ugliest and one of the most satisfactory personal possessions which earth affords, a trophy trout set up by experts. Its weight, five and three-quarters pounds, was marked clearly in a corner above the date, August 7, 19—. Hooked in the grim black mouth gleamed a red fly. This work of art was examined, criticised, and appreciated by the visitor before he took his way with his host through the swarming life of down-town to the great Equitable Building, which held the famous club restaurant.

Three men were waiting in the reading-room as the two went in, three grizzled, important personages, who rose up and greeted Jack's large m'sieur as one entitled to consideration.

"I want to present Mr. Vance to you," said Bradlee. "Mr. Howell—Judge Carroll—Mr. Fitzhugh."

And Jack, gripping the hands held out with his friendly, bone-breaking hand-clasp, failed to see the wonder at his youth on the men's faces, for the won-

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der in his own mind that the large m'sieur had found him worthy to meet these bully old chaps, who were quite evidently somebodys. Somebodys—who? He wondered further. Shortly he found out.

"I asked you three here," Bradlee began, waving a comprehensive oyster-fork, "to meet Mr. Vance, for a purpose."

A bar of red crept up the clear brown of the boy's cheeks. He had not realized that these dignified persons had come to meet him! He would have described himself as "rattled."

Bradlee went on: "It will advance the purpose if I mention who you all are. Jack, Mr. Howell is the president of the I. S. I. & O. Z. D.; Judge Carroll, whom I luckily caught in town for the day, is on the Interstate Commerce Commission; and Mr. Fitzhugh is general counsel of four railways in the West and South. If anybody knows what you want to find out, these gentlemen do."

"Holy mackerel!" said Jack simply, and flushed scarlet having said it, and murmured etiquettically something about "Certainly am mighty grateful." But the four, at the awe in the tone, at the untram-

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melled expletive, at something winning and indescribable in the lad's embarrassment, broke into sudden laughter, and Bradlee, well pleased, knew that the charm which he had felt in the youngster was working. With that he was telling, what most men like to hear, a fish story—the story of the Scarlet Ibis. Plenty of raps for his autocratic ways the boy got as the large m'sieur told the tale, and once or twice the deep-toned young laughter rang out in a shout which made people all over the dining-room turn and stare and smile. Jack did not see that, but the elder men saw, and laughed too, and loved the boy for it, as older men do love youth and unconsciousness and joy of living.

“So you see,” Mr. Bradlee finished, “Izaak Walton Vance slipped up on the fly and the humble scholar guessed right. But the lad gave me the best time I've had for twenty years, bar none, and he taught me how to fish—I consider that worth anywhere from ten to forty million. So I'm his debtor to a large amount, and I want you three gentlemen to help me to pay an instalment on my debt. I want you to help the boy win his case in his moot court

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up at the Harvard Law School. That's what you're here for."

"Speaking for myself, it will be a pleasure if I can help Mr. Vance," Fitzhugh enunciated with elaborate Southern courtesy. "And speaking for people in general, they certainly are likely to do what Billion Bradlee asks."

The lad swung about and flashed a startled look at his host. "Are you—" he began and stopped.

Bradlee frowned slightly. "You've heard my nickname, I see," he said. "You didn't place me before?"

"Place you—well, I just didn't, sir," Jack smiled broadly. "You know, I thought you were so darned extravagant about that Leonard rod." And Bradlee smiled too, pleased with the comrade-like confidence. He laid a fatherly hand on Jack's arm.

"State the situation now, Izaak Walton," he commanded.

So Jack, stammering a bit at first, forgetting himself soon, and, launching out into a perfectly regardless wealth of law language which flowed quaintly from his young mouth, set forth his case. There was a small railroad, it appeared, running twelve miles,

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from Skaneateles to Skaneateles Junction, wholly within the State. At Skaneateles Junction the road joins the New York Central. A train was made up at Skaneateles, consisting of engine, tender, caboose, four local freight cars, and one freight car billed through to Chicago, via New York Central and Lake Shore. A brakeman on this train was injured between Skaneateles and Skaneateles Junction by the negligence of the railroad company, but also because of his own negligence.

"You see," finished Jack, addressing the great railway magnates and the interstate commerce commissioner as man to man, "the question to be settled is whether that small road is engaged in interstate commerce, so that the brakeman may recover in an action against it in spite of his contributory negligence."

Billion Bradlee, whose nod shook Wall Street; Judge Carroll, who, with his associates, decided every day vast questions of national commerce; and the two powerful railway men listened with careful attention. The four pair of keen eyes were fixed on the boy's face. The boy went on. His whole per-



"State the situation now, Izaak Walton," he commanded.

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sonality was focussed now on his argument, and, though in the vague margin of consciousness there might have been a knowledge of the incongruity between such an audience and a case in a law-school moot court, yet the glow of his intense interest in his affair reduced such thoughts to a dim fringe. The boy went on, unembarrassed, throwing his free power into his statement.

“You see, sir—you see, Judge Carroll, the act of 1898 speaks of ‘common carriers by railroads, while engaged in commerce between any of the States,’ being liable to any employee for injuries while ‘employed by such carrier in such commerce.’ The fact of contributory negligence does not bar a recovery in such actions.”

Conway Fitzhugh, who handled railroads in three States, spoke consideringly. “It’s an interesting question. I believe it has never been decided,” he said, and the president of the I. S. I. & O. Z. D. followed him up quickly.

“Possibly there has been no final test case. But if such a position as Mr. Vance sets forth is maintained—if the brakeman could recover—then there

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is no such thing as the domestic trade of a State. Congress may take the entire control of the commerce of the country."

Bradlee, leaning back in his chair, laid down his knife and fork, and the perfectly cooked bird on his plate was left untasted. His keen blue glance swept across the table to Jack's face. Jack, bright-eyed, flushed, slashed off a manful bit of partridge and stowed it away before he answered.

"There's that view of it, sir, of course," he answered the mighty Howell respectfully but firmly—and Bradlee chuckled. He remembered a fishing lesson up a little lost river and the odd sensation of being talked to as a novice. He wondered how Howell would take these fearless tactics. The lad went on: "But there's a good deal of authority on the other side. 'The Constitution gives Congress plenary power to regulate interstate commerce,' you see—doesn't it, Judge Carroll? I think that's a quotation from one of your opinions, sir. And you may use the analogy of the Safety Appliance act—under that it has been held that a railroad wholly within a State, not even touching the boundary line, may be

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engaged in interstate traffic. Then there was an example—let's see—what was that?—it was a perfect peach," mused Jack, and the four dignitaries waited, regarding him seriously. "Oh, yes—I know," he flashed at them joyfully. "You'll remember this, of course, Judge Carroll. The Senate was monkeying with the question—I mean to say, the question arose in the Senate. Senator Bacon supposed a case—he said, take a purely local train from Richmond to Alexandria. Clearly that train would not be engaged in interstate commerce. A trainman injured must sue under the Virginia law. Now suppose a man at Orange Court House puts on a box of cigars consigned to Baltimore—does that immediately change the character of the train? After that may a trainman injured sue under the United States act? Senator Dolliver seemed to believe he could."

With that there was a battle of the gods. Even Bradlee dropped his spectator's attitude and descended into the arena, for the point was one which held a vital interest for each of the four, and the lad had opened the ball with a dance of distinguished authorities. Moreover, he had the literature of the

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question at his fingers' ends, and his shining spear, bright and new, flashed back and forth in the thick of the fray so readily, so accurately, that no thought of difference in age entered the minds of the older men any more than it did his own. It was suggestive of certain remarks of Kipling's calling attention to the fact that

"There is neither East nor West nor border nor breed
nor birth

When two strong men meet face to face, though they
come from the ends of the earth."

So the four captains of industry, men at the very crest of international careers, and the lad not yet at the beginning of his career, bringing only his eager brain and hard-won young knowledge and the tremendous impulse of his enthusiasm, debated together as equals and gave and took pleasure and strength. And the boy soaked in experience and ideas at every delighted pore, till at last the lunch was over, and Jack, due at an engagement, had to leave before the grandees, and stood up to say good-by. In his manly, boyish way he expressed his appreciation of their help, and, as he towered above them all in his youth,

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vigor and bright good looks, each one felt, perhaps, that he had unconsciously given as much as he had gotten, and that an impulse of generous new life had swept like a rushing wind into the world-worn minds from his contact.

"I can't begin to thank you, sir," he said, his hand in his host's, and Bradlee's arm across his shoulder half-caressingly. "I can't possibly tell you how I've enjoyed it. It's been simply great. I—I've never had such a bully time in my life," he exploded, and the others laughed quiet little laughs of older men, but their eyes were very friendly as they looked at him.

"We shall be interested to hear if you win your case," the mighty autocrat Howell said. "Bradlee must let us know."

"Send me a telegram, Jack," ordered Bradlee.

"I sure will," promised Jack heartily, "if you'd like it, sir," and, flushed and radiant and smiling, was gone.

About four o'clock the door in Jim Fletcher's room up-town—where a club of three law-students held their meetings for study, and where the confrère

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from Cambridge was expected this afternoon to battle with them over a special question—opened, and three bent heads lifted from a table littered with papers and legal-looking volumes to regard Jack Vance.

“Come in,” Fletcher threw at him. “You’re late. We’re half through. What are you grinning about?”

Jack shut the door inside with an air of reserved electricity which arrested the workers at the table. He came and stood over them and they all stared up at him; there appeared to be something to wait for.

“Gee!” spoke Jack at last. “Guess whom I’ve been lunching with.”

Carl Harrison drew a law-book toward him. “Don’t care,” he stated with disapproval. “Get to work, Jack; we’ve got a tough one on to-day.” But Joe Lewis and Jim were interested.

“What’s up?” Joe asked. “Get it out of your system, Johnny. Who?”

Jack stuck a thumb in each waistcoat pocket and looked “chesty.” “Oh,” he flung at them casually

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with his lips pursed and his eyes dancing. "Nothing uncommon. I simply lunched at the Lawyers' Club down-town with four of me pals—Billion Bradlee—W. R. H., you know, the railroad king, and Judge Carroll, of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the president of the I. S. I. & O. Z. D., Mr. Howell, and Conway Fitzhugh, the Southern railway magnate—just us five, that's all. We had some business to talk over."

And Jack, grinning consumedly, agitating his fingers from the thumb fulcrums, posing his slim figure as near as might be to resemble a bay-windowed alderman, grinned more and watched the effect.

"Come off," responded Jim Fletcher.

"Stop your monkey-shines," said Carl.

But Joe Lewis asked curiously: "What do you mean, Jack? Give us straight dope."

And with that Jack, chuckling very much, told the tale, to the wonder and amusement and awe of the three lads. And then, with a dizzying shift from boyishness to the stress of the battle of life, the shouts of laughter and light-hearted chaffing stopped

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short, and the four bent, grave and responsible, over the law-books, and the work of the day went on.

And the days went on and the Harvard Law School and its events went on, varying from mere recitations to trials in the moot courts, till a Thursday came, three weeks after the luncheon at the Lawyers' Club. There was an important meeting that day in the impressive offices of W. R. H. Bradlee. People had travelled from long distances to that meeting; there was a man there from Texas, and Hugh Arkendale had come from San Francisco on purpose, and Conway Fitzhugh had left his home in New Orleans two days before for it. Bradlee, opening the meeting, was making a short speech setting forth its purpose and importance. He had just begun when a rap came at the door. Every one looked up in astonishment; these men were as unaccustomed to being interrupted in their councils as the gods of Olympus.

"Come," thundered Bradlee in a terrible voice, and an alarmed clerk slid hurriedly in and held out a telegram.

"Orders"—he murmured—"any message from"—and the name was a gurgle and the clerk bolted.

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Billion Bradlee flopped the paper open, and, as if a bar of rollicking sunlight had broken into the dull atmosphere, his face lit up, as he read it, with a smile, a most unfitting smile. His clear, keen blue eyes flashed about the company a second, and then, like a boy, quite unlike a great financier plying his mighty trade, he tossed the yellow scrap to Fitzhugh.

"Good news," he spoke—he was shaking a bit with inward laughter, it seemed. "Read that, Conway."

The bald-headed general counsel of four railways put on his glasses, while the rest of the august company watched him and waited curiously. With careful, deliberate enunciation, in a businesslike tone and manner, the general counsel read aloud—a picked company of the most important men in America listening—these somewhat bewildering words:

"Landed my trout Scarlet Ibis top of the heap glory be won every blamed thing sure am grateful to you and high mucky-mucks kindly pass on thanks and accept most.

J. C. VANCE."

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There was a momentary astonishment on the face of Conway Fitzhugh as he stared over the yellow paper at Bradlee; the varied expressions of surprise on the dozen faces of the other men were a psychological assortment; Fitzhugh suddenly arrived with a jostle of quick laughter.

"Oh—that boy!" he said, and handed the telegram back across the table. "That delightful boy—I'm glad he won his case. Give him my congratulations."

"A youngster—a friend of mine—and of Fitzhugh's—" Bradlee explained vaguely to no one in particular, but the smile and the look of clean pleasure were still there, and every one felt at once as if a draught of sweet air had found its way into the room and had refreshed them.

"Now, gentlemen," said W. R. H. Bradlee, "as I was saying——"

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JOSEF and I were lifting our canoe into Lac Lumière from the Dammed Little River when we saw paddles flash up the lake. The "*garçons*," Blanc and Zoétique, the brace of younger guides, had been out to the club for mail; as that happened only once in ten days we hustled.

I ought to mention that the Dammed Little River is not so named entirely for love of blasphemy, but because it is little and is dammed—it was over that dam that we lifted the canoe. I'll grant you, however, that it may add a tang to the harmless stream to call it by the fierce name, and also it makes you feel pleasantly like a perfect devil to swear that way without sin. Anyhow that's where we were that September afternoon, Josef and I, just back from a two days' hunting-trip to Lac Sauvage country. I'd missed a moose, and I knew I was going to get jeered when I got back to camp

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and told my brother Walter, who never leaves much to reproach himself with when there's an opening for jeerings. But I might as well face the music; and besides, there was the first mail for ten days a mile ahead between two glints of sunlight coming and going—the paddles. So we hustled, as aforesaid.

But Blanc and Zoëtique paddling the home-stretch are hard to beat, and they had landed minutes before we got there, and were making oration with Walter on the porch. He detached himself with difficulty to greet me.

“Hello, Bob,” he threw at me, and “*Bon jour, Josef. Glad to see you. Any luck? Wait a moment and I'll talk to you.*”

I sat myself on a bench and stretched my hunting-boots over the landscape and waited per order. It's good for the soul to hear Walter talk French. He was enthroned in the one store chair, a red rocker, in the middle of the big camp porch, and I'll tell how he looked, for local color's sake. He's a lot older than I to begin with—over forty, while I'm only at Yale—and they made him a judge the minute he cut his teeth—the youngest in the State. He

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sat there appearing pretty prosperous, with his nice beefy color, and his dark-gray clothes, and his dark-gray hair, for his honors have gone to the outside of his head only. He's a trifle too embonpointish around the hips, but great men often have a rush of dignity to the waist-line, I notice. The light splashed on his spectacles so that they were all you could see of his eyes, but the glasses seemed full of earnestness, and there was a deep line in the middle of his forehead which comes when he's most awfully serious. He was this time. I'd have bet on it, when I saw his pipe sitting on his knee like an interrogation-point upside down.

Before him stood Zoëtique and Blanc, dressed in odds and ends; trousers under their armpits, multiple suspenders, slouch hats, a red bandanna, an axe in Zoëtique's belt, and a caribou-skin knife-sheath with buckskin fringe in Blanc's. Rummage-sale effects. For all that Zoëtique's got a figure which any athlete might envy, deep-shouldered, small-waisted, muscley—and Blanc moves like a greyhound, all steel springs and lightness. They stood respectfully in front of the red rocking-chair,

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and behind them two miles of lake stretched from the camp porch to the everlasting hills. In musical, incorrect French, with the nice polite manner all these *habitants* have, Zoëtique was getting to the end of a story, as I gathered, about a fish. That made it clear why Walter's soul-depths were bubbling and he couldn't pay attention to me. He's keen for fishing. He'd rather fish than be President—rather than shoot the biggest bull moose on record. He had the package of letters in his hands, the first in ten days; around him were piled rolls of newspapers, and he hadn't heard a new in all that time—but nothing mattered. Nothing but Zoëtique's fish-story.

When Zoëtique's crisp, rippling sort of low voice stopped, Walter leaned forward and got ready with anxious care to talk. To talk French was a necessity, for the men didn't understand English, and I could see him working his intellect. He usually helps himself to the French dictionary and kicks it, and calls that conversation, but this was different. This was about a fish—it was important to be understood.

“Si je comprenne, Zoëtique. Comme celà. Vous

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*l'avez view sortir à le Remous Doré, yune gros poisson—
gros grosse—vous disons celà?*”

I yelped a short yelp. The guides canvassed the sentence with perfect gravity. I could see them guessing. “View” they recognized as “*vu*,” I was sure; and “yune poison,” was a fish, “*un poisson*”; these transformations they’d run up against before. But “*sortir*” stumped them a minute. They looked at each other trying to remember if they’d seen a big fish go out—*sortir*. Then Blanc got it—it was “jump”—“*sauter*.”

“But, yes, M’sieur, it is true that one saw a big fish jump—at the Golden Pool—as one passed. A very big one—*b’en gros—gros de même*”—and the knotty hands of Blanc measured a hearty three feet.

“Great Scott!” gasped Walter excitedly, taking it all verbatim as he does a fish-story. “Holy Moses! it’s a six-pounder, at least!”

And with that the French language was batted through a game. A Parisian would have sobbed. But Walter got his questions out of his system, and I pulled him from one or two sad holes by the boots.

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And then the *garçons* raconté-d over again for me how they had been passing the Golden Pool—the *Remous Doré*—on their way up from the club with the mail and provisions, and had been brought to a dead stop by an enormous splash in the water. Zoétique specified that it was “*épouvantable*,” and Blanc, with gestures of hands and shoulders, told how he was so scared blue that he spilled into a two-foot hole, and the pack slid off him. Then the trout came up again, and concerning that appearance they gave measurements. They had him half the length of a canoe, and ten pounds heavy, by egging each other on a little, and Walter didn’t doubt a syllable; he didn’t want to.

“*Je vous dites ce que nous faisait*,” he addressed them enthusiastically.

Then he arranged, with further language, that the three, he and Blanc and Zoétique, should go down to the Golden Pool the next afternoon and collar that fish. Then he let the men loose, and they dissolved into the woods toward their own camp, and Walter glared at me joyfully through his goggles.

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"Bob, it's a sockdologer; it's the one that nibbled at my fly two weeks ago, and I couldn't get him on. But it was hot, then, and low water, and lots of flies for the fish to fill up on. Now it's cold, and they're gathering in the deep holes, and the flies are frozen out—I'll get him."

"Please the pigs, you will," agreed I. "Sounds like an old he-one, doesn't it? And Zoëtique never does lie as well as the rest. Give me my letters, won't you?" and with that he came to.

"Well, Bobby, I haven't heard about your trip. Did you have a good time? How was the water on *Lac à l'Isles*? Have the beaver raised it? And did you see anything? Get a shot?"

My time was come, so I unbosomed my sorrow, and Walter was decent at first and said we all knew what it was to miss, and likely the sights of my rifle were wrong, as Josef suggested, and shooting from a canoe was hell anyhow, and these Frenchmen couldn't hold a boat still—and all such things. When you shoot crooked there are just so many excuses from which your friends will choose comfort to offer up to you, and you knew beforehand which.

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But the feeling left is the same. If you've missed, you've missed, and nothing alters that fundamental grief and the yearning for blood and one more shot, which remains. And conversely, if you've hit you don't give a button how easy the shot was, or how many times you pumped your gun to do it. There's a profound peace in the pit of your being that religion is powerless to bestow.

So as Walter ran over the reasons why I couldn't possibly have hit I appreciated his courtesy, and rejoiced to be let off, but I was sore all the same. Besides, there was a gleam behind the spectacles which gave me a good hunch that I wouldn't be let off forever. A moose—to miss an old bull moose the size of a barn! I couldn't forgive myself, whatever Walter said, and even if the rifle was gone queer, which it was. I'll mention in passing that not long after I killed one bigger than the first, but that's quite another story. I told about my trip, and began on my letters, and Walter took to the newspapers. I heard him laughing in a few minutes, and I looked at him.

“What's up?”

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He glanced at me over a paper, grinning sheepishly. "They're talking about me for governor."

"Hey!" I hurled at him, for I was surprised. "You!" And I got up and kicked before him a little. "You! Hooray! Glory has come upon us. And me associating with you just as free—!" Then I sat down. "Tell me what it says," said I.

Walter read some paragraphs from different papers, and it sure did appear like a promising young boom.

"Why, look here, Walter," I gasped. "What's the likes of you doing in the wilderness? Oughtn't you to be down there fussing? Why don't you beat it for the settlements to-morrow—oughtn't we to go home?"

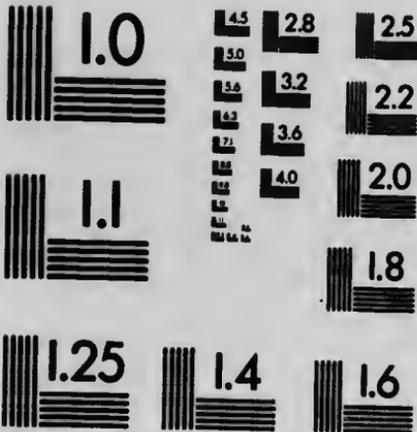
But Walter frowned evilly. "Go home? Not much. I'm going to take that fish at the Golden Pool to-morrow," he snapped at me. "Besides, if they need me they'll let me know. Whatever happens, I mean to get my fish to-morrow."

Then I addressed him. "That's too ridiklis," said I. "An afternoon's fishing—and us candidates for governor! Why, you make me laugh. I'm in charge of you, my good man—"



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"Oh, are you?" he inquired sarcastically.

"I am that. See?" So I punched him about a bit till he yelled for mercy. I can handle him since he got his embonpoint. I'm in training, and he isn't.

"Don't—don't," he howled; and then, as I slowed down, "I do dislike physical demonstration," said Walter. And I gave him a dig that rounded his sentence up with a squeal.

"That's all," I stated. "Just wanted to put you in your place. Am I in charge?"

"Yes, yes—leave me alone, Bob," he threw at me hurriedly, and just at that second I happened to look out at the lake.

I stood petrified. There was a canoe on it. Now our own guides and canoes were all in camp, and we're away beyond everybody's passing. Nobody comes to Lac Lumière unless they come to see us. Who under heaven could be coming to see us? It was five-thirty in the afternoon, and nobody from another camp would arrive at that hour, for it would be too late to get back anywhere. One doesn't walk portages after dark in Canada. So I was petrified. It was a canoe all right, however, and the paddles were flashing fast; it would be at our dock in five minutes.

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"What the devil does that mean?" Walter growled, and I lit into the camp and brought out my telescope, and in half a minute it was on the canoe.

"Two guides—don't know 'em," I reported. And then I shrieked in agony, "For cat's sake—for cat's sake!"

Walter got excited. "Who is it—what is it?" he threw at me.

"That's what I say," answered I. "Who is it? what is it? It's, a, straw, hat!"

"A straw hat?" Walter repeated, dazed-like.

For, you see, nature may abhor a vacuum, but I'm willing to bet she doesn't abhor it a patch on the way she does a stiff hat. And there it sat in the middle of nature, the lake gurgling around; dingy, regulation guides dipping paddles bow and stern; outraged mountains rising up green and sanctified at the horizon; and, in the centre of the stage, a shiny straw hat. It was too much. I dropped the glass and doubled with too-muchness. And Walter glued an eye to the lookout.

"It's a straw hat," he admitted, and reserved

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judgment, and went down to the dock, me following in all maidenly modesty.

In five minutes more the canoe's nose ran up the bank to our feet. We "*bon jour*-ed" the guides, and then the hat was lifted respectfully and a lanky figure of a man arose to his feet and stood wobbling. The guides tried to keep the boat steady, but he lurched at the dock and slopped over. His forefoot went into some quite wet lake which we kept there—Canadian canoes aren't meant for doing the tango. Walter and I snatched as one man at him, and yanked him landward, but in the enthusiasm of a savage his eye-glasses jumped him, and according to the law of gravity made for a crack in the dock. And somebody—said to be me—knocked off his lid. It took to the deep and bobbed away riding a wave, and Auguste, the guide, had to *depêche* like sin to fish it in with a paddle. It was an eventful landing for that sandy-haired youth, as we discovered him to be on the escape of the hat. He squashed water sorrowfully out of the yellowest low shoes I ever saw, and you couldn't cheer him even when I set his crown back on him and picked up his glasses.

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He just pulled off his hat promptly and gazed at it like an anxious mother and squashed more lake out of his yellow foot, and clucked softly—I don't know how to spell the noise, but it was a kind of a regretful cluck. Finally he got his glasses rubbed and his hat wiped, and Walter and I volubly offered him dozens of shoes, though I knew we'd have to short-come on the color. With the most exquisite courtesy we walked him up-stairs over the muddy little precipice of a trail to the camp, and sat him in the red rocker, and offered him whiskey. But he wouldn't. Heavings, Maud! No. Not for him. So we fed him Jamaica ginger and hot water, which I prefer myself, if there's sugar in it. And behold! he smiled like a split in a potato and arrived at the next station.

“I beg you will pardon me, Judge Morgan. I have been disturbed a little by these unfortunate accidents. I have forgotten to explain my presence in your hospitable camp. My name is Spafford. I am head clerk in the office of Bush, Engelhardt & Clarkson. I come from Mr. Engelhardt, Judge Morgan.”

“Huh!” grunted Walter in a sweet way he has, like a cross codfish.

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The sandy one looked bewildered. "Mr. Engelhardt," he emphasized, "the chairman of the State committee. I mean *that* Mr. Engelhardt," and he paused to give Walter a chance to whoop for joy. Walter not whooping, he trotted along glibly: "The convention which is to nominate the candidate for governor is on the eighteenth, and Mr. Engelhardt decided yesterday that it would be best that you should be there. You know, of course, Judge, that you are likely to be nominated?"

"Huh!" remarked Walter again, making awful faces, biting his cigar.

"Yes, sir." Mr. Spafford answered that sound with firm politeness. "Mr. Engelhardt thinks it best." And that to Mr. Spafford seemed to be final. "To-day is the 14th. If you take the train with me from the club to-morrow night at eight, leaving from Quebec the next morning, we will reach headquarters on the 17th, the day before the convention. Mr. Engelhardt and I planned it out," and he smiled that split-rock smile again.

For the third time Walter got off that insulting "Huh!" And then in a flash there spread over his

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face a thick layer of a peculiar sirupy smile, which I knew to mean an attack of pig-headedness.

"I'm afraid I shall not be able to join you on the journey, Mr. Spafford," he cooed.

Mr. Spafford looked flabbergasted. He simply didn't know the repartee. That anybody should disobey Mr. Engelhardt seemed one form of insanity. But here was a human being playing fast and loose with the nomination for governor—that was a form even more awful. His pale eyes popped till you could have knocked them off with a stick.

"Are you ill, sir?" he exploded finally.

"Oh, no—not ill, Mr. Spafford," Walter answered gently. "But I'm going fishing."

The cigar which Walter had fed him dropped splib on the floor, and the lower half of his mouth nearly joined it. "Fishing!" he gasped. "Fishing! But—but," hope dawned. Maybe Walter was absent-minded or deaf or something—he surely hadn't understood. "Judge Morgan," he began in a first-reader effect, "it—is—the—nomination—for—GOVERNOR." He got into capitals at that point. "Mr. Engelhardt —the Chairman—of—the—State——"

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Walter headed him off. "I know—I grasp," he interrupted softly. "I would like to be nominated for governor very much, but there's a big trout, Mr. Spafford—are you a fisherman, Mr. Spafford?" he interrupted himself in dulcet tones.

"No." The stunned one stared.

"Ah! then you can't really quite understand. I'm so sorry to disappoint Mr. Engelhardt if he wants me, but you see it's this way." He proceeded to explain elaborately, as if in court, the situation to that dumfounded youth. Walter showed him carefully how the fish wouldn't bite of a morning, and so the first time he could take this one would be the next afternoon. He pointed out that he'd been after this fish off and on all summer, and how big he was, and how one could see that it would be out of the question to leave before he killed his and more—details about flies and low water—such things.

When he got through, the head clerk of Bush, Engelhardt & Clarkson didn't know what he possibly could be talking about. Then a bright idea struck him. Walter was a practical joker—and with

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that we got the privilege of hearing Mr. Spafford laugh. It wasn't dead merry laughter; it sounded like a rapid-fire Christmas horn gone rusty. "I see," he arrested the flow of it to explain. "You are jesting." And with that I butted in.

"Not on your life, he isn't," I stated. "But it's too blamed bad. Walter, don't go and do such a perfectly rotten—" and at that point Walter's eyes flashed fire, and I stopped hurriedly.

But I didn't give in for all that. I can get him to do things sometimes when most people can't, and I was bound to try this time. So that night, after we'd tucked up the Spafford blossom in his downy guest-tent—and he was horrid nervous about beasts and spiders—I went into Walter's camp and reasoned with the Judge. I pointed out things which are obvious to the intelligence of a frog, and after a while I got him to shed his sirupy smile and talk sense.

"I'm not keen about being at the convention, Bob," he explained. "If the nomination comes of itself I'll be delighted, but I'm not the build to roll logs and keep my dignity. And I don't care to be led down on a leash by that young fool. I don't know

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what Engelhardt means by sending me such an infernal puppy."

"Ought not to talk that way before a boy like me, Walter," I remonstrated. And then reminded him that Mr. Spafford meant awfully well, and that it was his proud boast that he'd been sent because of his reputation for persistence.

"Persistence—heavenly powers!" Walter groaned. "I should say he was persistent. Like a terrier this whole evening. Made camp a hell. I'm so relieved to get him to bed that I could yell for joy."

Back I went to the point. I saw he was only reluctant to go out, not dead set against it, and I thought Mr. Engelhardt could likely judge better than he could. I asked him, and he said yes, likely, and that it was no harm to be there for the convention, only—he didn't feel like it. And he felt amazingly like taking that trout. Well, I managed a compromise. It was agreed that we should break camp next morning, and go down ahead of the guides early in the afternoon to the Golden Pool, he and I and Mr. Spafford, and there Walter should fish till it was time to go on to the club to catch the train.

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If he could corral the sockdologer before that psychological moment, well and good. If not—well, he wouldn't promise, but I had a hunch that if we were all packed up he'd go on. Anyhow it was the best I could do. So I took Mr. Spafford aside next morning and stated the case, with a rosy glow over possibilities; and I warned him politely not to nag at Walter or he'd break for the North Pole, and never be governor or anything else but a frozen corpse.

Next morning we were busy little housewives, bundling our earthly alls into the big canvas mail-bags which are our camp trunks. The guides were flying back and forth, and everybody was bubbling French, and lots doing. And in the middle of it the poor Spafford waif clung to the red rocking-chair, with the straw hat on his head, lost in wonder. He couldn't comprehend why people who might live in houses with rugs on the floor, and lace curtains and upholstered chairs should choose to do this. I saw him stare at a three-inch hole in my left trouser, where my complexion showed through, and then lift his wondering eyes to my gray flannel shirt, with much mountain wiped upon it, and a red cotton

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bandanna decorating the neck of it—he couldn't see through the game. You have to be born to it, or you can't.

We got off about two, Walter and I paddling, and Spiff in the middle, in the hat. We left all the guides to shut up camp and bring on the "*butin*." We paddled two miles down the lake, and then into the river among the rocks—it was low water and you had to know the channel. We shot a little rapids, and the flower of civilization was scared blue, but we made the portage, and there I flopped the canoe on my head and walked off, and Walter guided the steps of the stranger. It's only a mile down the portage to the Pool, so we got there an hour after leaving camp, and Walter at once paid no more attention to anybody. He began to put up his Leonard rod as if it were a religious ceremony; he does it that way. He had his leader ready, and I saw him meditate on the flies, and then open his fly-box and look it over thoughtfully to see if there was anything more seductive to the troutly mind. I remember that cast; it was a Jock Scott for hand-fly, a Silver Doctor in the middle, and a Montreal tail-fly.

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That's the way he started. Afterward he changed the Silver Doctor for a brown hackle— it was a brightish day. The minute he began to string the rod, it came to me that we'd forgotten the landing-net. That was ghastly when we were out for big fish, but it was much too far to go back, and I knew the guides would have it, and so I hoped the giant wouldn't get on, and Walter wouldn't notice about the net till the guides got there. And I kept mum, not to fuss the fisherman.

The Golden Pool was named that because it is. In September, when we fish there most, the leaves around it have turned yellow, and yellow only, for we're too far north for red foliage, and it's all in a bath of gold light. It's a widening in the river about a hundred yards across, and a lot of it is shallow, so, of a bright afternoon, the tawny-colored sand-bars show through. And all around the shore are tall birches which lean over, and their thin leaves are gold-shot, and the sun glitters through them. There are alders close to the water, and these are frost-touched too, and the stream rushes in over a steep rapids at a gorge between alder walls. It tumbles

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flashing around rocks in tier on tier of champagne whiteness, with sherry-colored slides of smooth water, and in the deep holes it's the gold-brown of brandy. Flecks of foam whirl over the surface, and under the bushes at the edge lie feathery hunks of it like piles of whipped cream a foot square. As you get to the place from the shadow and quiet of the woods, you seem to have come into a shower of glancing light and movement and excitement. You breathe in autumn and energy sharply. Yet it's all as still and remote as the big shadows on the mountains. That's the Golden Pool, and that's where we got, the afternoon of September 15, when my brother squatted on the rocks, and put up and strung his rod.

The reel sang as the first line ran, and the snells fell stiff and curly—but not over the hole—trust Walter not to stir up that hole till he was ready for business. In two or three casts the snells were wet, and the flies spun out on the brown, foam-spotted water. And then Walter cast carefully at the edge of the real fishing-ground. Along the left-hand side of the Pool the bottom is all big rocks, and in be-

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tween are deep, cold holes, and there the big trout lie—never many, yet every year two or three good ones are taken by the few who know the secret, from a place about twenty feet square. It's ticklish fishing, for there are sharp edges to the rocks for an educated fish to dodge under, and more than once a leader has been cut in two by a jerk from a fish that knew his business; and many's the fly yanked off around those edges. So it's skill against skill, man with his clumsy inventions against trout with his exquisite instinct—human brains out of their element against trout cleverness in its stronghold. That's the way it is when you go fishing in the Golden Pool.

Walter cast his prettiest from the first, and that's very pretty casting indeed. The dim-colored Jock Scott danced delicately toward us as he lifted the tip of the rod, hardly touching the surface; the Silver Doctor just wet its bluish, silverish wings, and the Montreal, with its streak of purple-red, dragged a bit in the water; big trout are more likely to take a fly underneath than to jump for it. It was all done in regulation form, slow recover, wrist motion only,

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sidewise jiggle as the flies came in, a lengthening line covering the hole slowly from side to side. Close back of us was the forest, with just a few yards of big rocks and low bushes for clear space; the recover, you'll see, was a critical business. It was mighty easy to catch a fly in one of those alders or on a fringe of tree, but Walter didn't catch once. He's a shark at the job. However, it was too early; the sun was too strong; nothing doing. So, after half an hour of exhibition casting:

"Take me across, Bob," said Walter, his eyes still fast on the Pool.

So I slid the canoe in, away off one side, awfully cautiously so no ripple would disturb the sacred and holy twenty feet square. And Walter stepped in the bow, and I slid the paddle into the water without a splash, and in two or three careful strokes I had him over at the farther side of the pond, well away, but yet within casting distance of the hole. "Zip" went the reel, with the businesslike, sharp, soft sound which means it's well oiled and well wound and well managed. It's a joy to hear Walter's reel. Out flew the nine-foot line of light which was

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the leader, and over the brown water danced three spots of color which were the flies. And then I saw Walter's fist jerk back about two inches, hard, and my eyes jumped to the leader, and the hand-fly was taut, and there was a bunch of white foam where it should have been, and a great bubbling of water, and the Silver Doctor and the Montreal were floating loose, and the kicking and bubbling and struggling were stronger each second. A fish was on the Jock Scott, and Walter had hooked him. I watched about thirty seconds with my heart in my mouth, and then I knew it wasn't what we were after. And with that Walter gave his pretty grunt.

"Huh!" he said, and began to reel in, casual-like.

"Sm ll feesh?" I asked, as Blanc talks English.

"Yes, the little cuss," Walter murmured, and yanked up alongside the boat a three-quarter-pound trout.

"Want to keep him?"

"Heavens, no!" said Walter with contempt.

So I laid the paddle in the boat, and wet my hands in the stream, because if you don't do that your

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touch will take off the overcoat of slime that's necessary to a fish's life, and he'll die. If I'd wanted to keep that fish I couldn't have landed him without a net. He was hooked by just a thread in the upper part of the mouth. But I got the hook out gingerly, and presented him with the freedom of the pool, and he slid off with no remarks. He lived all right. Then big brother proceeded to disgust himself and me by taking rapidly, one after another, five half and quarter pounders. I threw them all in, and, seeing we were too popular with the small game, we moseyed back to the rocks.

Meanwhile, all this time the outcast from civilization was sitting on my sweater on a rock, gazing in wonder at the lunatics. If it hadn't been for the infallible Mr. Engelhardt, I'll bet he'd have shaken Walter as no fit thing for governor, but as Mr. Engelhardt said he was, why, he was. Somehow, because the chairman of the State committee ruled the cosmos, and said so, Walter had to be nominated. So he sat, and just wondered. I thought I'd try to open a dark side of life to his vision—be a missionary, as it were. Walter had brought the rod-case, and I

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dug out an old fly-rod and strung it, and put on a leader and three flamboyant flies—a Scarlet Ibis, and a Grisly King, and a White Moth—regular flag effect. Then I charmed him with kind words to follow me down the pool a way, and he followed, lamentably complaining. He fell into holes. At last I got him where he couldn't hurt the fishing, and I showed him how not to hook the tree tops, and how to work the automatic reel, and then I put the rod in his virgin hands and said, "Fire away."

For about three casts he was doing it to oblige me. Then an infant trout, out of an asylum for feeble-minded orphan fish, jumped at the Ibis and hooked himself enthusiastically. And I took it off and showed it to Mr. Spafford—his first trout! And you wouldn't believe what a hurry he was in to cast again. It sure was funny. But that's the magic of the game. The primmest of humans aren't proof against the lure of fishing when they take something. So he took another, and he was a figure of fun, standing on a rock in that wild place in his store clothes, gleaming at head and foot with brightness of straw and leather, prancing with excitement,

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and casting very fast. I showed him points, and he began to catch on, but he threw a fit when he hooked the Grisly King to a spruce-tree, and I had to climb for it.

"If you could go faster, Mr. Morgan, I'd be obliged," he panted. "There's a large trout in the pool which I can see, and I want to catch it." And then a frank groan: "Oh, mercy, *do* hurry!"

So I yanked the fly off the branch and slid, and he was casting before I struck *terra cotta*.

About then I began to be conscious that time was passing. I looked, and it was 4.30; the guides might be along any minute and we'd have to go on our winding way in half an hour if we caught the train. I glanced across at Walter. He was changing a fly. He put a Brown Hackle in place of the Silver Doctor. He sent two or three short casts, letting out line, and the reel whirred sharp above the gurgling of the rapids. Then he loosed a reckless handful of line on the butt, and his wrist went back, and the flies sailed high and forward and floated out over the pool and touched without a sound—the Montreal under water, the Hackle skimming, the Jock Scott

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an inch over the surface. A corking cast, over sixty feet, I reckon.

Suddenly there was a swirl, and the Montreal went under deep, with a steady old he-pull. No mistaking that taking of the fly—it was a big trout. Sometimes a huge catfish will make you think he's a trout, but you can't ever mix a trout of large calibre with a catfish. It isn't done.

I saw the swirl and pull, and I leaped into the woods and heard my scholar fisherman wailing as I fled. I knew that Walter had on the scale, and the thought of the landing-net minus made me spin. I crashed through till I got back of Walter, when I called just a word:

“Go slow till I get the net,” and up the trail I bolted to meet the guides.

Right where the Green Velvet Brook comes in I met them; we call it that because there are yards of flat rocks each side of solid emerald-colored moss. Zoëtique was prostrate on his lungs with his face in the drink; Blanc was dipping it up in his hat; the others were lighting pipes; my eyes lit on the four-foot handle of the net, and with that I lit on it. I

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grabbed it without breaking the stride, and was loping back down the trail, and not a word said. Those men were surprised—the tail of my eye saw that. I took the portage at a hand gallop, and slowed down twenty feet behind the pool, and crawled out over the rocks to Walter.

“The net is here,” I gasped at him, and Walter didn’t throw me a syllable, but I knew he heard and would be civil when he got time. The brute was sulking. Down in the rocks—blamed dangerous trick. It was all uneven on the bottom, and the rocks were big, and there were deepish holes, and if he could get the leader across a rough edge and yank, or if Walter pulled a bit too hard, he could cut the leader and be off in a second. He knew it too—he was an educated person, that trout. Wherefore it behooved Walter to fish like an archangel.

He didn’t look the part, being screwed into a wuzzle behind his gleaming glasses, but if pretty is as pretty does, he was a beauty. He held Mr. Sockdologer on a short line, just feeling him, and giving him a tiny lift now and then to keep the game going. Exactly the right amount, that’s why fishing is

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hard; you have to do it right to a hair's breadth, which is instinct. You acquire it by patient years of losing fish. So the candidate for governor, huddled in a brown lump, sat on an inconvenient-shaped rock and held himself there by one boot planted in the water, and didn't give a hang for the governorship or the discomfort—those qualifications also go with a fisherman.

I lay along a chosen log six feet back, and watched the battle. And pretty soon I was aware of shapes that melted out of the trees, and it was the guides. They slid together back of me like a group of fauns or other woods creatures only half human, in the shadows, and there wasn't a sound from them, but a wreath of blue air floated forward in a minute, and I got the dim odor of Canadian tobacco. That odor always seems to me just one remove from leaf-mould and growing ferns and spruce-needles and other forest-speaking smells. So there we all watched, while Walter fought the fight.

And around the corner of the pool, out of mischief, Mr. Spafford, mad with excitement, fished his first fish with squeals of rapture and of agony. I couldn't

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see him, but I could follow the plot by the noises he made, and I had to chuckle, in spite of the real job on hand. First there'd be an "Oh!" high and sharp, of excitement and hope—a trout was on; then an "O—O—Oh!" deep and mournful—he'd lost him. Then he'd adjure them.

"Come, little fishy," said he; "nice fly—jump for fly, little fishy," as unconscious as a kitten, and as lost in the game. And pretty soon I heard the men behind me giggling softly, and as I squinted up they were shaking *en masse*, and trying to see the débütant Izaak Walton around the trees.

About then, out of the hidden deeps the whale suddenly rose right at the rod, coming with a smooth velocity that was terrific. The tip went up, and the reel ate line; the line kept taut. But it was a miracle that did it, and if the beast had got an inch of slack he'd have shaken loose; he knew his job, the trout. And the next second the reel screamed, and off he went like a cannon-ball, out and out and out, tearing down the stream, and Walter had the rod straight forward, lowered almost to the water, giving him line by the yard. It was a tremendous rush, and I tell

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you I was proud of Walter. That minute and the next two or three were the most superb fishing-show I ever had the luck to be in at. For no sooner had the beast run like mad for sixty feet straight from us, than he whirled as chain lightning, and scooted for us, licketty-split. I thought that settled it; no human could manage a line at that angle, I thought. I heard Zoëtique gasp softly back of me:

"Mais, bon Dieu, c'est fini!"

But it wasn't "fini." Up flew the tip of the rod; Walter was turning the reel rapidly, and the line was ripping in without a sag, without a jerk—I never saw the equal of it. That, if you please, sir, is fishing. Also it was lightning. Quick! Heavings! It discouraged old man whale. Down he went into the rocks again, sulking, and I knew Walter would rather have him do rushes than that, for there's nothing so anxious in all fishery. You can't ever tell what minute's going to be an earthquake, and you don't know what jagged edges he's got down there to jerk himself across, and you don't dare pull him, and you don't dare hold him easy. It's all guesswork, and mighty dangerous. Moreover, for a hole, the

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hole was shallow, and you had less leeway with the line, and a mistake in gauging the depths would be fatal quicker than in deep water. So Walter had a handful and a brainful.

Into that breathless situation reverberated a roar. "Oh, Mr. Morgan! *Oh*, Judge! Oh, Mr. Morgan—come and get ME. I—want—to—go! It's five o'clock! Come, and get ME! It's five o'——"

And about there Walter looked up and frowned vaguely, and I arose and hesitated as to how to kill quickest. Walter's eyes strayed back to the brown pool with the white bubbles doing waltzes and two-steps across it; and with that, as I stood reflecting, I was aware that Mr. Spafford was trying to come alone. All of two hundred yards—the dare-devil. I knew it by a crash as of a bull moose, and a howl following. He'd gone into a hole the first thing. "Oh, my! Oh, my!" I heard him moan, and then more crashing, and the guides splashed suppressed laughter all over me, but Walter didn't hear. His soul was at the end of the thread that dipped out of knowledge at a point of the dark water.

And in a second we were all intent on that same

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point, for the trout opened up hostilities once more. Without warning he gave an enormous pull and rose to the top and shook himself, and broke water, and beat with his tail, and tossed, and jerked, and rolled, and raised the most dangerous Cain ever, and Walter's wrist followed the ins and outs of it faster than any mind could possibly think. If your subliminal consciousness doesn't understand fishing you might as well give up when a trout gets to that act, for no up-stairs thinking-machine ever could follow. However, Walter's sub-qualities saw him through, and the whale went down again, visibly tired from the struggle.

And out of the woods burst our guest. So sad and bad and mad he was that I crouched before him. "Judge Morgan," he fired at Walter, who paid no more attention than if a puppy was barking; "Judge Morgan, I'll say nothing about the condition of my clothes." So I took notice, and there was a six-inch square tear in the right knee of them clothes, and the piece flopped.

"Too bad," I murmured, and he glanced at me sarcastically as who should say he knew well enough

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I'd put that stick to catch him, so I needn't be hypocritical. He further addressed the court:

"Judge Morgan, I'll suppose that my discomfort has not been caused intentionally—I'll suppose that."

Walter lifted the tip of the rod the least gingerly bit, and promptly lowered it; he was there.

"Judge Morgan, I'll not further mention myself, but for Heaven's sake, for reason's sake, for Mr. Engelhardt's sake, stop catching that fish and come and catch the train. I adjure you, do not throw away the prize of your career, the governorship," and that was shrieked in large capitals. His voice trembled with emotion. He thrust his hand into his trousers-pocket, and halted a mere second; then he pulled out of that pocket as he went on—I couldn't believe my eyes—he pulled out of that trousers-pocket a small, slimy, dead trout, and cast it from him, and pulled out another, and up to six, and discarded them on the rocks contemptuously. And I gasped, and the guides lay down and rolled, choking, but his voice went on in great exhortation: "The governorship! For a fish! Come, Judge Morgan. Be sane. There's

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time, but not more than time. We must start this instant—we must hurry—but we can make the train. Judge Morgan, I entreat you—come!”

And that “come” was a howl that penetrated even Walter. When he’s annoyed he’s likely to take his glasses off. He did that now, pulling them away hurriedly with one hand, and staring up at the exhorter near-sightedly, like a troubled bat. “What’s all this?” he growled, and threw me an appealing, irritated glance. “I’m not going anywhere till I kill this fish—you ought to know that, Bob!” and then he put his glasses on and threw one surprised glance at the little dead fishes on the rocks, and settled back to his rod, and I think plain forgot Spafford and me and everything else.

I realized that the universe, barring the trout, had been put up to me, so I took the wheel. “Mr. Spafford, I’m sorry; but it’s no use. Derricks couldn’t stir him. If you want to go on, you can take two guides and make the train all right. I’m awfully sorry, but my brother wouldn’t drop his rod, as things stand, to be made czar; we might as well give up.”

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"But it's insanity! It's—it's criminal! It's——"

I just agreed. "All of that," said I. "Only it's Walter. He's that way, and I can't change it. It's pretty selfish of course"—and I looked sidewise to see if the criminal was taking in things, but not an eyelash quivered.

The outraged Mr. Spafford held out a disgusted hand in answer to mine. "I shall tell Mr. Engelhardt, and he will believe me, but he will not understand. No reasonable person *could* understand that a sane man would throw away the governorship for a fish. Good-by."

At that Walter looked up with the nice beaming smile which makes him so popular and said pleasantly: "Good-by, Mr. Spafford. Sorry you have to go. It would be nice to be governor, Mr. Spafford, but it's necessary to finish the job I'm on." And in two minutes more the dumfounded youth was in a canoe between Henri and Godin, and the paddles were flashing down-stream beyond the Golden Pool.

Walter played the trout twenty minutes more—forty-five minutes in all. There were more rushes, and more sulking, but the runs were shorter each

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time, and the brute was plainly getting tired. At last the battle was practically over, and the huge fish was swimming near the surface, rolling on its side and flapping its fins helplessly, and Walter drew it this way and that, waiting to land it till the psychological moment when it should be too tired to shy at the net and break loose, as happens often after a great fight. Zoëtique knelt by him on the rocks, intent and excited, but responsible, and dipped the net softly in the stream to make it pliable, and then held its mouth toward the moving fish, following its course, ready every second for Walter's signal.

"Now!" said Walter, and the net swept toward the trout, and the trout, with a last effort, splashed, tore, ran—Zoëtique had missed him.

We all gasped in unison. Then for two or three minutes more the fish was played gently, carefully, back and forth, near the surface always now, and then suddenly Walter's chin lifted, and Zoëtique, half in the water himself, brought the net around and up with a splendid sweep, and in it, high in air, flapping and splashing spray over us, was the great

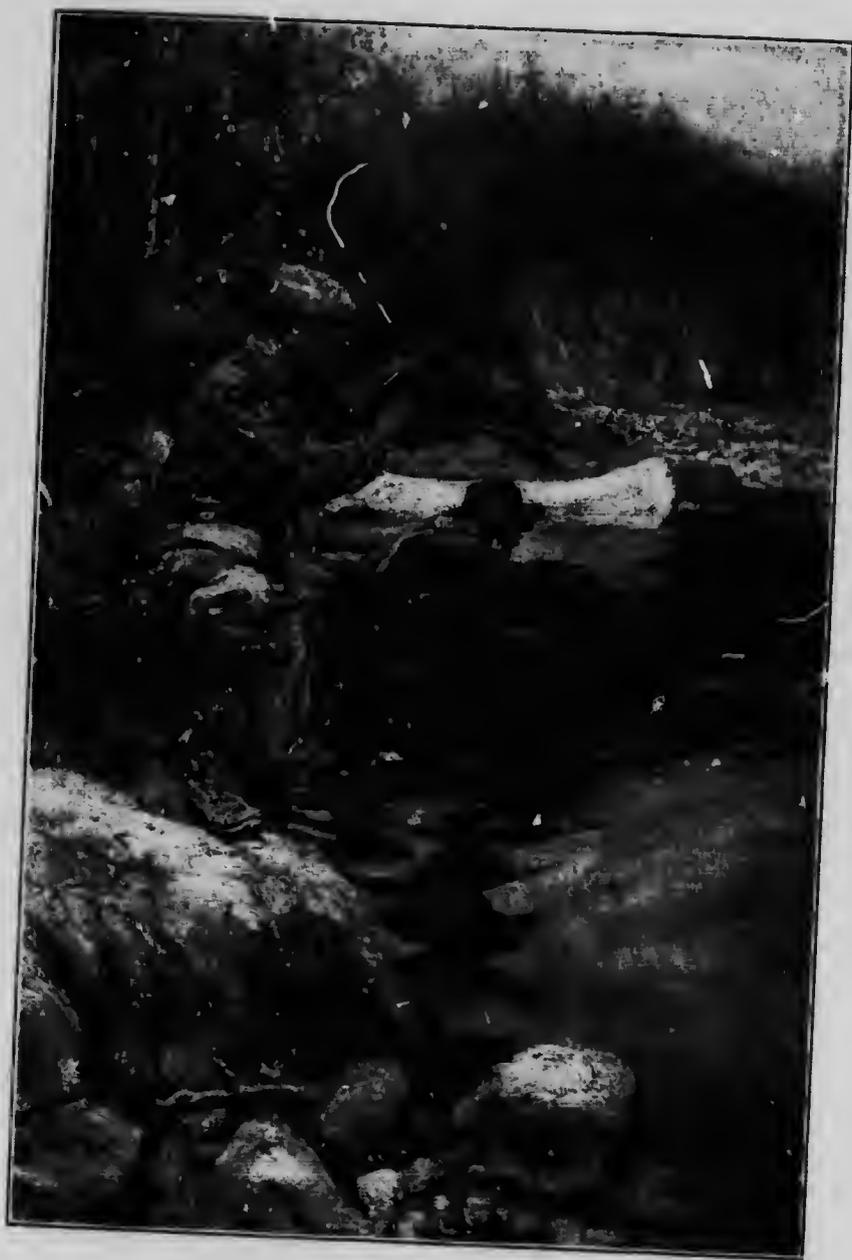
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trout! And when the net was lowered, and Zoétique got out his big dirk to finish the beast with a rap on the skull, *v'là!* he fell off the fly into the net. Lightly hooked as that, and Walter had saved him! It sure was a mighty fish-fight!

My! you ought to have heard Walter sigh. And one minute later you ought to have seen him grin. It was an hour of glory. Then the guides were given cigars and drinks, as is seemly at a great killing, and then the scales were dug out. Six and seven-eighths, just short of seven, the record in the club for the *Salmo-Fontinalis* on a fly. Of course, they're taken up to nine pounds in our waters in spring, but that's trolling, and no credit to anybody. The whale of the Golden Pool holds the record, to this writing, for sporting fishing.

And here ends the first chapter. Walter claims that here ends the story, and that the sequel is a detached incident. But I am now come to man's estate, and I happen to have a perfectly able hunch of my own about that. It's the sequel—I give it.

We went back to camp that night, and by careful observations my brother hadn't a regret in the



"Now!" said Walter, and the net swept toward the trout.

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world, and crowns and principalities and governorships weren't on his mind, which was set up by a huge gloat over his fish. He was the most deeply satisfied man I ever saw, that night, after he'd "thrown away the governorship"—see Spafford as above. We trotted along back and unpacked our "*butin*," and settled down, much like that emperor of Russia and his thirty thousand men who drew their swords and put them up again. We stayed a week, and not an uneasy glance did I surprise in Walter, but once and again an amused one with a chuckle onto it, as something recalled the Spafford episode. We got no mail and he seemed not to care. At length we broke camp definitely, and paddled down the lake in the sunshine of a glorious cold September morning, looking back longingly to where our long, low log palace, barred and empty, blinked blind, reproachful windows at us through the trees. We did hate to leave—we always do.

We got to the club-house at five in the afternoon, and everything was dead quiet; not even Demerse, the steward, was in sight. So we wandered up through the birches to the big house and stood a moment on

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the veranda to watch the guides bring up the *pacquetons*. Walter was bossing it, so I just stared at the last wild-woods picture I'd see for a year. Around the cup of Lac à la Croix in front of us were two sets of mountains: one stretched calm miles of greenness and sunshine into the horizon; its double dipped deep in water upside down, and the wind zigzagged wet silver across the submerged spruce spires. With that, out of the spruce spires as it appeared, leaped Demerse panting before us, excited, much-grinning.

"*Bon jour, Demerse,*" said Walter cheerfully, and shook hands and went on bossing the guides. "*Godin, je veux que vous faisait*"—he began. But Demerse wasn't to be corked that way. Not much.

"*Bon jour, m'sieur le gouverneur,*" he burst forth. "*Mes félicitations à votre Excellence. On est b'en content de ces nouvelles, m'sieur le gouverneur,*" and he grinned and panted more.

"What the devil are you talking about?" remarked Walter impolitely, and instantly translated, with that friendly comic grin of his which nobody seems to resist. "*Quaw le diable est-ce que vous disez, De-*

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merse?" he said. With that Demerse burst into the club-house and brought forth bunches of papers. It was so. They'd nominated the old rascal, whether he would or not. We read that first, and Walter was interested enough and pleased enough to satisfy even Mr. Spafford. Then I lit on a head-line in huge letters, which read:

"Consider the Contrast. Candidates of Different Calibre. Holloway Leaves Sick Child to Make Speeches. Morgan Says'"—and then I yelped, and joy got in my legs, and I threw down the paper and leaped a leap in mid-air.

"Read it, cub; read it, you young cuss," Walter fired at me, and I read:

"Morgan says: 'It would be nice to be Governor, but it's necessary to finish the job I'm on.'"

In small type below was the story about the fish. All straight, too. Spafford in deep disgust had told it to Mr. Engelhardt, and the chairman had been quick to see how to use it as a campaign catch. Holloway, Walter's rival, had left his small boy, about to be operated on, to get to the convention, and was awfully criticised for it; so the picture of

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immovable old Walter sticking to his fishing made a grand set-off to Holloway's nervousness.

We found it in paper after paper. Mr. Engelhardt said afterward that the simple account of Spafford's despair and Walter's solid-rock front of determination to get that trout first, and then attend to the governorship, but to get the trout first anyhow—that the account of that did more for the nomination than Walter's presence could have done. It seemed to tickle the people to have him look after the job on hand, and be impervious to everything else till he put that through—and that's the way the old chap is. Single-minded. I brought him up rather well, if I do say it, and I only hope this governor job—for he's elected now, you see—isn't going to spoil our camping-trip next summer. So does Walter.

THE REWARD OF VIRTUE

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THIS is a story about my guide, Josef Vezina. He's a corking guide and a wonder at hunting, and all sorts of a good fellow besides, but he's a French-Canadian *habitant*, and that means that he's blind as a bat to some ideas perfectly evident to us. So he did a stunt last autumn one day, all out of kindness of heart, which came near getting me into a nasty hole, and would, if my friend Arthur Shackleton, my roommate at college last year, hadn't been the best ever, and too square himself to think un-squareness of another fellow. It turned out only a joke on me after it was straightened out, but I was feeling rather shy for a while along at first.

I ought to give some idea of the sort Josef is. Well, to look at he's a tall, lean, powerful chap of twenty-four, with slim hips and big shoulders, and black hair, and large light-blue eyes which are simply marvellous. They are wide open always, and snap back and forth over everything like lightning,

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and there isn't a visible object for miles that they miss. Why, one day out on the lake in a canoe, fishing, Josef said, in his soft, respectful voice:

"M'sieur Bob!"

And I answered, "*Oui*—what is it, Josef?"

"If M'sieur will look—so—in the line of my paddle"—he held it out as lightly as a pencil—"*V'là un oiseau-de-proie*"—hawk—"on the tree across the lake."

I looked till my eyeballs popped, and not a blessed bird could I see for minutes, and then, with much directing from Josef, I caught sight of a lump with a wriggle to it, on the top branch of a spruce like a thousand other spruces, half-way up a hillside.

It's a treat to see him bend over a dim footprint in the moss, deep in the woods, and to watch those search-light eyes widen and brighten, and notice how he puts his rough fingers down as delicately as a lady. Then in a minute he'll blink a quick glance and say quietly:

"*Un orignal*, M'sieur Bob—a moose. There is about an hour that he passed. It is a middle one, and he was not frightened. He but trotted."

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At first I used to say "Gosh! how can you tell all that, Josef?" and he would shrug his shoulders and look embarrassed.

"But it is easy—*c'est facile*—M'sieur. The print is not large or deeply sunken—*calé*—so the animal is of medium size. The marks are close together—he did not jump long jumps as one does to hurry, when *effrayé*. And the left hind foot and right fore foot come side by side—an animal trots so."

"And the hour, Josef?"

For the life of him he can't exactly explain that, but two or three times his guesses have been exactly verified. He murmurs something about whether the fern is withered which the moose crushed into his step, and whether a leaf or little twigs have fallen into it, but he lets a lot go unexplained. I reckon it's judgment that's come to be instinct by practice and thinking about it. For I believe he dreams hunting, he's so crazy on the subject, and he's sure a shark at it too.

He's a shy fellow and won't talk to most people, but he's got used to me because we've gone off on trips. Being in the woods alone with a person,

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camping in one tent at night, and tramping in one another's steps all day long; putting up with short rations and discomfort, and then having the fun and glory of killing a caribou, or getting a five-pound trout together—that game makes you feel as if you knew the other fellow pretty well. Especially if it rains—Holy Ike! We did have rain on one trip to drown a frog. Three days of it. We were off to find a lake up the right branch of the Castor Noir river, and we didn't find it at all that "*escousse*"—as the guides say—and we got wetter every step and didn't get dry at night so you'd notice it, and altogether it was a moist and melancholy excursion. But Josef was such a brick that I had a good time anyway—I've discovered that there are many varieties of good times and there's one tied up about every package, if you'll look hard, and shake it out. So we used to have lots of fun building a whooping blaze at night near some little green-mossy arrangement of a brook, and making it go in spite of the rain—Josef's a wizard at that. We'd get the tent up and chop for the all-night fire, and d. . . out our clothes and things—it's wonderful how much

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you can. And then we'd have supper, and I never hope to taste anything as good as that fried bacon with corn-meal flapjacks. Maple sugar's fine mixed right in too—we didn't stop for courses. I've had meals at Sherry's and they're not in it with our bacon and flapjacks. Then Josef would fumble in his soggy pocket and bring out an old black pipe, and fumble in another pocket and bring out a marbled plug of tobacco, and slice off some with his ferocious hunting-knife, out of the caribou-skin case with fringe of the hide, which he wears always on his belt. Then, when he'd lit up, he'd start in to amuse me—I think he was deadly afraid I'd get bored before we found that lake. He'd tell me anything on an evening off in the woods like that by ourselves—especially, as I said, if it rained. He told me about his sweetheart who died, and about the hundred dollars he'd saved up in five years and then had to pay the doctor from Quebec when his father was awfully ill. He's had a hard time in some ways, that Josef—yet he has his hunting, which is a great pleasure. I'd tell him about college and big cities, where he's never been in his life, not even to Quebec,

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and he'd ask the simplest, most childlike questions about things, so that sometimes it made me feel sorry and a bit ashamed somehow to have had all the chances.

After we'd talked a while that way I'd get him to sing for me, for he's got a corking voice and they are all musical, these *habitants*. Some of the airs were fascinating, and the words too, and afterward I got him to write down a few for me. The one I liked best began this way:

Les grands bêtes se promenant
Le long de leur forêt—
C'est aux bêtes une salle—
Le forêt, c'est leur salle;
Et le roi de la salle
C'est le Roi Orignal.

Chanceux est le chasseur
Et louable, qui est capable
Vaincre le Roi Orignal.

I had a bit of trouble making out the words because he spells his own style and splits up syllables any way that it sounds to him. I'd like to give some of it the way he wrote it, for it sure was queer, but I'd

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feel as if I were playing a mean trick on poor old Josef if I did that. When he brought the songs to me, written on a piece of brown paper that came around a can of pork and beans, he shrugged his shoulders in an embarrassed way and blinked those enormous light eyes half a dozen times fast, and said:

“*Sais pas*, if M’sieur is capable to read my writing. I do not write very well—me.” Then the shoulder stunt. “M’sieur will pardon, as I have had little of instruction. I was the eldest and could go to the school but two years. It was necessary that I should work and gain money. Therefore M’sieur will pardon the writing.” And you bet I pardoned it, and you see I can’t make a joke of it after that.

All this song and dance is just to explain how Josef and I got to be a good pair, so that he’d get up any hour of the night to hunt with me, and jump at the chance; and would always manage to get me the best pool on a river for fishing, and never let me realize that I was hogging things till after I’d done it. Sometimes the other guides were up in the air at him, but Josef didn’t mind. However, the one chance

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that was apparently the ambition of his life he'd never yet been able to give me, and that was to kill a moose. I'd been pretty slow at getting even a caribou, and missed one or two somehow—they're darned easy things to overshoot, for all they're so big. But that I'd finally accomplished, and I drew a good head with thirty points to the *panaches*—horns—so Josef's mind was at rest so far. At the present moment the principal reason he was living—you'd think—was that I should get "*un orignal*," and I didn't have any objections myself either.

That's the way things stood when Arthur Shackleton came up to camp. Shacky's the best sport going, but a greenhorn in the woods—he'd tell you so himself promptly. I saw Josef sizing him up with those huge shy eyes, as Shacky stood on the dock and fired my 30-40 Winchester at a target before we started out on the trip I'm going to tell about. Josef had one foot in the canoe, loading *pacquetons* into it, busy as a beaver and silent as the grave, and almost too shy to glance at the bunch of "messieurs" who were popping the guns—all the same he didn't miss a motion. He knew perfectly that

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Shacky had to be shown the action of the Winchester—how you saw the guard to load, and then saw it again to throw out the shell and put in a fresh cartridge. If it had been the Archangel Michael, Josef wouldn't have taken much stock in a fellow who didn't understand the Winchester action, and that afternoon poor old Shacky settled himself. We'd been travelling all day, paddling in canoes and tramping on portages, and we'd gone through two or three lakes and were now working up a little river full of rapids, but with long "*eaux mortes*" between them. We were getting to the end of such a dead-water, and Shacky's canoe was in front, with a guide in bow and stern, and him in the middle, with a rifle. We were behind, but neither of Shacky's guides, Blanc or Zoëtique, saw the caribou till Josef gave a blood-curdling whisper that waked them up:

"C—caribou! C—caribou!"

And, sure enough, there it was, but so hidden in the branches on the left bank that no eyes but those big microscopes of Josef's could have picked out the beast. The stream narrowed just there and

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a ripple of water dashed over the stones between alders on one side, where the caribou was, and a pebbly shore in front of alders, on the other. Of course the animal heard Josef's whisper—that couldn't be helped. And what do you think he did? They're crazy in the head, those caribou. He gave a leap out of the alders that hid him, and jumped across the rapids with a tremendous splashing, and stopped on the pebbles in full sight of the audience, and stared at us. I suppose he didn't know where the trouble was coming from—or else he didn't know it was trouble, and liked our looks—but that question can't be settled this side the grave. Anyhow, Zoëtique swung the canoe around with one mighty stroke so that Shacky had a nice left-hand shot, and the caribou stood as if trained and waited for him to be good and ready; and poor old Shacky proceeded to profit by my lessons on the Winchester. He put the rifle to his shoulder and sighted with care, and started in and worked the lever back and forth, back and forth, till he'd loaded and thrown out all five cartridges—and never once touched the trigger. The caribou stood petrified with

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astonishment while he went through with this surprising performance, making a most unholy racket of course. And when he'd quite finished, and the last cartridge lay in the bottom of the boat—they rained all over him—then the beast stuck out his nose and took to the underbrush, a perfectly good caribou still. It sounds like an impossibility, but it's an absolutely true tale—it was a pure case of blue funk of course. And he wasn't used to guns—it's an outrage to bring a boy up like that.

Well, old Shacky was as game as they make 'em about it, and apologized profusely for wasting good meat, and never whined a whine on his own account. But that didn't help with Josef. I explained at length how the m'sieur was new to the gun, but when his big eyes lighted on Shacky I saw such contempt in them I was dreadfully afraid Shacky'd see it too. He'd queered himself all right, and I believe Josef would have hated to guide for him at three dollars a day, he despised him so. Yet that's putting it strong—there aren't many things the French-Canadians won't do for money, poor fellows. Anyway, as things were, Josef never looked at Shacky,

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and acted, as far as he decently could, as if he wasn't there.

We came to the lake where we were to camp, and the four men put up the tents, and we settled things, and then Josef sneaked off in a canoe alone to see what the signs were for game. We'd planned to hunt first on the *Rivière aux Isles*, the inlet to this lake, which was said to be broad and grassy in spots.

It was clean dark when Josef got back, and when he walked into the firelight his eyes looked like electric lights—blazing, they were. I never saw such extraordinary eyes. Some old cave-dweller that had to kill to eat, and depended on his quicker vision for a quicker chance than the next cave-dweller may have had that sort—but I've never seen the like.

"Did you find good '*pistes*,' Josef?" I asked him.

He had stopped on the edge of the light, shabby and silent and respectful in his queer collection of old clothes, his straight black hair sticking all ways, like a kingfisher's feathers, under his faded felt hat. I tell you he was a picture, with his red bandanna knotted into his belt on one side and the big skin

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knife-sheath with its leather fringe on the other. That knife gave a savage touch to his make-up. But he stood erect and light and powerful, a bunch of steel springs—there's nothing to pity Josef about on the physical question. He was shy because of Shacky's being there, but when I asked about the "*pistes*"—signs, you know—up went his shoulders and out went his hands—he was too excited to think of anything but the hunting.

"*Mais des pistes, M'sieur Bob! C'est effrayant! C'est épouvantable!*"

Then he went on to tell me, with hands and shoulders going and his low voice chipping in with the cracking of the fire. It seems that, as there was a light drizzle falling, which would wipe out his scent, he had landed on the shore of the wide-water of the *Rivière aux Isles* near where he thought the beasts might come in. And he had found signs to beat the band—runways cut wide and brown with steady use, and huge prints of both caribou and moose. But what excited him particularly was that, according to his statement, there was a big moose which watered there every day.

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"He is there to-day about ten o'clock in the morning. He was there yesterday. There is also a *grosse piste* of day before yesterday," he exploded at me in mouthfuls of words. "He walks up the pass—I have seen his steps all along—I have followed. It is necessary that M'sieur Bob shall go there of a good hour to-morrow morning and wait till the great one comes up the river. It is a shot easy for M'sieur Bob from the wide-water to the place where that great one comes. In that manner M'sieur Bob will kill a large moose—*crais*—but yes."

"Hold on there a second, Josef," I halted him. "M'sieur Shackleton's got to have the first chance—he's my guest," and then I stopped, for not only was Josef looking black murder, but Shacky threw his boot at me.

"No, you don't," said Shacky. "No more ruined chances and healthy wild beasts for mine. I won't go, and that's all. If you've got a good, harmless spot with one caribou track to amuse me, and you'll let me sit and work a crank, I'll do that fast enough. But as for throwing away any more meat, I plain won't."

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"Oh, cut it out, Shacky," I adjured him. "It was only a cow caribou anyway, and you'll be steady as an old soldier next time"—but he wouldn't listen to me.

Then I labored with him, and finally after much agony we came to an agreement. There was a place, Lac Monsieur, a little pond to the east, which we had every reason to believe would be fine hunting. It was good country, and might beat out Josef's place, only we didn't know for sure. So I terrorized Shacky into a consent to draw lots, the winner to have the choice. We drew, and I won the choice. Josef stood there waiting, his eyes snapping and gleaming and watching every movement—he could understand enough English to follow, though he couldn't speak any. He saw that I had the long stick and he flashed a glance of unconcealed rapture at me.

"At what hour is it light, Josef?" I asked him.

"One can see enough to go *en canot*—in the boat—at three hours and a half"—he answered happily.

"I will wake M'sieur Bob at that hour, is it?"

I really hated to disappoint the chap, he was so tickled to death and so certain I'd get my moose.

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So I spoke very gently. "I'm sorry, Josef, but we're not going *en canot*, you and I. M'sieur Shackleton and Zoétique will go to the river, and we'll go to Lac Monsieur, and rake out a moose before they do."

"Oh, come," burst in Shacky. "This is a crime. I simply can't"—but I interrupted.

"Shut up, dear one," I said politely. "You talk like a teapot in early June. It's my choice, and I choose Lac Monsieur."

Josef bent over with a quick swoop, and picked up the two sticks and held out the long one. "Pardon, M'sieur Bob. It is this one that M'sieur drew?"

"Yes," I said. It came hard to rub it into the fellow and I was just a little sick myself, I'll own, to have to throw away that moose on Shacky's fireworks. "Yes," I said.

"And it is for M'sieur to choose?" he asked, blinking.

"Yes," I agreed again—I let him fight it out his own way.

"Then—*Mon Dieu!* M'sieur Bob will choose the river. It is certain that M'sieur will there kill the great moose."

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Well, I had to send him off sulky and raging, and entirely uncomprehending. He simply couldn't grasp why, when I had fairly drawn the choice, I should throw it away on such a thing as Shacky. I couldn't put a glimmer of it into him, either.

At gray dawn, out of the underbrush there was a low call of "M'sieur!" repeated more than once before it got us up. We crawled shiveringly into our clothes by a smoky fire kicked together from last night's logs; we had hot chocolate and not much else out in the open; and off we went, Shacky and his guide up the lake in a boat, and Josef and I through the woods that seemed to have a deathly stillness in them as if all the small wild creatures were sound asleep that make an underbuzz in the daytime.

A little cold light was leaking, up in the branches, but down where we walked it was dark—mostly I couldn't see the *plaques*—blazes on the trees, *plaques* are. But you couldn't fool Josef—he went straight from one to another as if it was a trodden portage. My! but he sure was in an ugly temper. Once when

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he whipped his axe out of his belt and clipped a branch in our way, I just knew he wished it was Shacky he was chopping at. The light brightened as we went, and before we got to Lac Monsieur, I could see the sights of my rifle. As we came to the lake, the tree-trunks stood black and sharp against a white wall of mist hanging solid on the water; above that the mountains showed black again, on the sunrise—only the sun wasn't risen. The marsh-grasses were stiff with frost, and when you stepped the marsh was crisp. We walked to the east side to get a good watch; we settled ourselves, and the sun came up behind us as we sat shivering with cold. First it lit the tops of the mountains across, and then crawled down the trees and lay on the water in a band. The stiff grasses suddenly stood up white in masses, and then, as the sun hit them, the frost melted and they turned yellow. I wish I could tell how pretty it was and describe the feeling it gives you of the world's being just made that morning expressly for you to play with.

We watched there till the light came high and came shooting through the branches where we sat

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straddling two logs, and the minute it touched us it grew so warm we had to shed our sweaters—about seven o'clock, I think. And about then Josef got restless. He picked twigs, and he crawled about, and he kept looking at his big silver watch as if he had a train to catch. Finally, he took out his pipe and began feeling in his pockets for tobacco—the flies were chewing us by then. But I couldn't have that—it's a crime to smoke on a hunt, because the caribou have wonderful noses and scent things a long way off if the wind is to them.

"*C'est bien dangereux,*" I whispered.

Then Josef whispered back that this lake was no good—he didn't think we'd see anything.

"What can we do about it?" I asked him. I didn't agree, yet I trusted Josef's judgment more than my own, and he knew it, blame him. He shrugged his shoulders.

"*Sais pas!*" he said, and then he changed his manner. "If M'sieur Bob wishes, there is another pond where one might have a chance."

"What distance?" I asked.

"*Sais pas,*" said Josef. "It might be an hour, it

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might be more. I believe well that M'sieur will kill a moose if he should go to that pond."

"All right," I said. "Come on."

So we crept off through the beaver meadows edging the lake, where every step comes "galoomph" out of soggy moss. Josef gave me a peach of a walk that morning. The sun went under and he had the compass, so I lost direction, and we had a lot of bad going—windfalls and spruce-thickets and marshes—all sorts. We walked forever, it seemed to me, more than an hour, anyway. But finally we came out, around nine o'clock, on a little pond like a million others in Canada, which looked the real thing. There seemed to be quite a big inlet up at the end where we were. Here's a map to show how the thing lay:



We watched at the cross-marked spot and from there you could shoot all over the pond and up the opening which seemed the inlet.

I could judge at a glance that the place was good

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for game. Opposite us, two hundred yards across water, lay a bank of mud with lily-pads and grass, and that bank was trampled like a cow-yard. From where I stood I could see huge sunken hoof-prints, lapping, and the mud thrown up on the edges, not caked or dry even—done inside a few hours. The big roots of the water-lilies had been dragged up—they look like long pineapples—and partly eaten and left floating—that's the stunt of only a caribou or moose. I patted Josef on the shoulder silently, and his big eyes flashed as if he was satisfied. We selected a stump with some thin bushes in front, where I was screened, yet could swing my gun all around the place, and Josef effaced himself back of me, and we sat there and waited.

Not long. We hadn't been there over five minutes, and I hadn't stopped jumping at the sound of the water on a big stone below, and the sudden breeze through the trees back of me, and a squirrel who kept breaking twigs sharply and then scolding me about it—when all at once there was a thundering, unmistakable crack across the pond, in the trees close to the shore. My heart gave a pole-vault—I

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reckon everybody's does at that sound—and I heard a breath from Josef:

“*Original.*”

Neither of us stirred a finger. It was still as the grave for a second. There was another great crack, and then a huge rustling and breaking together, unguarded and continued. My eyes were glued on the thick screen of alders, and the alders parted, and out from them stepped the most magnificent brute I ever saw alive—a huge moose with spreading antlers that seemed ten feet across. As big as a horse he was, and looked bigger because he stood higher and because of the antlers. Gee! what a picture that made. He waded grandly into the water, making a terrific rumpus of splashing, and then, as I sighted down the barrel, I felt Josef's finger light on my arm.

“*Il va marcher*—he's going to walk up the shore. Wait till he turns.”

It was plain that he wanted me to have a broad-side shot, and, while it wasn't flattering, yet I didn't care to take chances on this moose myself. I lowered the rifle. The beast put down that gorgeous head and tore up a lily and tossed it on the water, and



The alders parted, and out from them stepped the most magnificent brute I ever saw alive.

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then bit off a piece of the root and munched it. It was hard to wait while his lordship lunched; I was so afraid I'd lose him I nearly exploded. But in a minute he turned and began to wade again arrogantly and deliberately up-stream—it was plain he felt himself cock of the walk and the monarch of the forest all right. Then Josef's finger touched me again, and he grunted—I think he was beyond words. I lifted the rifle and held on the back of the beast's head and pulled the trigger. The stillness sure was smashed to pieces by the roar of that rifle-shot. I reloaded instantly, but Josef yelled:

"Vous l'avez, M'sieur Bob—you've got him!"

It was so, you know. Of course it was a fluke, but I hit him in the back of the head where I'd held, and he dropped like a log. Well, for about five minutes things were mixed. Josef and I talked to each other and listened to ourselves, and both of us were mad to get across that pond to where the big moose lay, still and enormous—but we hadn't any boat. We didn't dare start to walk around it, for fear the moose might not be quite dead and might get up and make off while we were in the woods. So

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we stood and waited, ready to plunk him if he stirred.

"Where the dickens in Canada are we, anyway?"

I burst at Josef in English—but he understood.

"It is a place not too far from camp, M'sieur Bob," he answered quietly. "If but we might have a canoe, *à c't heure. Mais v'là*"—he broke off.

And, please the p'ss, I lifted my eyes and there *was* a canoe paddling down the inlet, and in the canoe sat old Shacky and Zoëtique.

"Where in time did you drop from?" I howled, and then, with my hands around my mouth: "I've killed a moose! I've killed a moose! There he is!"

Not a sound from Shacky or Zoëtique—I couldn't understand any of it. Why were they there? Why weren't they surprised to see us? Why didn't they answer? However, they paddled steadily on, and as they got close I saw that Shacky was looking rather odd.

"What's up," I asked. "Can't you talk English? Aren't you glad I've killed him?"

"Fine!" answered Shacky with a sort of effort about it that I couldn't make out. "Whooping good

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shot!" he said, and the boat ran in on the bank and I squatted on the bow to hold her. Shacky proceeded to get out, but he didn't look at me, and Zoë-tique, who's generally all smiles and winning ways, was black as thunder—there was something abnormal in the situation which I couldn't get on to. "Corking good shot," he went on in a forced sort of way. "The moose went down like the side wall of a church."

"How do you know?" I threw at him, for his manner irritated me.

"Know?" Shacky laughed a queer laugh. "Of course I know. Didn't I see him?"

"See him?" I repeated. "Where were you? What's this lake, anyway, and what are you doing here?"

Shacky looked at me hard enough then. "What in thunder do you mean?" he asked with an astonished stare.

"Mean? I mean that," I yapped. "There's something about this I don't grasp. Do you know what this pond is? For I don't."

Shacky's lower jaw actually dropped, the way you

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read about in books. He stood and gaped. "What! You don't—know—where you are?" he jerked out. "Why, this is the lower still-water of the *Rivière aux Isles*—just below where you sent me to watch, you know."

I gave a gulp; he went on:

"We've been listening to that moose an hour—he walked in from away up the mountain—we've heard him crack all the way—he was just in sight around the turn when I heard you shoot and saw him fall. I had my gun cocked and was waiting till he got a few yards nearer."

With that Zoëtique could no longer control himself, but burst in with voluble, broken-hearted indignation. "*C'est b'en malheur!*" he moaned, gurgling like an angry dove. "M'sieur had well the intention to shoot straight—he would not have missed this time—M'sieur. M'sieur had examined and practised the movement of the *carabine* constantly—he now knows it *comme il faut*. Also I remarked the arm of M'sieur, it had the steadiness of a rock—I say it as at Mass—it was, in truth, the moose of M'sieur. He would have gained great credit—also

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me his guide. So that it was a hard thing to have that moose torn from us at the point itself of gaining. *C'est b'en malheur!*"

Now here's the rest of the map to show how it was, and how we were both holding on that moose around a corner from each other. That beast's last day had come all right, but I got the first crack at the trumpet of doom. Here's the map:



When the business had filtered into my intellect I whirled on Josef.

"You knew where we were? You knew this was M'sieur Shackleton's hunting-ground? You brought me here to get that moose?" I flung at the fellow in nervous French, never stopping for tenses.

Josef shrugged his shoulders just a touch. "*Sass peut*" (*Ça se peut*) he murmured irresponsibly—which is Canadian for "It may be."

I could have choked him. To make me play a

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trick like that on poor old Shacky! And with that Shacky spoke up like the white man he is.

"I guess we're both stung, Bob," and he banged me on the back. "But it's a thousand times better you should get it. I'd probably have missed again. It's the reward of virtue; you gave me your chance. Only I did want to redeem myself. I really was steady, and I'd been fussing with the gun till I knew it by heart. I was going to do it right or bust—you'll give me credit for not being two fools, won't you, Bob? But it's the reward of virtue—that's straight."

I could nearly have cried. Poor old Shacky! when he was ready and nerved up, and that glorious moose within gunshot, to have me step in and snap him off his upper lip when he was almost tasting him.

I was afraid to speak to Josef for a minute, I felt so much like killing him. I simply hustled those two guides, without another word about it, into the canoe, and we crossed to where the moose lay, and the business of skinning the brute and cutting him up, and all that, took three good hours of hard work. But I was laying it up for Josef, I can tell you. I'd

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have dismissed him if it hadn't been that at lunch, when the men were off, Shacky took me in hand and reasoned with me, and made me see, what indeed I knew, that Josef had acted up to his lights. He couldn't understand our point of view if I talked to him a year, so it was no use talking. He had found that hunting-place and he considered that he had a right to it for me, and that I should throw it away seemed to him pure childishness. By his code it was correct to circumvent me for my own good, and he had plain done it. Anyway I didn't dismiss him, owing to Shacky, and also because I'm fond of him.

But I did give him an almighty serious lecture, which did no good at all. He was bursting with joy and quite ready to face small inconveniences, so he just shrugged his shoulders and blinked his light, big eyes when I preached at him, and I don't believe he listened to much of it. Zoétique was sore, too, but Josef let the storm rage around him and was content.

And all the way down the river and through the lakes, as we went home in triumph with those huge

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antlers garnishing the middle of the boat, I heard old Josef humming to himself as he paddled stern, back of me:

Chanceux est le chasseur
Et louable, qui est capable
Vaincre le Roi Original.

THE SABINE MAIDEN

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MY young brother-in-law, Bob Morgan, is two yards long by an approximate three-quarters wide; his brother, my husband, is as long and wider; and the two frolic together, amid thunders of furniture, like kittens. Bob is that joyful-hearted thing, a sophomore at Yale, and the elder barbarian rises, playing with him, to the same glorious and irresponsible level. It is lucky that the appointments of our camp in Canada are of a sort suited to men of the stone age. Short of knocking down the stovepipe, a real tragedy is difficult, and after six years of connection with the Morgans no variation of giant gambols now surprises. So that the "God Pan" photograph, which might once have seemed against etiquette, did not startle me.

The photograph introduced the episode of this story, so it is fitting to begin with it. The three of us, Walter, Bob, and I, old comrades in the woods,

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had left that centre of civilization, our log camp on Lac Lumière, for three days in tents early in September. We hoped for caribou or moose, or both. All day we travelled a lonely stream, the Rivière à la Poêle, or Frying-pan River, paddling up sunny, still reaches between rocky shores, or through gold-green rustling water grass; then, as rocks thickened and the rapids came crashing in hoarse sweetness, we disembarked into a portage opening like a door into black forest; we followed the trail up the hurrying water, seeing through the trees the tumbling foam or the brown, white-speckled whirlpools; hearing it above the leaves' whispering. All day we followed the stream.

We came to a lake, Lac à la Poêle, at three in the afternoon—a lake which perhaps twelve white people have seen. The guides, with expert shifting and fitting, wedged six hundred pounds' weight, alive and dead, *pacquetons* and people, into each sixty-pound canoe, and we floated *au large* to the liquid dip of four paddles.

Into Lac à la Poêle at the farther end, three miles away, flowed its largest inlet, where we meant to

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camp. Its course near the lake was all rapids; at the head of these rapids we should put up the tents, leaving the boats at the lake end of the portage; there we should be far enough away from the big pond not to disturb the hunting. Lac à la Poêle was game country, and the marshes about it were cut into trodden runways. Moreover, the falling water would drown the sound of the chopping; we had been here last year, and studied the ground.

But it was fated to be one of those well-laid plans which "gang agley," and nobody to blame but beavers. A beaver seems close to humanity sometimes, yet a human being gets no satisfaction in being angry at a wild, shy, black mass to be seen only in sections, as a glittering head above the water, or as a broad tail descending thunderingly on the water's surface. One might as well be angry at a centaur or a winged horse as at a spirit of the forest such as a beaver.

We came, about five o'clock, with heavy loads and aching muscles, to the spot for our camp, and found two large, brand-new beaver dams built since last year, and the entire shore-line changed. Woods

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were flooded ten feet in, running water turned to a pond, everything spoiled for camping. We could have cried, so we laughed—one transposes in that way in the woods.

We plodded on, foot-heavy in our high, wet hunting-boots, perspiring and fly-bitten—but yet with a laugh at the beaver. It is wisdom in many conditions to be good-tempered, but in the woods it is necessity—good temper and salt pork you must have in a camp. We plunged into a few more holes, fell over a few more rocks, and around a turn we came on our reward—a prettier camping-ground than we had imagined.

Above the two dams a grove of spruces with a copper floor of needles reached into the water, and about two sides of it the stream flowed. A silver birch gleamed through the evergreens, and we could see the light tops of more on the hillside; there was good fire-wood near by; late-afternoon sunlight slanted through the tree tops, and slid in patterns over the pink-brown of the spruce needles; the river persistently chanted something cheerful about making a joke of rough places and laughing over the

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rocks and going on steadily in any case, and so we set to work.

A dead log knocked out with the blunt of an axe, a few bushes levelled, and the ground was ready for the tents—mine facing Walter's and Bob's, in the centre of the woodland; that of the guides back a hundred and fifty feet somewhere, burrowing in the mountain.

Gold sunset leaked wet through black spruces, and drowned itself in bright spots in the river; the guides chopped long poles for the tents, short stakes for pegging them out; the tents rose flopping, grew taut, and stood snowy and trim—our homes.

I got birch bark and sticks for a fire, and soon it crackled between my house and Walter's, licking aromatic air with orange tongues. The guides' axes rang hollow as another fire—to cook supper—shot up on the shore; a crotched stick with a swinging kettle hung over it; Blanc had started the hot water. We fell to at getting balsam for the beds; we unpacked blankets and belongings, and then we dressed for dinner. Clean hands and brushed hair change a costume.

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In the meantime, somewhere in a crack of affairs, Walter had put up a rod, and stepping from rock to rock had found a pool where the trout longed for the fly, and brought back a dozen speckled, pink-and-silver, scarlet-finned quarter-pounders.

Blanc was chef; his slouch hat back on his shock head, his marvellous red-striped stockings and pink calico shirt and aggressive suspenders and other curios of garments showed up on his figure as on a telegraph pole, where he stood before the fire. He squatted low and shook the frying-pan over the red coals; he stared at the fish earnestly as they doubled their tails "*croche*" with freshness; he watched that the corn-meal in which they were rolled should not burn; and it was supper-time. We had fish and flap-jacks and bacon and fried potatoes.

Godin, butler, urged these delicacies upon us with soft French speech and alert glances of interest. Godin differed in several ways from the butler of commerce.

The twilight gathered brown around the red fire-light; the fish jumped in the darkening river; tents glimmered behind us and promised rest and deep

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sleep. We had come far to get these gifts of the gods and had dropped chains on the road; our freed spirits thought with kindly pity of the bored people sitting down to banquets in London, suffering in dinner clothes and candle-light at Newport, trying to squeeze happiness out of smelly automobiles and cramped steamer cabins. That three-quarters of them would pity us did not lessen our sympathy.

Next morning I was slowly aware that the shadows of innumerable leaves danced noiselessly an abandoned two-step on the white walls of my tent. With eyes half open I watched the silent, wild play, and then I was aware of wild play not silent in the house across the street.

Bob, with squeals of ecstasy and peals of big laughter, was waking Walter. By slow groans and quick, impassioned remonstrances I knew that he was waking him with water, applied carefully with a sponge and recklessly out of a cup. I heard it splash in a fat cupful against the canvas, and by Walter's howl I knew the canvas had not got it all. I shivered, for the morning was sharp—better Walter than I for

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that baptism. In a minute more they were fraternizing against me.

Wake, wake, freshman, wake,
Wake while our song strikes the sky,

Bob thundered out of tune. Walter wandered into the concert with a recitative strangely like an air, but yet not. My tent flap was fastened; noise was all they could do.

"Good morning," I was saluted. "Are you ready for breakfast?"

I answered: "Are you?"

"Practically. Bob and I are going to swim. Will you join us?"

I refused, and they went off complaining of bushes in a way which suggested lack of shoes, and I heard their voices down the stream and around the turn. As I dozed again Walter was pulling at my tent flap.

"Margaret! Open this—I want my camera."

Walter was in a blue woolly gown, with his glasses on, and the faithful cap from which he is seldom parted was on his head.

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"Are you going to swim in a cap? What are you going to photograph?" I demanded.

"Three films left," he murmured, and pushed up his glasses and scrutinized me. "Where's the tripod? What? I'm going to take Bob as a—as a Greek deity." He grinned. "There—I've got it all," and he started out of the tent.

As I said, my sense of decorum has wasted by association with the Morgans. I simply answered: "If you're going to do the God Pan you'd better take him playing on his pipe," and Walter stopped.

"That's true." He came back and dived into his tent.

Bob had yesterday, on the journey, hollowed an instrument from a bit of wood which gave out flute-like murmurings in keeping with the forest. Walter with this wood-hand pipe and camera and tripod melted into the bush.

By that time I was all awake, and after a plunge in a pool up-stream, a quarter of an hour made me ready for events. Events came. From the guides' quarters rose sounds of crackling fire and rattling dishes and high French voices, busy and interested

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—breakfast would soon be ready. Meanwhile from down the river floated at intervals laughter and howls—Bob and Walter were playing. But time was passing and without remonstrances they would not be ready for breakfast; by now they must have finished their swim—I might reconnoitre.

As I jumped from stone to stone down the bank the voices grew louder. I stepped along. A log lay overturned and I came to the upper beaver dam, a pile of earth and sticks four feet high. Thirty feet below lay the second, and from over the top of it sounded a thanksgiving hymn.

Oh, gee! I'm glad I'm free!
No wedding bells for me!

Bob sang enthusiastically, as if just escaped, and out of the middle of the dam ripped suddenly a big peeled birch branch. With it went a mass of mud and sticks and the river wallowed through the gap.

“Holy Ike!” shouted Bob, invisible below. “It’s no trick at all. Easy as pullin’ teeth. Even beggars’ll have to sit up nights to sew that togather.”

Out sprang another great armful of white sticks

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and black dirt and the loosened pool flowed with a swirl. The boy had crawled out on the dam—or swam out—and was pulling to pieces the work of the patient beavers. I called in distress.

“Bob—Bob! Why *are* you doing that? Don’t! It’s cruel!” And then I caught sight of Walter watching through his spectacles, barefooted, robed in blue, the cap on his nose. “Walter, stop him!” I pleaded. “Don’t let him. It’s useless and it’s brutal. These poor little beavers worked hard to make that wonderful dam and I think it’s a sin——”

From behind the wonderful dam came incisive tones.

“Take another think. They’ve ruined the river. I’m going to teach ’em manners.” And then, as if hit by a thought, Bob squealed at me: “For cat’s sake, Margaret, go back—this is no place for you, my good woman—I’m coming out.”

And Walter added: “You’d better go—he’s not completely clothed.”

“Well, breakfast’s ready,” I said, and I turned, and fell splashing behind the upper dam, and as I sat there and mourned that the river had got

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into my boot I heard Walter's accents, speaking to Bob.

"That's enough for scientific research. Now get your clothes on, cub," he said, and with that rose a shriek.

"Oh, gosh! My clothes! Walter—save 'em! Down on the beach—Oh, Holy Ike! The water's covered 'em—they're gone!"

There was a dramatic silence. Splashing and crackling of underbrush, and for a minute nothing more. Then came an outcry, a mixture of suffering and laughter. Accustomed as they were to the pandemonium of "M'sieur" and "M'sieur Bob," it brought the guides—the two light figures raced down the bank past me as I sat. I did not go. I guessed what had happened, and I doubted my welcome.

Bob had taken his clothes with him to dress after his bath—all of his clothes—everything he owned nearer than Lac Lumière. He had rolled them into a wad, on a bit of pebbly beach convenient to dress on, below the dam. Then he had gone up above and opened the sluice gate. If he had wanted to lose

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them he could not have planned better. The first rush of freed water must have taken them away, and by the time he remembered them they were gone forever.

I scrambled back to camp and awaited developments. The first was Blanc, who came leaping, cat-like, to the tent of "M'sieur." He threw me one glance and slipped in and emerged in the same breath, with a blanket. I understood—as with our savage ancestors the first point was protection from the elements—from black flies and mosquitoes worse than elements.

A few minutes later a sad little procession filed up the rocks, and I stood inside my tent and tried to keep a right expression of countenance and attitude of mind. Godin came first, ruling his spirit to seriousness, yet with blue eyes gleaming; then Walter, silent but rolling in his gait and with a watery look in his glance; and then came Bob, slim and tall, and wearing a gray blanket with a dignity which was like a poke in the ribs.

I said: "Oh, Bob, I'm so sorry." I said it without a smile, and then I went quickly into the tent.

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Walter came, in a minute.

"I've got him put away," he began, and then we both tried not to make loud noises. When he lifted his face, tears were on it and at his first word he sobbed.

"Margaret, you mustn't let him hear you laugh," he gasped. "He's dignified. I wish he wouldn't be. When I laughed down there, he was raging. If he'd only——"

"Walter," cut in a cold, clear young voice. Bob knew well enough how his family were engaged.

"Yes, Bob, I'm coming," Walter called back hurriedly. "Now, Margaret, about this question of clothes. Let's see what we can raise."

I looked at him with concern, for we both knew what we could raise, and that it was nothing. It was all I could do to remember, and not to mention, that I begged them both to bring a change of clothes, and they would not. But we got him, at the end, clothed—as it might be. He wore a coat of Blanc's which had been his own three years back—it had suffered under the first régime, but Blanc had ground its face since then. It was short in the sleeves and

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popped open when buttoned; but it was necessary to keep it buttoned. It had burst on the shoulder blades. There was no extra shirt in the party, so this coat must be worn V-necked. I felt a yearning for a black velvet ribbon to tie around Bob's neck. Walter contributed some offerings, not of surface value, and Bob had his own sneakers and socks—short socks, because the drowned trousers had been long ones.

“Holy Ike!” wailed Bob, from his blanket, in a voice with a squeal in the middle. “What I want is a pair of clothes!”

I trembled a little. “Cub,” I said, as considerately as I knew how, “I’m sorry—it’s the only thing there is—I’m afraid you’ll have to wear my extra skirt.”

Bob whirled. “Me!” he barked. “Not so’s you’d notice it!”

Then we reasoned. It was short—yes—but yet. Of course he was eight inches taller than I—yes, eight inches was a good bit off a skirt—but yet. Oh, yes, it would fasten around the waist—with safety pins. Socks—bare legs—yes, it was too

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bad—black flies, yes—but yet. The point was, what else could you do about it? Which finally settled things.

When it was on, and anchored around his vague waist-line, he gazed downward like a young pine-tree outraged in its finest feelings. He missed the bony neck, he got a poor view of the strain across his chest; but he saw the gray corduroy swathing his knees—just his knees—and, below, a waste of fly-bitten legs and a little Lord Fauntleroy finish of gray socks and white sneakers. Before that vision his young dignity went in a landslide. Laughter and yelps rose in succession.

“Don’t, cub! You’ll ruin the hunting! Shut up, you long-legged devil! Stop raising Cain! Stop it!” Walter exhorted him.

Bob, with his arms around a tree and his legs prancing in time, thundered on.

We led between us to breakfast a raw-boned and short-haired lady of six feet, wreathed in a shame-faced grin, and wreathed in desperately little else. When the “Messieurs” so presented themselves it seemed likely during the first shock that there would

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be no breakfast, for our respectful guides were incapacitated.

We could not get used to him all day. All day, as we caught a glimpse of a short skirt skipping high in air, or vaulting logs with unladylike ease, we were seized with new spasms of mirth. But that night the cub lived down his costume. At four he went off with a body-guard of Blanc, prancing down the portage to Lac à la Poêle, the gray corduroy skirt glinting in and out of the forest. At seven there was talking heard from that direction—reckless talking and crackling of branches.

“What in thunder?” Walter inquired of space. “That can’t be Bob—he’d never be such a lunatic. He’ll scare everything in five miles. It sounds like Bob’s voice. What does it mean?”

“If we’d heard a shot I’d think he’d killed something,” I ventured.

“Too early—and we would have heard a shot, anyway.”

With that Bob broke through the woods. “Hear me fire?” he burst forth.

“No—what at? Where? When?” Questions hit him in groups.

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"Only a muskrat. Nice easy shot, and I've never killed one—I thought I'd try it."

"What do you mean, Bob?" Walter asked sternly. "You did *not* fire at small game in caribou season, in a hunting country?"

With that Bob exploded. "Wake up, Walter, and hear the birdies sing. I've got a moose, a peach, twelve hundred pounds, Blanc says. You're a nice lot of Rip Van Winkles not to hear a shot within two miles. I potted him the first thing, almost at the landing, beaned him with one shot; he dropped like a log."

Whether he wore skirts or wings mattered little to the cub now. Life was a trumpet peal, and he gambolled about the wilderness with his gray curtain flying, callous to criticism. It took most of the next day to *arranger* the moose *comme il faut*, as the guides delicately put it, for the shot had finished a mighty life.

"We'll have to sit up nights and eat," Bob considered, regarding the huge *pacquetons* of meat done up in a hide, and then his eyes fell on the head and antlers.

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It was a fine head and the *panaches* were forty points.

"Hully gee!" the cub gurgled, and caracoled on all fours, with that mixture of child into the man which sometimes makes an eighteen-year-old boy startling. "Won't the fellows be stunned when they lay their eyes on that? Won't that look delicious on the wall of my house in the 'Hutch' next winter! I wish those boys were here to help eat."

And his long legs, still as in early youth the most emotional features of his physique, described ellipses.

"Bob," Walter remonstrated, "wait till you get your natural clothing before you jump so much. Your legs gleam not wisely but too well."

And Bob chuckled, but calined down.

"I guess that's good dope," he acknowledged—"dope" being Yaleish for "advice"—and then he went on: "Ginger!" he brought out explosively. "I'm glad those fellows aren't due for a while yet, till I shed my ball gown. Just picture to yourself if they'd been on this trip." His head went back and his big laugh rang up through the trees, ending in

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a projection of a bark and a bleat as if he could not get it all out. Bob's laugh ranked with his legs as a safety valve for his spirits, and both worked overtime. "Think if those fellows had seen me this way—Buck and Donnie and Hal Harriman—why, I'd never have heard the last of it."

Three of the cub's classmates, coming to visit us in camp, were due now in two days.

Walter stared at him fixedly, and Bob's wide eyes became attentive. He looked alarmed.

"You're not going to give me away to the fellows, are you?"

Walter pulled his cap over his eyes, stuck his hands in his pockets, and regarded his young brother.

"I can't say. I'd be glad to say, but I don't feel that I can."

"Look here, Walter," begged Bob, "if you could curb yourself enough not to tell the fellows—maybe it's asking too much, but Holy Ike, won't they guy me! It'll be a crime! It doesn't seem as if I could have you do that form of torture."

Walter grinned. "You look out, you young cuss. Be very gentle and thoughtful to your brother, or

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it'll be worse for you. I owe you several. You're doomed anyway, I think, but you're doomed worse if you're not careful."

The next day, with heavy luggage of tents and *pacquetons* and game we made a slow way down the Poêle River toward the home camp. It was necessary, with so much *butin*, that the men should triple the portages. Walter, Bob, and I waited at the lower end of one for the last charge to be brought over. Around us lay the impedimenta of a hunting trip, mail-bags which were our trunks, tents, heavy bundles wrapped about with rope, and above the heap, towering darkly, low in the forest, where it had been carried with stateliness, was the sombre magnificence of Bob's moose's horns. A still-water stretched a shining band below us between walls of forest; in front was a pool, foam-flecked from the white rapids above.

The boy picked up a rod.

"There ought to be trout in that hole even if it is sunny. If I were a trout I'd——"

He sprang, murmuring a sentence, to a rock. Then to a farther one. In the middle of the river



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he stood in sharp sunshine, and cast into shadows under the bank. Where the brown hackle touched a ripple, there was a break; his hand lifted instantaneously, and a splashing bit of color followed the glint of the leader—a fish was on. I watched, held with the never-failing fascination of the game, as the lad played cleverly the lively half-pounder in the narrow pool, keeping him away from rocks, away from shore, giving him no slack and no pull, for he was lightly hooked.

As I watched I heard a click, as of a camera, and I turned quickly, and with that, before I had time to investigate, I turned back in astonishment. Floating up the stretch of still-water sounded the most unexpected noise on earth—human voices. As I looked, around the bend below paddled two canoes, loaded heavily with men. I stared, dazed. Who were they? What did they want on our particular planet? There were seven, four guides and three messieurs.

At this point there was a bang on the rocks close by and I was blown sideways by a whirlwind. A flash of bare legs and gray corduroy accompanied the phenomenon. Bob had dropped the rod in mid-

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stream and left the trout to play himself and had taken to the woods; the forest crashed as his flying feet fled up the portage.

I gathered myself. The canoes were within two hundred yards now, and Walter stood by me glaring a welcome; for it annoys him to be reminded in the woods that the earth is not his private star. Who were these interlopers? A deep, fresh voice called out:

“Good morning, Mrs. Morgan.”

And I knew. It was, of course, Bob's friends, the boys not expected for two days, Buck and Donnie and Hal Harriman. Buck I had known before; a magnificent youngster of six feet two, he towered between desiccated-looking guides in the middle of the first canoe and sent questions to me in trumpet tones.

“Where's Bob, Mrs. Morgan? Do you mind our getting here sooner? Isn't Bob up yet? This forest is a perfect peach. Are we upsetting things, coming ahead? Do you mind? Where's that beggar Bob?”

The huge young brute was out on the rocks and mangling my hand with a friendly grip, while he

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introduced the two others, clean-cut, bright-faced lads like himself. Walter had got back his hospitality, and we both talked steadily to give time for the refugee to make arrangements; we wondered what arrangements he might make. It seemed to me a case of exposure or suicide, but the cub would have to decide which. And meantime, of course, the burning question was Bob's whereabouts.

"The men at the camp told us you were here; our guides knew the way, so we thought we'd come on and meet you," the boys explained. "But they said Bob was along, too. Isn't he?"

By then we had told them four times that we were delighted to have them sooner, and had said all that the subject would bear about canoes and paddling. The moment had arrived when Bob had to be mentioned.

"Yes; he's along," Walter acknowledged carelessly. "He killed a moose last night, you know."

The inference was that no gentleman receives company the first day after killing a moose. The boys looked mystified, but were full of polite interest.

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"He stayed back then? He didn't come down with you?" Buck questioned.

I watched Walter, for this was a crisis. He simply had to decide now where Bob was: whether a few rods back or still in camp on Lac à la Poêle; and whichever way he decided Bob was likely to plan otherwise. It was a crucial moment. And with that, out of the forest dashed the long figure of Blanc, his trousers suspended up under his arms, his belt six inches lower, the red stripes of his wool socks giving a flippant expression to his earnest personality. Blanc was not clever, and he looked anxious as he came into the midst of us.

"M'sieur," he opened fire; "it is from M'sieur Bob."

"*Oui*, you may tell me what he said," Walter allowed. I saw him bite his lip as if the strain was great. The three lads listened.

"I do not comprehend—me, M'sieur," Blanc went on, "but M'sieur Bob instructed me to say to M'sieur that M'sieur should say to the new messieurs—" He glanced about the circle mildly, including them, and drew his brow together with an

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unhappy expression. But he spoke with a pretty distinctness. "That M'sieur should say to the new messieurs that he—M'sieur Bob—had unfortunately returned to Lac Lumière by another route. M'sieur is to say that M'sieur Bob did not know of the arrival of the three new messieurs. M'sieur is by no means to let the new messieurs learn that he—M'sieur Bob—is at present up the river, one-half mile of distance from here on the portage."

Between Bob's extreme duplicity and Blanc's extreme frankness even Walter and I could not make out the plot for a moment. There is no other route to Lac Lumière, but it simultaneously came to us that Bob meant to make a forced march and pass us back in the woods, so reaching the lake before us. There he would probably shout till the guides left in camp heard him and paddled over for him, and once landed at the base of reserves he could await his friends clothed properly. It was a well-planned flank movement—Bob seemed a young Napoleon, but Blanc as his *aide-de-camp* was a complete Waterloo.

With that Blanc veered about and melted, the

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way he had come, into the forest. I looked at Walter, and saw that even a lawyer did not know any hole out of this corner, and then suddenly the end came in a way not expected.

The hero Buck has, like many heroes, an eye for the fair sex. While he waited for the riddle to be solved, taking it for granted easily that Bob would turn up some time and that "the guide chap was loony"—so he told me later—the memory of another mystery came back to him, the mystery of an unknown lady.

"Do you have lady guides in these parts?" he fired at me. "Who was the tall girl that fled off the rocks as we came around the bend?"

I looked at Walter appealingly, and over the face of Buck came illumination. There burst from him instinctively a yell which Bob could not have bettered, but he instantly choked his feelings to decorum.

"Beg your pardon, Mrs. Morgan." The boy's theory of good manners was stretched on top of a volcano of curiosity. "I beg your pardon," he went on eagerly. "But—but—it wasn't—wasn't it Bob—that queer thing?"

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I looked at Walter helplessly, and the bright-eyed lads looked at both of us, and something about us answered the question.

"B-Bobby disguised as a f-female, what for?" stammered, inquiringly, one of them—Donnie, I knew later.

And then, whether they crowed in chorus like young roosters, or whether the jubilation of excited chickens was merely expressed in their silence, I do not know. I only know that sound was the symbol of that moment. In another instant, with permission asked—for whatever he may be underneath, the typical Yale boy is Lord Chesterfield on top—with permission impetuously asked and helplessly given, they were off like hounds on a scent, up the portage, after the fated Bob.

The next chapter in the drama I did not witness, but it was told to Walter and me by the actors with such spirit that I could not regret the real play.

As the boys disappeared we once more regarded each other.

"He's lost," said Walter. "'The execution will be private, and may Heaven have mercy on his soul!'

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Those young lunatics will raise Cain. All we can do is to await the remains."

He settled himself against a *pacqueton* and lighted his pipe, and I stepped across the rocks and picked up Bob's rod and began to play his unhappy trout, still going through the motions of a fight about the pool. I pulled him in. Then I hooked another, and another, till half a dozen spotted lines of saffron and silver-gilt lay at my feet on the moss. Walter meanwhile gave advice—one of the things he does best.

"Look out for your recover. That last cast was almost on the alders." Three puffs. "Don't draw your flies so fast; you don't give them a chance to rise. Your flies are in the air more than on the water." Then he said "I wouldn't let out more line—I'd reel in. A man can handle a long line in a cut-up little place like this."

The worm turned. "Walter, do I know how to fish or don't I? And haven't I been pulling in trout every minute? Look—seven! Why don't you come and take them off for me, instead of sitting there and smoking?"

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With that, down the road of the woods came a sound—an unwoods-like sound. Growing and clearing, it resolved itself into Lohengrin's "Wedding March," sung in a powerful bass:

Here comes the bride!
Get on to her stride!

The melody floated through the spruces, and across it cut mirth and plaintive squeals.

"Let me go! Ouch!" And a crash. "It's no joke, I tell you, to step through a jagged stump when you've got bare legs on!" And with that Lohengrin stopped for a second, and heroic laughter filled the forest. Then

Here comes the bride!
Get on to her stride!

the orchestra repeated.

"Let me alone! Oh, you beast! These portages aren't made to go double, Buck. I *can't* walk up a tree. Oh, I say!"

A ripping of timber, and from the woods filed a procession. Bob's maiden garb dripped water, and he was conducted, reluctant, by Buck, who led him

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along firmly, chanting "Lohengrin." The others followed, lending a hand. Then the tale was told. The two stranger lads lost strangeness in the telling; and in language of whose color I can give but an echo, they painted the picture of a Homeric battle.

"Bob heard us coming," Buck began, "and he lit out."

Ha! Harriman was a mighty, square-built, black-headed lad, whose name I had come to reverence. Bob's accounts of him drew an intellectual giant, eating up the toughest mathematical course in Yale, taking honors in it, asking for more. An inventor Hal Harriman was, who sat at his desk and made machines play about the room. I had come to think of him as the mediæval world thought of Erasmus. I felt a litt' *azy*, then, when Hal Harriman burst into the conversation on the heels of Buck, like an excited and slangy boy, not like Erasmus.

"The old nut lit out over the river, kicking his legs hidjous," exploded the genius.

Then something told him he had been slangy; he remembered suddenly that he had never seen me before, and he apologized with blushes in a general

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way for everything. Nobody noticed, for Donnie's stammering tongue was jerking out a sentence spaced like telegraphy.

"M-Mrs. M-Morgan, he fell in and sp-p-plashed like a—like a careless wh-whale," he blew out with difficulty, and at the picture the words recalled, the three youngsters laid hold on each other, and sagged together in laughter. I thought the tale was ended.

"You're all crazy in the head," Bob remarked tersely. "But take your time and enjoy yourselves."

"Me for brevity," Buck then proclaimed, with dignity. "You see, it was this way, Mrs. Morgan. Bob broke for cover when he heard his friends coming—his *friends*, you see, I regret to state, whom he'd urged to visit him and——"

"Instead of which he puts on ladies' clothes and runs," Hal Harriman broke out. "We don't know yet why he wears ladies' clothes. Does he prefer them?"

"Bobby, wh-why?" Donnie breathed at him. "We d-didn't have t-time to ask him up there, M-Mrs. M-Morgan."

"Time! Gosh! I beg your pardon, Mrs. Morgan!"

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"I don't mind slang a bit," I reassured the genius.

"But I do want to know what happened."

The genius had the floor. "You see, Mrs. Morgan, when we came out of the portage he was right there; he had only just heard us because of the noise of the rapids." So far Mr. Harriman's speech was of irreproachable formality, but with that the rush of the tale caught him. "So there the sad old goat was lepping from rock to rock in his kilties, like a Sabine maiden escaping from her lovers. But such lepps no maiden ever put up, Sabine or otherwise; he looked like he had a hundred legs and all of 'em—excuse me, Mrs. Morgan, *beg* pardon—I should say that when we emerged from the woods and when Bob became aware of us— Oh, holy cats!" The English as she is wrote left the boy again. "Oh, gee! He le, one too many and slid on a rock and rolled down clawing and scraping. Did you scrape, Bobby?"

"Did I?" murmured Bob, and patted his anatomy.

"He went into the p-pool with a waterspout, and I'm afr-fr-fraid he got wet," Donnie put in. "Then he l-landed."

"He didn't; you've skipped the best," Buck in-

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errupted. "He *tried* to land and to rise like Venus from the waves—sort of, don't you know, Mrs. Morgan. And we, being naturally irritated, chastised him with rocks. Not many, Mrs. Morgan; just a few soft little ones to remind him that he ought to be glad to see us. Remember we threw rocks at you, Bobby?"

"Rocks! Gosh! Look at my shins!" responded Bob mournfully.

"Anyway," Buck went on, "then he landed, us pelting him with mud, at that time—gobboons of mud. Where he landed there was a pile of sticks and stuff——"

"Old *chaussée de castor*, beaver dam," Bob hastened to explain learnedly.

"All right—have it that way. It was the moth-eatenest rat-trap I ever met. Bob turned a hand-spring and crouched behind it, and grabbed a long, varnished pole out of the mess."

"Varnished!" snapped Bob scornfully. "That was a beaver pole and they'd chewed the bark off."

"My son, that's not the point—ain't it?" reasoned Buck with dignity. "You grabbed the pole and we

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charged you over the rocks—pointed, slippery rocks, Mrs. Morgan. And as we got near enough our host—our *host!*” with telling emphasis—“poked us off those rocks with that pole. It takes only a small poke, Mrs. Morgan, to knock a man at a crucial moment off a little rock that’s slippery. We got some of our feet wet that way,” he reflected, glancing down. “Donnie fixed him,” he went on. “Didn’t you, Donnie, you idiot?” And he patted the stammerer affectionately.

“I d-did,” Donnie acknowledged, modest but firm.

The account went on.

“You wouldn’t notice it, Mrs. Morgan, but Donnie’s got a brain, and sometimes he works it. He did this time. He withdrew and nobody missed him, being such as he is, and he ran down the portage and found another crossing and got over and doubled up the river. He came behind Bob and Bob didn’t notice because of the battle, but we saw him coming and we kept Bobby in play till he got close, and then——”

“And th-then I th-threw my arms around him

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and c-clasped him to my heart b-backward," Donnie cut in. "F-fellows, d-didn't he yell when he f-felt me?"

Again the three rolled on each other, while Bob threw sand at them, and grinned.

The tale proceeded.

"They went over together, cracking that old dam effect—if that's what it calls itself—into a million stars."

"I s-saw the s-stars," Donnie indorsed.

"And Bobby was taken at last and had to shake hands with his guests."

"Had to?" objected Bob politely. "Delighted to see you."

At that there was a roar in the big, deep, fresh young voices, and at the end Donnie's slow tones, which were yet never ignored, put in.

"We thought it was so g-good of B-Bobby to ask us all up here to have a nice time in a q-quiet way. He said it would be q-quiet, but he could promise us a hearty w-welcome. He s-said he wanted to see us so m-much."

"So he jabs us into the river with a pole!"

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"Frostiest reception I ever got."

And other comments.

We had a week with the lads. Buck killed a caribou, and Hal Harriman missed one, and Donnie took a five-and-a-half-pound trout. Some of them got ducks and partridges; and all had general good fishing; there were long, rough tramps to remember, and trips to unknown lakes; there was much swimming, but always with care for the clothes to be worn later. The great god Pan did not again pose as a half-done Venus. I could not tell which boy I liked best, but in Walter's case there was an intimacy with Donnie. It began over photography, when Walter took the youngster into his room one day to show him films and prints made in the woods. We heard sounds of laughter and Donnie's slow tones urging something, but while we were in camp the secret of the interview was not divulged. It came out a month later in a letter from New Haven.

"DEAR MARGARET: I'll get even with Walter some time if it takes a leg. What do you suppose

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he let me in for? Listen to this, if you please, and learn what a beast you've carelessly married. You know that day he and Donnie were chuckling and whispering in camp and wouldn't let us in, and had the films out? Well, I know now what they were up to—do I know? Gosh!

“The running for the fraternities began yesterday. You see, before a fellow is taken into a society he has to spend a week running around and doing exactly what the upper classmen of that society tell him, no matter how crazy it is. Buck and Donnie, for instance, had to go into Huyler's, dressed in weird clothes, and propose simultaneously to the candy girl, and both had to burst into tears when she refused them. That's just a sample.

“Well, two days ago I got a hint that I'd better appear in Billy Brent's room—Donnie's older brother, you know, a junior. So up I went, grinning but shivering. There was a bunch of juniors there, and I saw by their joyful faces that I was going to get mine strong.

“I didn't make any mistake. I was handed two

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packages and told that they were photographs, and I was to go from room to room and peddle them earnestly for five cents apiece. I was to say to each fellow that they were pictures of Yale's favorite son in his two favorite costumes, and I was to plead and insist importunately and use every effort of every sort to make the fellows buy one at least, and five if possible, without consideration of personal pride. I supposed they were of the president, don't you know, or some big bug, and I thought I was getting off rather easy. I grabbed the packages—there were about two hundred in the two—and then Billy Brent said:

“You'd better look at your wares, Morgan, so you can sell 'em with more enthusiasm.”

“I looked. They were me, both of 'em—me as the great god Pan—you've seen it—a sylvan life study—in the earliest known costume, gleaming by glimpses through sheltering foliage—and thank the cats for the foliage! With that whittled tootling machine in a pose at my mouth—a hundred of that! Also me as a Sabine maiden in your darned gray corduroy petticoat, fishing. I didn't ever know that

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had been taken. It seems Walter snapped it up the river, at the very moment the fellows came around the bend, and just before I took to the woods. Likely you've seen it.

"Walter gave both the films to Donnie and he passed them on to Billy with the suggestion.

"So I started on my weary way, and knocked at door after door of the 'Hutch,' and all around the street, and was treated first as a white man, and then as I went on begging and insisting importunately, as was my duty, to get twenty-five cents out of each fellow—why, of course, they turned on me and kicked me out in time. Everybody bought one—that was easy fruit, but it was harder than the dickens to squeeze out the other twenty cents—I couldn't do it but a few times. Al Nelson took a dozen for dinner cards and that helped—though humiliating. But I've still got seventy-five on my hands, and after I go over to Commons in a few minutes from now, and feed my face, I've got to start out and beg and insist importunately some more. It's a cruel and unusual punishment, and you watch me get even with Walter when I get home. You might as well men-

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tion to him that if I live and keep my health I've
got a hunch he'd better cheer up, for the worst is
yet to come.

With love to yourself,

BOB."

THE WHISTLING OF ZOËTIQUE



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AS when a child shakes a kaleidoscope the bits of colored glass shift from one distinct pattern into another, so when I think of the events which came of Zoëtique Vézina's gift of whistling, the little story falls into two or three sharply defined pictures, so different from each other, so linked, so filled with life, that, simple as it is, the tale appears to me dramatic enough to tell exactly as it happened.

It is a far cry from the moonlit stillness of an August night on a Canadian lake—a dark amphitheatre of hills guarding the sky-line, a road of light across the water, canoes floating black on silver—from that to the crowded glare of a New York theatre. Yet the span of life reaches easily across such distances, and the stage-settings of the play I am to tell were such. It was the last night of a fortnight's visit to the Morgans' camp, and they, as well as I, were going back to civilization next

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day. There was a ceremony to be celebrated which had become a custom of last nights, they explained to me—the guides gave a concert. It was always clear and always moonlight on a last night in camp—by law, young Bob Morgan gave me to understand. In any case, it was invariable, and here was this cloudless, bright evening to back up his assertion. There were two methods of giving the concert: either the *messieurs*, which included Mrs. Morgan, stayed in camp and the men paddled about at a picturesque distance, and serenaded them from boats; or else the *messieurs* went out in the canoes & the guides “howled from the underbrush,” as Bob put it. To-night, the air was so warm and the wet moonlight lay in such thick splashes over the water that no one wanted to stay on land. It gave a man a greedy feeling that he must get “*au large*” and loot jewelry and broken gold out of the night. So the canvas canoes slid from the quay with musical wooden and liquid noises, and off we drifted, two and two, into the perspective of a dream.

There were six of us, with the two strangers. Fishing down a deep bay of Lac Lumière that afternoon,

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Walter Morgan and I had dropped suddenly, around a corner, on a camp—two tents, two *messieurs*, four guides.

“The devil!” said Morgan, and I, though it was not my business to do the swearing, repeated the words.

It is the theory when one gets into camp that one has discovered an earth without inhabitants, and proof to the contrary is accounted a rudeness. We wished not to know that people lived, and it was immaterial and irrelevant—what Bob Morgan would sum up as “fresh”—of these unknown ones to thrust knowledge upon us. All the same, there were tents, guides, and an unmistakable *monsieur* in aggressive sporting clothes on the shore, and, within ten feet of our boat's nose, another boat with a bored-looking Montagnais Indian paddling it, and in the bow a man with a rod whose first cast explained the Indian's expression. A fisherman does not catalogue when he sees another man cast, but he knows the details, and he knows their summary—a greenhorn or an expert. Morgan was a crack, and I had studied under him, and before his slow “Good-day” greeted

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the stranger we were both aware that the rod weighed at least nine ounces, that the leader was too light for it, that a Yellow Sally for a hand-fly and a Scarlet Ibis for the tail were flies that, in this light, made a blot on a man's character; that the man was casting from his neck down, and getting the flies in a mess as might be expected; that the thirty feet of line out was all and more than all that he could handle; and that, last and worst, the person who would fish for trout in that spot, at a little outlet, where the water was shallow and warm, in the month of August, was, as a fisherman, beneath contempt. I could hear Walter Morgan's opinion of the person in that "Good day" when it came.

But I was to see his manner change. The stranger, his back toward us, at my friend's voice arrested his line half-way through a convulsive recover, and the three flies fell in a heap about his shoulders—one caught in his brand-new corduroy hat, and the hook of another went into his thumb. He whirled about his brilliant tan-leather clad shoulders with a lurch which missed upsetting the boat, Montagnard and all, but neither episode disturbed him.

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“Good day,” he returned cordially, with a smile which at once made a difference about an uninhabited earth. He went on quickly. “Am I in your way? I’m a greenhorn, and I don’t know other people’s rights, but I mean well. I’ve never had such fun in all my life,” he confided in us with a rush, like a small boy having too good a time to keep to himself. “I’ve never fished before, and it’s the greatest thing in the world. I caught a trout a while ago. Do I do it all right?” he inquired wistfully. “I wish you’d tell me if anything’s wrong.”

A Roman candle exploded inside of Morgan could not have left him more scattered. The outcome was that we landed in a spirit of eager friendliness and partook of other spirits with this attractive débutant and his partner, who seemed a person of equal ignorance and equal, though quieter, enthusiasm. That this latter was a well-known playwright we made out shortly, and there was at once a free exchange of names among us, but our first acquaintance we did not then place. However, it took no time at all to see that two such whole-hearted babes in the woods had probably never before arrived, as

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such, at the approximate age of fifty. They were wa- in the hands of their guides, and their guides were "doing" them without remorse. Morgan, pleased with the virgin soil, began gardening; he sowed seeds of woodcraft and of fishcraft which took root before his eyes, and, charmed with the business, he invited the two to dinner that night. That we were breaking camp next day, while they were just beginning their trip, was a point of genuine regret on both sides.

We hurried back to our log castle to see that pea soup and partridges and flapjacks and other delicacies were assured in force for the meal to come, and in an hour or two the meal did come, and I cannot recollect a gayer function. As with the San Francisco earthquake, there was not a dull moment from start to finish, and again and again I saw Morgan look at his wife triumphantly with the "Trust-me-to-bring-home-pleasant-people" expression of a man who has sometimes been less fortunate.

The dining-room was a moss-covered point; the water rippled about two sides of it, forest made its other walls, and a roof of birch bark its ceiling. This

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greenwood hall rang with laughter spontaneous as children's, till the silver lake gleamed leaden through tree trunks, and purple hills turned black, and a rim of round moon rose into the twilight, big, over the shoulder of the lowest mountain. Then Godin, head guide and butler, lighted his *lumières électriques*—his candles arranged as a chandelier—and by their swinging light we finished a feast of the gods with maple sirup and delicate “mushi frite,” while the French-Canadian guides sat grouped in Rembrandt lights and shadows about the kitchen fire and laughed, too, to hear the peals which, at everything and nothing, rang across the lake to the lonely hills. Certainly in entertaining these strangers we had entertained angels unawares—angels of light-heartedness—for our sides ached when we slid from the board benches that were dining chairs and went down where the canoes lay beached, where guides evolved out of shadow to slip the boats into the water, to hold them steady, to direct our stumbling with deferential French syllables, as we embarked.

Two hundred yards down the lake, the “camp of

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the *messieurs*" stretched its log front of sixty feet. The lamplight shone ruddily through windows red-curtained, the door from the broad gallery stood open, the bare low room, as we entered, had the qualities which make a place attractive—space, brightness, order, and comfort. Many a time in a New York drawing-room I have thought of the charm of that big camp with its silver-brown bark of walls and ceiling, its scarlet cotton curtains, its rough floor, and rustic furniture; I have remembered how it breathed hospitality and the joy of life, and I have wondered what people wanted of more. Into this room we went, the three Morgans and Dr. Davidge and Mr. Esmond and I. Pipes and cigars were going in a moment, and soon young Bob was sent to find out the plans for the concert. He came back kicking his boyish long legs ecstatically. "It's going to be a peach," he announced. "Dr. Davidge's guides sing, all four of them, and Henri, the old fellow, has a mouth-organ, and Zoëtique is going to whistle. It'll be the pickles all right."

"I didn't know Zoëtique whistled," said Walter Morgan. "I never heard him."

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Nor had I, but Bob hastened to enlighten us. "I have," he said, "and it's a wonder. Never heard anything like it. Godin says he's the best whistler in Saint Raymond, and they always make him do it for parties, as a side show. Wait till you hear him—I'll bet you'll like it."

Mr. Esmond looked up. "Really good whistling is rare," he said, and then added as if to himself. "but of course this isn't that sort."

"How are they to arrange, Bob?" asked his sister. "Are they going out on the lake, or shall we?"

"Oh, they said just as the *messieurs* wished; so I settled it," Bob answered in a lordly way. "It was such a whooping good night, I thought it would be the stunt to go out ourselves, and bum around in the canoes."

So it was that in half an hour we drifted down the shore toward the point where the blaze from the guides' camp shone and disappeared by glimpses, a star of orange fire in the trees above, an orange bar of fire in the water below. The men's voices in excited conversation, as conversation is always with French Canadians, floated out to us; we caught

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words which showed the forest road of their thoughts—such words as “*caribou*,” and “*carabine*,” and “*gros poisson de cinq livres*,” and “*un m’sieur qui tire b’en*,” and there would be a hush while one deep voice told a story and then all together would break out in an abandonment of laughter. Suddenly some one, going outside the range of firelight, caught sight of the fleet on the lake, and there was a quick word—“*les messieurs*” and “*les canots*”—and then a silence.

Walter Morgan called from invisibility. “Godin,” he called—Godin was head guide.

“*Oui, M’sieur*,” came back with respectful goodwill from among the trees. I listened closely now, for it is a pity to lose any of Morgan’s French.

“*Est-ce que vous êtes mangé?*” he demanded cheerfully, and Bob gave a snort—Bob knows French.

But Godin knew better than that—he knew his *m’sieur* and what he meant. “*Mais oui, M’sieur, on a fini de dîner*,” he responded promptly, shifting the sentence graciously.

“*Êtes-vous preparry pour nous donner un concert?*” Morgan went on, not bothering particularly

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to pronounce according to French models—"concert," especially, being done in honest English.

There was an embarrassed ripple from among the trees—the strange guides believed that *M'sieur* was making a ioke, and that it was civil to encourage him. But Godin understood.

"*Oui, M'sieur,*" his polite tones came back. "One will sing a song or two with pleasure, if the *messieurs* desire it."

There was an undertone of talking back and forth, as we waited, and a little self-conscious laughing, a little chaffing evidently, and then a tremendous clearing of throats and trying of keys up and down the scale. A second's silence and a voice which we of the camp knew for Blanc's swung out over the water, musical, for all its occasional sharpness. It was one of the old *voyageur* songs he sang, filled with the sadness which the gay souls seemed to crave in their music.

C'est longtemps que j'ai t'aimé,
Jamais je ne t'oublierais.

The refrain came over and over through so many verses that I wished some one would choke Blanc

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and let the concert go on. Yet it was far from painful to lie in a canoe, with young Bob wielding a skilful paddle for my benefit, and listen to soft French words sprinkled over a sapphire night—on the whole, let Blanc pursue the subject through ten more stanzas if he must.

He came to an end; there was great hand-clapping from the floating audience; then from the hidden performers more earnest undertones of discussion as to the next number. We waited, smiling to ourselves, and soon the notes of old Henri's mouth-organ sounded from the grove of spruce trees. I suppose a mouth-organ is not a high form of instrument, but I am glad that I am not too musical to have found it pretty that night. I had a vision, too, in my mind, of the grizzled, labor-worn face, and the knotted hands which held the cheap toy, and a thought came to me of a narrow life which had known little but hard work, to which this common music meant operas and oratorios. It was nice music, too—old Henri had a soul, and he put it heartily into his mouth-organ. We clapped that number and encored it, and the man played the second tune with

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a vim that showed pleasure. And while arrangements were making for the next event I heard Esmond talking in his canoe to Mrs. Morgan.

"It's too charming for words," he said. "I've never known anything at all like it. The old-world simplicity—the quaintness—the good-will and earnestness of it. I didn't know such people existed outside of books. Why, if you could get this atmosphere on a stage——"

With this a preliminary silence and the clearing of a throat warned us that the performance was about to continue. A young voice rang out over the water with manly vigor and pleasant distinctness—one caught every word:

C'était le vingt-cinq de juillet
Lorsque je me suis engagé
Pour monter dans la rivière
Qu'on appelle la rivière enragé.

On a monté dans la rivièr-e
En canot dans la Gatineau;
Plus souvent les pieds à ter-re,
Avec la charge de sur le dos.

The *chanson* went on to tell in not too artistic rhymes the story of a logger on the River Gatineau.

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The words were a bit bald in spots, yet they bubbled with picturesqueness—the rhymer had told what he knew, and that had kept the song simple and strong. But the words were beside the question. Far from an accomplished musician, I yet knew in a few bars that the air was out of the common, and probably very old. I knew that many of the songs of the *habitants* came with their ancestors from France, a hundred, three hundred years ago, and this one had an ancient ring.

The song ended—it was rather long—there was a second's pause, and then a frank, manly voice, the voice of the singer, spoke from the stage of the spruce grove.

“Excusez-la,” said the voice.

It was prettier than I can describe. What was implied was so plain and so graceful—and only a Frenchman could have said it without self-consciousness. “What I have done is poor, but it is all I can do. I hope you will let it please you. It is my best, excuse it,” the two gracious words asked from us.

I looked at Mr. Esmond—he seemed petrified—

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he could not even clap, as the rest of us did. "I never knew anything like it," I heard him murmur.

Bob, seldom suppressed for long, came to the front. "Zoëtique, Zoëtique, whistle it—*sifflez-le, sifflez,*" he called, and added an explanatory word to us. "It's twice as good when he whistles; it's a decent tune sung, but wait till you hear him whistle—it's a peach."

Presently the whistle came.

I think there is not any other whistling like that in the world—certainly I have never heard any, and many people who should know have said the same. The canoes lay motionless, the people in them hardly breathed, and out from the spruces, over the track of the moon, floated to us the sweetest sound I have ever heard made by a human being. Birds on a dewy morning throw out notes as clear and silvery, but bird-notes are weak and are haphazard. These came freighted with the vigor of a man, with the thought of humanity; there was in them the gladness of youth, a rapture of artistic fulfilment; and, beyond what any words can say, there was in them a personality impossible to say

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—a personality cramped into a narrow life which spread its wings unashamed in these sounds of loveliness. He whistled the air that he had sung, the old French air of unexpected harmonies, and it was as if a magic flute repeated the logger song of the "River Gatineau, which one called the raging river in the springtime."

He stopped, and out of the dark hill beyond us floated an echo like the ghost of a flute of long ago.

There was deep stillness for a second, and Zoë-tique's unconcerned, clear voice broke it.

"*Excusez-la,*" he said.

For a moment we were too stirred to join Bob's energetic hand clapping. "Don't you like it?" the youngster demanded. "I think it's great. For cat's sake, why don't you encourage the lad?"

And, so adjured, we broke into as great a storm of applause as six people can manage, and, after, we discussed the sensation of the evening from boat to boat while the performers arranged further their hand-to-mouth programme. The concert went on; there were choruses, charming to listen to, in the ten men's voices, all sweet with the musical sense of

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these people; there were separate solos, "*A l'école du Roi*," "*Au clair de la lune*," "*Alouette, gentille alouette*," and others characteristically *voyageur* and *habitant*; and old Henri was made to play again on his mouth-organ. But the hero of the concert was the whistler, and three times more he was called before the curtain—which is to say that three times more from out of the mysterious darkness of the trees the flute notes flooded full down the moon-path and thrilled the misty air about us. And each time, at the end came Zoëtique's unconscious, honest little speech of two words:

"*Excusez-là.*"

It was only Mr. Esmond, I remarked, who did not discuss the whistling as we paddled back to "the camp of the *messieurs*," where the lamplight through the scarlet-curtained windows of the long front sent out a comfortable glow to welcome us. It seemed to me that Esmond was strangely silent for a man as talkative as he had shown himself. Even Mrs. Morgan could not make him express enthusiasm as to the hit of the evening.

"I'm afraid you didn't like our whistling gentle-

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man as much as we did," she complained at last, as I helped her out of the canoe.

"Mrs. Morgan," Esmond answered quickly, in his decisive, impressive manner, "I liked it far more than anybody, because, from my peculiar position, I am able to appreciate its value better and to see more possibility in it than any one here. I am going to prove that to you." The moment we were inside the camp Esmond turned to his host. "I don't want to impose on your hospitality, and I won't make any move without your consent, but I'd like to explain to you who I am and what I want to do."

Everybody looked surprised, and conversation stopped. "Yes," Morgan answered tentatively.

"Perhaps you know my name, if you're theatre-goers," the stranger went on. "I'm Charles Esmond, the theatrical manager, and I have quite a lot of stock companies and theatres more or less under my control. Looking out for new stars isn't my business nowadays, but it used to be, and I haven't lost my scent for a good thing, and the minute I heard that boy whistle I knew he was a good thing. He does what is called double-tongue whistling, and

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that in itself is not common. But that is only incidental—it's the quality of his performance that is extraordinary. I have heard the best people that are known at the business—it's a limited business—and I've never heard any one who touches this guide of yours. Take that young fellow and put him on the stage and he'd make a hit for us, and for himself he'd make what would seem a big fortune in little or no time. I'd like to talk to him—now—to-night. May I?"

Impetuosity is peculiarly winning when it is backed by knowledge, and Morgan laughed and put his hand on the other man's shoulder. "Surely," he said. "It's interesting to run into an adventure up here in the wilderness. The boy is a good guide and I like him, yet I would not stand in the way of making his fortune for anything. Bob—" But Master Bob's long legs were already chasing each other out of the low doorway in a rush after Zoëtique. In three minutes he was back with the man in tow.

Zoëtique Vézina was perhaps twenty-two years old, a stocky, well-built chap of five feet ten or so, with deep, powerful shoulders and a small waist

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and a body that moved with the grace of efficient muscles. His face was roughly carved and of his class, but he held his head with an air that had pride and sensitiveness both in it, and when he spoke and smiled the commonplace modelling of his features lighted with a gentleness and a spirit which made you understand his whistling. There was character and shading back of this ordinary-looking block of humanity. He wore blackened *bottes sauvages* of caribou leather, laced with thongs of hide through huge brass eyelets; his trousers looked as if they might have been somebody's dinner clothes five years before—somebody not particularly his shape; his coarse red and blue striped sweater was belted with a broad band of black leather around a waist as trim as a girl's. He pulled a nondescript felt hat from a shock head of dark hair as he entered, and his blue eyes gazed about half startled and half friendly.

We sat and listened as if at a play, while Charles Esmond, the great theatrical manager, conspicuous on two continents, interviewed this unknown backwoodsman. He did it in fluent French, with his own

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charm of manner, but it took some time to make Zoëtique understand what he was offering, and when he did understand, to our astonishment he did not respond. Esmond mentioned a salary to begin with so large that I gasped, and to the guide, accustomed to two dollars a day in good times, it must have seemed fabulous. Morgan voiced my thought when he put in a quiet, reassuring word.

"The *m'sieur* will do what he says, Zoëtique. I know all about the *m'sieur*, and he is to be relied on."

"*Merci, m'sieur,*" the man answered with ready French politeness, but his expression did not change.

His bright, light-blue eyes simply lifted a second to smile at Walter, and dropped to the floor again. All of us waited—he stared at one knot-hole—a minute, two minutes—three minutes we waited in silence while Zoëtique considered that knot-hole.

At last, "I don't want to hurry you," Esmond said, "yet I would like to know by to-morrow. It's the chance of your life, you understand. You couldn't make as much money here in forty years as you could make in a winter or two in New York. I do not see why you should hesitate five minutes. But

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think it over—talk it over with your friends. I will wait till you pass our camp with your *messieurs* tomorrow morning." He smiled his sudden, fascinating smile at the guide, and the contrast between the two was sharp and picturesque—the finished, handsome man of the world and the awkward, ill-clothed child of the people. "I know it must be startling to you," Esmond said kindly. "You will have to collect your ideas a bit. But you must answer as I wish. I will wait till morning."

Then the guide lifted his clear, light eyes and met the other's slightly pitying gaze with unexpected dignity. "The *m'sieur* need not wait," he said serenely. "I know my answer at this time. The *m'sieur* is very good to me, and I am glad that he is content with my poor whistling. I would be happy to make all that great money—*mais—oui!*—but I cannot go to New York as the *m'sieur* wishes."

"You cannot go?" Esmond repeated in surprise, and we all stared.

Zoëtique's gentle tones went on firmly. "But no, *m'sieur*. I have the intention to marry myself in the spring, and this winter I build my house. Alixe, my

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fiancée, would be disappointed if I should not build our house this winter."

"But, man, you'll have money enough to build a dozen houses—you can build one ten times as fine—you can pay men to build it for you, think of that!"

Zoëtique smiled—his smile was winning, but very self-contained, and the tilt of his head was assured. "It would be another thing, *m'sieur*. *Alixè-là*, she would be disappointed."

Esmond argued. Patiently, with amusement first, and then a bit hotly, but the guide never lost his gentle respectfulness of manner or his firmness. Walter Morgan put in another word.

"Think carefully before you decide to give up so much money as this means, Zoëtique. As the *m'sieur* says, it is a chance for all of your life."

The young fellow's alert, bright eyes flashed gratitude. "But yes, *m'sieur*. I understand. However, one knows that to make money is not always to be happy—is it not the truth, *m'sieur*? We are a poor people, we others, *habitants*, and yet we are content. I am afraid to lose the happiness that I have, in

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that great city which I do not know. Here—I know. I am strong”—he pushed his big shoulders forward and smiled proudly as he felt their muscles. “I am capable and can work hard—I have planned my life, and I have the things which I wish. Why should I risk all that for—I do not know what? I thank the *m’sieur*”—he turned his blue glance on Esmond with a self-possession which the cosmopolitan might not have bettered. “I thank also my *m’sieur* much for all his goodness to me.” He stood up, his shabby old hat crushed in his hand. “I thank madame and every one for their good wishes. I am content that madame and the *messieurs* found pleasure in my poor whistling. Good night, madame—good night, *messieurs*.”

He had made his bow, as his peasant ancestors had been taught to make theirs in old France two hundred years before, with deep respect, with hat in hand and head bent. Here was a man who knew when he had enough. The question was closed. He was gone.

The next year it was in September that the Morgans asked me to their camp. Air like cooled wine

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breathed life into me as my canoe flew down Lac Lumière to the double paddle-beat of Godin and Josef, who had been sent to the club to fetch me. Sunshine lay over the lake and laughed back at us from the hills, where flecks of gold through green tree-tops told that the birches had caught the frost. One peculiarity of the woods is that at whatever time you go to them they persuade you at once, with a wordless, answerless logic, that it is their best season.

“This is better than August,” I called out to Walter and Margaret Morgan, standing smiling on the quay, while Bob kicked chips toward me in welcome.

“A thousand times better,” they called back together, and Bob stopped his gattling to respond classically:

“Golly, you bet!”

And it certainly was—till the next August at least. There were no flies, and one could fish without tar oil or citronella; each breath pumped energy into the lungs; the snap of the water made a man laugh and shriek aloud as he plunged into the lake in the

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morning with air at forty-five degrees; the fishing and hunting were at their best.

Down by the mouth of the little Rivière à la Poêle—the “F. ying-pan River”—the trout were massing for the *frayage*, the spawning, and there in the cool of the evening, when the shallow water was dim in the low light—at about six o'clock, perhaps—they jumped like mad things for the fly. You had but to paddle across the lake and through the rushes, slower and slower, till the rustling against the boat slid into silence as you halted; you had but to pull loose a few feet of line with your left hand and to listen to the whir of it spinning out as you put your right wrist into the cast; you had but to drop the flies over the mystery of the brown water by the edge of the lily-pads—gingerly, it must be understood; cautiously, for this is the first cast for a year; carefully, man, with a tiny lift of the rod-tip as the flies fall so that the Parmachene Belle on the tail takes water first, and the Reuben Wood touches not too soon, and the black hand-fly skims with its snell clear of the pool. Such fitting small precautions, such pleasant proprieties, were all one

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had to observe at the mouth of the river "A la Poêle."

The sweet water would meet your searching with a smile as inscrutable as Mona Lisa's—with the smile it had worn, careless of your existence, all these centuries, up the river you would hear the dull boom of the rapids, the nearer, busy monotone of the falling stream. The utter quiet of the woods, with its deep undertone of teeming life, would fold you in—there is nothing stiller. Peace and silence and the tranquil pool—only the steady swish of the line as you cast.

Suddenly a wild lashing and splashing and spraying; the bubble, bubble, bubble of broken water; a white and scarlet flashing that comes and goes where the black hand-fly holds taut to the water; a thrill and tug on your wrist that brings your heart to your mouth. You have struck automatically; he is on; you are playing your first fish of the season.

"*Pas trop fort,*" Godin remarks calmly from the stern; "not too hard, *m'sieur*. It is a big one."

Probably, for the candidates, a presidential election is more exciting than this—certainly it lasts

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longer—yet I doubt very much if any quarter-hour of it carries more of a thrill. You feel Godin's sense of the importance of the situation by the way he handles the boat. With light manœuvres of the paddle, not to disturb the pool too much, he works you, towing the fish, to a place where the water is clear and you can play his rushing lordship without fear of getting him tangled about lily-roots, and so pulling loose from the fly.

The fight is well on—it is the contest of a man's brain, working with the awkward tools of a man's muscles, in an unaccustomed situation, against a wonderful expert and gymnast in his own element. The outcome is always a doubtful one—it is a fair fight—that is where the thrill comes in. The long runs when you must give line with a swiftness beyond thinking; the lightning rushes toward the boat when your reel must work faster than your brain or you lose him; the lifting, the lowering of the rod that must be done by a sense acquired in many such battles, a sense come to be instinct more than reason; the whisper in the muscles that tells you not to pull him when he sulks; that tells you not to let

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him get line enough to shake free—all these phases and a hundred more which fishermen know were in that fight of mine on September ninth with my big record trout, down at the mouth of the Rivière à la Poêle. I won. I landed him, and he weighed five and a quarter pounds by the scales. It was my first fish of the season, and Godin was almost as pleased as I with this good beginning. We kept at it, of course, and we had what would have seemed good luck on other days, for a spotted fellow of two pounds, and three more of a pound and a half soon decorated the bottom of the boat. But the battle of the giants had led off; we had trapped the patriarch first. And, seeing this, and happy enough with our afternoon's work as it was, Godin and I fell to talking.

He had crossed the pool now, and worked into the river, and was paddling slowly up it, where birch-trees hung over and met across brown running water, foam-spotted from rapids above. I cast at intervals, leisurely, as we floated up-stream, and the intermittent bright flight of the flies punctuated the guide's clear-cut French sentences. A sudden thought of last year came to my mind.

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"Godin," I asked, and watched the Parmachene Belle flash delicately scarlet toward a lily-leaf.

"Godin, where is Zoëtique this year?"

"*Ah—oui*," the voice came from behind me. "I was about to tell the *m'sieur* of that. The *m'sieur* had an interest in Zoëtique, eh?"

"Certainly, I have an interest in him," I answered. "I meant to ask M'sieur Morgan about him this afternoon, but I forgot."

"*Ah—oui*," said Godin again, and no more. There was a note of importance in his tone, and I rose to it.

"Well, what is it, then? Why isn't he here? Where is he?" I threw over my shoulder.

Godin cleared his throat for heavy conversation. "*Zoëtique est à New York*," he announced.

My flies came slapping against the boat. I certainly was surprised. "In New York?" I repeated.

"*Ah, oui, m'sieur*," said Godin again. "The *m'sieur* who was here last year, the strange *m'sieur* who wished that he should go to New York to whistle—that *m'sieur* sent again to search for him in the springtime, and Zoëtique was content to go."

"But I thought he was so decided about not going.

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I thought he was to be married, and was satisfied to stay here. I thought he didn't care about making money—I thought—" and I stopped.

"It is the truth, *m'sieur*. All that was quite true—last year," said Godin. "But one changes. Things arrive, and one's life changes, and so it happens that one changes. It was like that with Zoëtique. It was that he had a quarrel with his girl—with his *fiancée*. It was that which altered the opinion of Zoëtique. I know all about that affair—me—for it is I that am the cousin of that girl, and she has talked to me. She has explained to me about what happened, *comme il faut*. I am sorry for her and sorry also for Zoëtique—both the two. It is most unhappy. But"—Godin shrugged his shoulders with the philosophy which most of us can feel in another's tragedy. "But—what can one do? It is *malheur*—too bad—but it is life."

"Can you tell me about it, Godin?" I asked.

"But yes, *m'sieur*—most certainly. Yet it is a long story—*m'sieur* may be *ennuyé*. I will recount to *m'sieur* all the things which are of importance—is it not?"

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"As you think best." So Godin began, clearing his throat as always in preparation for vocal effort. It was an ordinary enough little history, of a high-spirited, light-hearted girl, full of coquetry, vain perhaps, quick-tempered and jealous and exacting, but all that from thoughtlessness, not from the heart, and with the good qualities of her defects. For Godin made me see, with his simple yet keen analysis of his cousin, that brighter side also, which each one of us has. He made me see a girl who was honest and warm-hearted and large-minded enough to acknowledge herself in the wrong and to do right with a will when she saw it—a woman strong and deep enough to keep the current of love alive like a flowing river on whose surface dead branches and bad things indeed collect and cover the bright rippling for a moment, yet whose rushing stream can sweep such *débris* easily away. He told me from how little the trouble had begun; how Alixe had imagined slights that Zoétique had never meant; how the man had tried to be patient at first, and then resented what he could not understand—cavalier treatment which he knew to be undeserved; how each had said things

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hard to forget; how another man and another girl had come into the breach and made it wider, and how at last the two, who really loved each other still, were so warped from the way of happiness that each was wretched and unnatural with the other, and that all comfort in each other's presence was gone.

I remembered the proud lift of Zoëtique's head and his responsive quick smile, and the delicate, close searching of his blue, alert eyes, as Godin told me that he was *vif*—I understood how the big, strong fellow, with a soul sensitive as a child's, a heart modest and secretly distrustful of its own power to hold affection—how he might have felt at the end that he had given all that was in him to a woman who did not care, who held him lightly, who played with him as he had seen her play with other men. So it did not surprise me when Godin went on to narrate how, when a letter had come again from Mr. Esmond, Zoëtique had suddenly cut loose from everything and had gone off, with a few curt words to Alixe for all good-by, to find a new way of life in New York.

There had been news from him once or twice,

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telling of his immediate success, of the astonishing gayeties of a great city, of his own happiness and absorption in them, and how he had already almost forgotten the narrow interests of the Canadian village. It was the letter that a sore and angry man would write, I reflected—hitting blindly as hard as he could, harder than he knew, at the hand that had hurt him.

“Do you believe he is as happy as all that?” I asked, thinking aloud.

Godin shrugged his talkative shoulders.

“*Sais pas*,” he said. “My cousin Alixe, she is not happy. One does not know it—the world—but I know, for she has told me. She will never marry—she says it, and she is not a girl to change her mind. It is easy for her to flirt with this man and that—oh, yes! for she is a girl who draws the *garçons*. But for love—it is another matter. She will not love any but Zoétique. It is *malheur*, for she is a good *ménagère*—a good worker—and she should marry. But it is that she will not do. It was to me she said that she was proud to have loved Zoétique and proud that he should once have loved her and that she would

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rather have that pride than marry another. It is not reasonable—but it is Alixe. She goes about her affairs, oh, but certainly. One does not know that she still loves him—but I know it. She will not marry—it is certain. But as to Zoëtique—'*sais pas*. He gains *b'en d'argent*. He sees life. He amuses himself well. It is much. When one is light-hearted it is much. Yet when the heart is heavy all that makes nothing. It is a *garçon*—a fellow—of much heart always. Always he was faithful to his friends, Zoëtique. It seems *drôle* to me that he can so soon have lost the *sc venir* of his place and the people to whom he was accustomed. It is *drôle* that. Yet one cannot tell." He shrugged his shoulders again as if to slip the whole question off them with the movement. "'*Sais pas*."

In late November the days in the Morgans' camp had become a page of past life, a page illuminated with blue and gold, hazy with romance, bright with adventure, marginally illustrated with the mighty shade of the bull moose I had shot, with the pink and silver glistening glory of my five-pound trout, with flying pictures of black duck and partridges which had fallen to my gun; a page to be turned to

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and dreamed over, again and again, yet a page of the past for all that.

On an evening, then, of November, I went out to dinner and to the theatre afterward. It was to a vaudeville which was attracting attention that we were taken. I do not care for vaudeville, and I merely suffered the numbers to pass as civilly as I might, talking between them, during them if I could, to one or two people of the party who were more interesting. The big placard in the glare of the footlights was shifted, read No. 5. I turned my chair sidewise in the back of the box and leaned forward to the woman in front of me.

"Don't watch this number—talk to me," I suggested. "It's an educated pig who does sums."

"You're trying to deceive me," the woman said, and laughed, and picked up her fluttering play-bill.

"No. 5—why, it isn't a pig at all, it's whistling."

"Then, for heaven's sake, talk to me," I begged. "Some things I can live through, but fifteen minutes of whistling with no relief—talk to me. It's life and death."

"Look at the name," she answered irrelevantly. "What a queer name—it starts out to be Zoroaster

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and gets side-tracked. This must be the wonderful whistling Mrs. Schuyler talked about—we must listen—they say it's the best thing in the evening, and is making a sensation."

"Let it—I don't want to hear it," I answered from a soul immune to vaudeville sensations, and I did not glance at the programme.

A boy came into the box swinging a tray of glasses of ice-water. I took one and held it in my hand as I spoke. At that moment No. 5 began. With a whirl of my chair which made the man next me frown with astonishment, I had twisted toward the stage, the glass crashed to the floor; the water splashed on a velvet gown and I did not see it; I saw only a figure which stood there, alone, by the footlights.

Strong, sweet, the song of the loggers on the River Gatineau rang flute-like through the theatre. The homely words, like meek handmaidens, followed in my mind the melody:

C'était le vingt-cinq de juillet
Lorsque je me suis engagé
Pour monter dans la rivière
Qu'on appelle la rivière enragé.

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I gasped as if I had plunged suddenly into the cold rapids of a rushing little river. The crowded theatre, the heat, the glare, were gone; I lay in a canoe in misty moonlight, in deep peace of Canadian hills, and from the shore floated the bird-notes of Zoétique's whistling.

It took me a minute to get back to earth, and another to explain, and then I drifted again into the heart of the woods. Stillness, pure air, running water and rustling trees; brightness and shadow of long portages, starlight and firelight and sunny lengths of lakes, a thousand poignant memories, seized me and carried me into a quiet, keen world, with a joy that was almost pain, as I stared from the box at Zoétique's familiar figure standing back of the foot-lights.

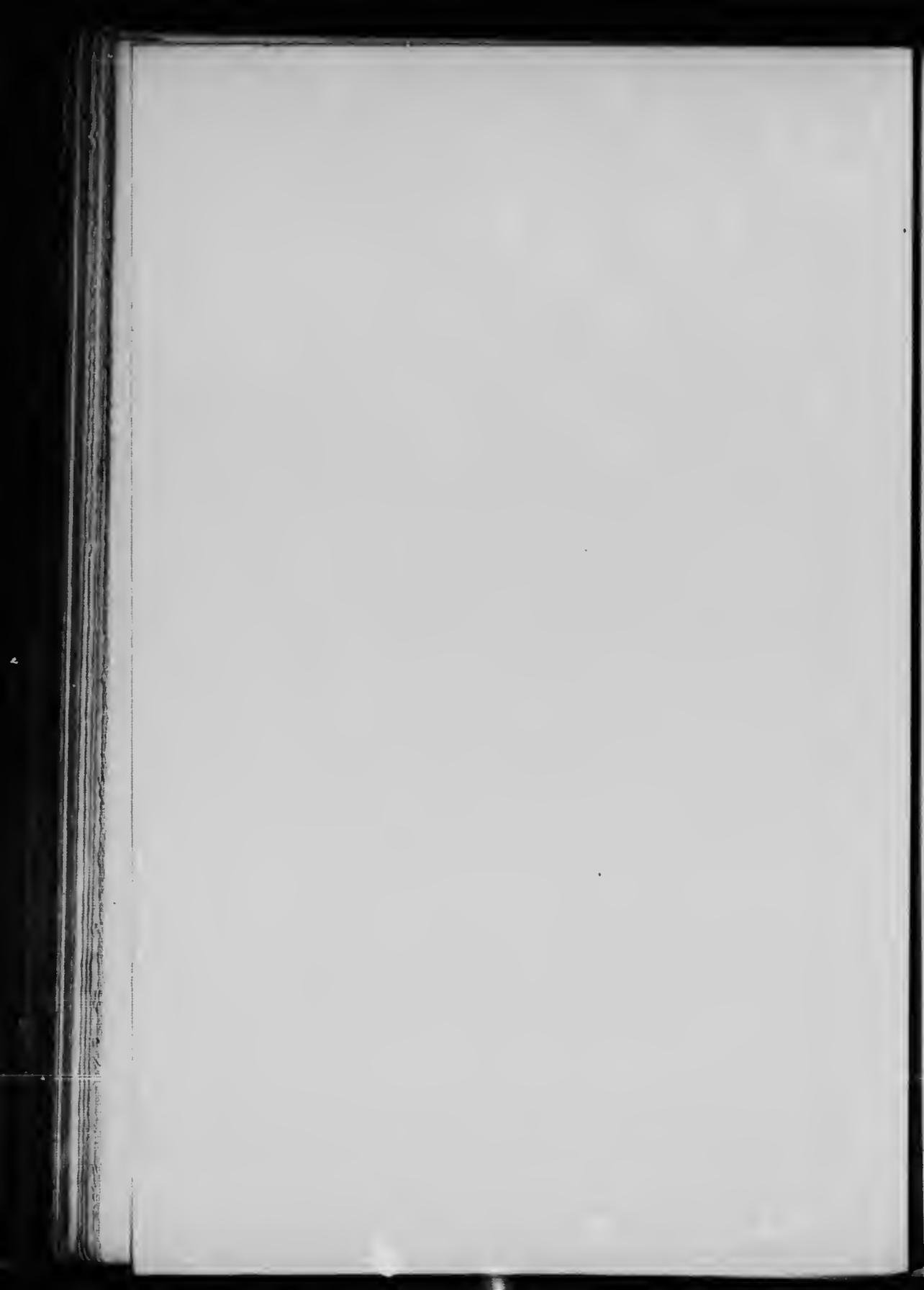
There was a pause; the Gatineau song was finished, his winning smile flashed.

"*Excusez-la,*" said Zoétique.

After the number was over I went back of the scenes and found him, and talked to him for an unsatisfactory five minutes. He was glad to see me, but some men whose air I did not like were wait-



At that moment No. 5 began.



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ing for him, and he was uneasy with me in their presence.

"Are you happy, Zoëtique?" I asked bluntly, as I told him good-by, and the blue eyes flashed to mine a second with an honest, half-tragic look. He shrugged his shoulders.

"*Sais pas, m'sieur.* I am gaining much money. One is never too happy in this world, is it not? Or in any case, not for too long."

We arranged that I should pick him up the next night after his number, and take him to my rooms, and with that I left him.

When I got back to my own place I could not shake off the idea of Zoëtique. I sat and smoked and considered for an hour, and I came to see that I was due to meddle in this affair. The boy was out of his proper atmosphere, and the glimpse I had had of him and of the men who were his companions had showed me that he was getting into bad hands. The Morgans were away—he knew no one else. I thought of the girl in the little French village in Canada eating out her heart for him, and of the happiness and self-respect and normal life waiting

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there for him, and a meteoric vaudeville success did not seem to me worth while as I thought of those things. So, as I sat smoking alone at three in the morning in a twelfth-story New York apartment, I elected to be guardian angel to this backwoods boy and settle him in a log cabin of his own with a wife who cared for him. I could not think of anything else as good that fate could give him.

I decided to see Charles Esmond next day and get his consent, as was only decent, to send the youngster about his business, and if there was any forfeit to pay I was luckily so situated that I could pay it. Bright and early I hunted up Esmond, and after a most unpromising start, including surprise, disgust, reluctance, on his part, I finally got at the man's good feeling, and persuaded him.

"I think you're clean gone off your head," was his parting remark, "and I think I'm worse. But you've hypnotized me. Take your brat and ship him back, or I'll change my mind." And I left him in a hurry.

I bundled Zoétique into a taxicab that night the moment he had finished his whistling, leaving two

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evil-appearing Frenchmen looking black at his evasion. I expected enthusiasm over the taxi, but the lad was too much for me.

"One drives in these wagons every day here," he remarked calmly. "My friends tell me it is *comme il faut*."

"The devil they do," I responded in stout English. "You must be spending money like water."

He shrugged his expressive shoulders. "*Ça coûte cher*," he acknowledged. "It is expensive. But what will you? One gains money every night, and one has nothing to save for. It is well to make pleasure for one's friends." And remembering the adventurers I had seen, I felt confirmed in my opinion that it was also well to snatch this brand from the burning.

Sophisticated as he had become, Zoëtique showed primitive interest in my rooms. He went from one thing to another, examining, asking deferential questions, and listening with deep attention to my answers. He put every picture in the place under analysis, and at length he came to a wide frame which held eight photographs set side by side. I heard him catch his breath as he bent over and saw

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what they were, and I heard his long-drawn "Ah, oui!" that was yet only a whisper. He stood like a statue, his head thrown forward, gazing.

After a while I put a hand on his shoulder and pointed to one of the prints. It was a snap-shot of himself and of me, taken an August morning on a little, lonely river. Zoétique stood upright in the stern of the canoe, poling it through the shallows. His athletic figure swung with a sure balance; the wind swayed the grasses and floated the ends of the bandanna about his throat. I held my hat on my head as the breeze caught it, and he smiled broadly to see me. The spire of a tall spruce in the distance cut into the sky. It was one of those lucky amateur photographs which wing the spirit and the drawing combined. It takes perhaps a thousand films to produce one, but no professional work comes near the effect when such a one succeeds.

A tremor went through his shoulder as my hand fell on it. "Which is more pleasure for you and me, Zoétique, to drive in a taxicab in New York, like to-night, or to be together *en canot*, like that?" I asked him.

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The boy turned and shot at me a wild look, and with that he dropped into a chair by my writing-table and laid his head on his arms and sat motionless. I waited two or three minutes. Then I drew up a seat and sat down near him, and at the top of the rough head I fired my opening shot.

"I want you to go home, Zoëtique," I said quietly. That brought him up staring.

"*Mais, m'sieur—mais—c'est b'en impossible,*" he stammered at me, startled.

So then I talked to him like a Dutch uncle, as a man of forty can talk to a lad of twenty-three. I told him, to begin with, that it was arranged with Mr. Esmond that he might go to-morrow if he would. I told him that while he was making money he was not saving any; that he was doing no good here, and was throwing away his life—and he agreed with pathetic readiness.

"One is not absolutely happy in this city, *m'sieur,*" he agreed. "One gets drunk every night, and it is not good for the health. At home I got drunk rarely, *m'sieur—me—oh,* but rarely. Perhaps at the *fête de Noël,* and when one finished logging in the spring—

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c'est tout. Not always as often—it is better for the health like that.”

It was not the psychological moment to lecture, but I put away a reflection or two at this point for Zoétique's later service.

“Yes, it is bad for the health, Zoétique,” I answered with restraint. “It is bad for one in several ways. One is not so much of a man when one gets drunk. I'm glad you think with me that Canada is the place for you.”

There was deep silence. I felt distinctly the stone wall at which we had arrived, and I knew it must be taken down rock by rock. I knew that the question of the girl was coming.

“I cannot go, *m'sieur*.”

“Why not?”

“There are other things. It is difficult to say. The *m'sieur* is good to me. It makes nothing to me if the *m'sieur* knows. But it is a small affair—to all but me—and it would be *ennuyant* to the *m'sieur* to hear about it.”

“It would not be *ennuyant* at all, Zoétique,” I said. “But I know already. Godin told me.”

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"Ah!" He was wondering as to how much I knew.

"I know about your trouble with Alixe, and that it got worse and not better as time went on, until you were not happy with each other any more. I was sorry to hear that, for it is not a little thing to have a woman love one as Alixe loves you."

Zoëtique, with his eyes glued on his great hands, which lay before him on the table, shook his head.

"*M'sieur* is mistaken. Alixe does not love me."

"Yes. She does. More than ever."

The boy's head lifted, and he flashed an inquiring glance. Then a look of sick disgust came over his face and he shook his head again sullenly.

"*M'sieur* is mistaken," he repeated. "She does not care—Alixe."

But I persisted. "I know, Zoëtique. I have heard news since you have heard. Alixe cares for you still—she has always cared. She is sorry for the wrong things she has done—she would not do them again. She loves you."

Then the suppressed soreness of his soul broke out. It was no longer as guide to *m'sieur*, it was as

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man to man he talked. "*m'sieur*," he said roughly, "I know. You do not know. Is it that a woman loves a man when she is ready to think him false, ready to believe he means bad things when he does not imagine anything bad? Is it that a woman loves a man when she says words to him that hurt as if one had cut with a knife? Is it that she loves him when she will not listen when he tries to make all right again? Is it that a woman loves a man when"—his light eyes blazed—"when she plays with other men—lets others be to her what only one should be—does that show love? Is it that a woman loves a man when these things are the truth?"

"Sometimes," I said, and Zoëtique stared at me in dumb anger.

I went on. I tried to show him in simple words how each of us has a Doctor Jekyll and a Mr. Hyde more or less evenly developed in his or her make-up, and how at times the bad gets into the saddle and rides; how this devil of wrong-headedness holds possession and makes man and woman lose perspective, so that the brain does not see the ugliness of the words the mouth speaks; how it is most often to

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the ones we care for most that such things are said, because our very sense of love for them puts us off our guard. I asked him also—remembering something from a long time ago—if he had not perhaps put bad meaning into speeches that were innocent—if his imagination had not been partly responsible.

“*Sais pas,*” said Zoétique, and shrugged his shoulders. “One accustomed oneself to have her words hurt—it might be that one jumped before the whip fell.”

His face was bitter—this end of my job was no sinecure. I talked along, trying to put my finger on the thin part of the boy's armor. I drew on Godin's description, and pointed out how the girl was high-spirited and imaginative, and how some unmeant slight, most likely, had set her to thinking that his love had grown less. How her treatment of him, so bewildering and insulting, was thus an assertion of her dignity—foolish and mistaken, yet only, at the end, a woman's self-respect. How her exactions, her air of calling him to account which had so galled him, were the poisonous flowers which had sprung in the shadow between them. I tried to make him

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see how such bad exotics would wither in five minutes of sunlight. I talked like a whole committee of grandfathers to Zoétique Vézina that night. But at one time I thought I should have to give it up, for he simply shook his head.

“One does not put one’s hand into a trap to be cut off twice,” he said over and over.

Finally I violated Godin’s confidence. “Boy,” I said, “won’t you understand that you’re throwing away the most loyal wife a man could have? She is above the ordinary girl—you know it. If her faults are bigger than another’s, her virtues are bigger, too. She will never get into this hole again—you may wager your life on that. She is clever—she has learned her lesson. She will not risk shipwreck twice. And—I know this, for she has said it—she will never marry any one but you. The other man was a plaything—she tried to pique you with him. It is a foolish trick, but women and men will do it to the end of time.”

I wondered then if he suspected ever so dimly what buried memories made me want to save another man’s life from this foolishness. I looked squarely at him and met his eyes.

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"Zoëtique," I flung at him, out of the bottom of my soul, "do you love her?"

The bright light eyes wavered, looked miserably back at me—yet straight and honest. I waited, and out of the bottom of the lad's soul came the reluctant answer:

"But yes, *m'sieur*, I love her."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, man, go to her and be happy!"

Once more the muscular arms were flung out on my writing-table and the dark head fell on them, but this time the bitterness was gone from the pose. The room was still for a minute, and then he lifted his face and it was smiling, and a tear was wet on his cheek.

"*M'sieur* has won—I will do as *m'sieur* wishes," he said, embarrassed, laughing, and the rest of that interview was as uninteresting as the nations which have no history.

True love is no hot-house plant, and, like moss on the trees, it grows warmest where north winds are cold; but, for all that, it does not take to being sandpapered, and if one walks on it with hobnailed

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boots it is likely to die down. Yet it is true that deep roots may with cultivation sprout again—may even sprout thicker if cared for tenderly. All the same, it is ill-advised to try more than one episode of hobnails and sandpaper. Zoëtique and Alixe, learning it painfully, learned this lesson thoroughly, and I think that never again will they take liberties with their affection for each other. That it has sprung plentifully from the trodden roots I am led to believe from strangely spelled French letters which reach me from time to time. My conscience as a meddler is much soothed by these letters.

As for the other side of my meddling—a few nights ago I dined at the Lambs' Club, and across the room was Charles Esmond, with a galaxy of stars shining about him. At the end of dinner he picked up his coffee and came over with it to us, smoking like a chimney as he came. He set down the cup and took my hand, and then shook his fist at me and laughed at my host—fascinating and unexpected as I remembered him in the Canadian camp.

“Dick,” said he to my friend, “this chap is a common burglar—don't give him any more dinner. He

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burgled the best number out of the best vaudeville I ever staged—plain stole the boy without remorse—the most marvellous whistler the profession has ever seen. I'd have made a mint of money off the fellow—he was just beginning to make a sensation. And this man you're feeding lifted him, inside of twenty-four hours, and shipped him back to Canada to the girl he'd left behind him." He proceeded to make an anecdote five minutes in length and telling practically all I have told, from the gist of what I have spun out so long.

When I got back to my rooms that night I found in my mail a birch-bark enveloped photograph of my lovers, now married. Zoëtique, in store clothes which took all the good looks out of him, sat solemn in a chair with a cheap derby hat on his head, and Alixe stood behind him, her hand on his shoulder—smiling, dark-eyed, and graceful.

I looked at the heroine hard and long, and then I unlocked a drawer and took out an old photograph of another dark-eyed girl, and put them side by side and let myself dream how it would be if that hand were sometimes on my shoulder, if those eyes

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smiled, so, to be at my side—if we had not quarrelled. I do not often let myself have this dream, because it makes work and play harder for a day or two.

I look forward to a month in Canada next summer, and I expect to have a guide who will turn the woods upside down to get me good fishing and hunting, as is the just reward of a successful meddler. And in the intervals of serious business I expect to listen without paying admission to the “best number of the best vaudeville ever staged”—No. 5—Zoëtique’s whistling.

THE YOUNG MAN WITH WINGS



THE YOUNG MAN WITH WINGS

What if some morning when the stars were paling,
And the dawn whitened, and the East was clear,
Strange peace and rest fell on me from the presence
Of a benignant spirit standing near:

And I should tell him, as he stood beside me,
"This is our earth—most friendly earth and fair;
Daily its sea and shore, through sun and shadow,
Faithful it turns, robed in its azure air;

"There is blest living here—loving and serving,
And quest of truth, and serene friendships dear;
But stay not, Spirit! Earth has one destroyer,—
His name is Death—flee, lest he find thee here."

And what if then, while the still morning brightened,
And freshened in the elm the Summer's breath,
Should gravely smile on me the gentle angel,
And take my hand, and say: "My name is Death."

SILL'S verses occurred to the bishop as he lay awake in the night. A thing had startled him during the day, and sleep had not come promptly as ordinarily. He listened, aware of each shading of sound,

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to the pleasant, dim noises of the midnight world. A thin wind rustled the trees outside his windows, it might be as if a crowd of light-footed ladies in silk petticoats passed unendingly by; far off in the road hoof-beats approached rapidly and rapidly died away; a dog—little Café, for he knew his voice—sent a shower of light, futile barks after the distant horse; a shutter somewhere banged aimlessly at intervals. Each accustomed impression, unnoted on common nights, reached his brain as a revelation, because of that which Everingham, the village doctor, had said in the afternoon.

So he lay awake and thought about the new prospect. It excited him as the prospect of a trip to Europe might excite him. However, Everingham was not certain; he had asked for a consultation, and the bishop had telegraphed Jim Fletcher, as he had called him since the two had roomed together at college fifty years back, to come down when it was possible. And Jim—Doctor James Austin Fletcher, as he was known over all America—Jim, to the bishop, had answered that he would be in Lancaster to-morrow at eleven. Jim would settle it. Meantime,

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what was the use of staying awake? The fact seemed to verge on emotionalism. He had believed himself free of that. He had believed himself free, moreover, of a thought which had once poisoned his days—free, but here it was following him, and in his veins throbbed the old uneasiness, familiar yet for all the years between. "It's not my affair now," he spoke aloud, as if reasoning, and then words came to him which he knew well, and he said them and peace came with them. He turned toward the square of the window where the opal night poured in and lay on his forehead and filtered to his nerves; with that the rhythm of Sill's verses caught and rocked him as his mother would have rocked him seventy years before, and he went quietly to sleep.

For an hour he slept dreamlessly, and then, at about one o'clock of the morning it might have been, through the hushed chambers of his brain there moved a presence from beyond them. The bishop put out his long, strong fingers as if in greeting, and a smile came on the sleeping face—the dream was pleasant. Some one, whom he was glad to see, stood by him, by the bed in the big, airy room, and smiled

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down at him. And it surprised the bishop only a very little that his visitor, the tall young man, had wings. He could plainly see the face, a face which he knew. The wings were a touch uncommon, but why not? The figure was more beautiful because of them—it was good to see them. Why did he know the face? And with that the young man spoke three words:

“Go to Lancaster.” And the bishop woke up.

He smiled broadly at the convincingness of dreams in general, at the distinctness with which the imagined voice still sounded in his brain: “Go to Lancaster.”

It was exactly as if some one had wakened him with the command. But the face was gone, and he could not recall it. Puzzled, smiling, he fell asleep. It might have been half an hour later that the dream came again. Again the tall figure, bringing, it seemed, an atmosphere of unlimited easy power, stood by him; and the bishop, looking up unafraid, saw a light on the face as if to emphasize—to impress it on his memory. And again the clear voice spoke the same three words:

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"Go to Lancaster."

And the bishop woke up. Through him there appeared to be an infusion of the strength which had been a vivid impression from the dream. He felt suddenly young, filled with energy. It was a long time since he had felt like this—Everingham said the malady had most likely been gripping him for years. Was it possible that he was shaking it off? That he was going to get well, in spite of Everingham's croaking? Well, Jim would settle that to-day. A man could trust Jim. In the meantime it was a great thing to have this glorious spasm of health, whatever it might mean. It cleared the brain—and the bishop fell to thinking. As he opened the door of his mind there met him the thought which he had said was not now his affair. Back of it was a procession of very old memories. He had not for years let himself review these in detail, yet the details were sharp. With his fresh sense of buoyancy he went back now to events which had shaped his career.

The foundations of lives are mostly alike, and mostly of elemental stuffs. On these rise superstructures of infinite architecture: a hovel of odds

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and ends here, a grim walled castle there, or a stately palace, or buildings filled with machinery, or sunshiny homes—there is never an end to the sorts. But under all the sorts lie masses of primeval rock, called by a few names such as Ambition and Love and Hate and Remorse and Honor and others. The bishop's business was with foundations, and he uncovered now in the night those under the dwelling he had made for himself. He found there one jagged rock, which cut him as he passed over it; its name was Remorse. In the crystal of his life was one cloud which darkened the light. The bishop thought, as he had thought many times before, of a man who had "found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully and with tears." He clinched his strong fist.

"If I might set that one thing right—if I might find him and tell him, and make amends with all that I have, then I could go," he spoke aloud.

With that he felt a desire to turn over his memories and put them in decent order, and he bent his mind to consider the old, long story. Wide-awake, clear-headed, with his new strength pulsing in him,

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he went over it all, and perhaps an hour passed, and at the end his mind rested, relieved. He put away the unrest; he thought happily of everyday things, of this big, pleasant place of his which he loved, the sunshiny garden, the shady driveway, where he mounted his horse of a morning. And the horse, Billy, and the joyful big dogs, and the little dog, Café, who was always so ridiculously glad when he came back from his ride—he had a great affection for them all. The gentleness of such thoughts about him, again he fell asleep.

And as soon as he slept it seemed the young man with wings stood again by the bedside, a shaft of strong light on the face; and again he spoke, imperatively:

“Go to Lancaster.”

And at once the bishop awoke. As before, he could not remember the face which he had seen so distinctly a moment ago; but flowing through him was still the strange tide of strength, and with it an uncontrollable conviction that he must obey this command—he must go to Lancaster. He laughed at himself.

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"Ridiculous!" he said aloud, attempting to break the spell by the sound of his own voice.

But the dream would not let him alone, and the new energy pushed with it. Against his will, against his judgment, much against his sense of humor he began to dress. Suddenly, "That settles it," he said. Lancaster lay across the river from the bishop's place; the only way to get over was by a ferry, and the ferryman lived on the farther side. He could not get to Lancaster. "I'll go back to bed," he said, and sat motionless. He could not go back to bed. There was an impulsion, which would not be put down, to get dressed, to ride to Lancaster. He was astonished, displeased. "I must be losing my mind," he said; and went on dressing.

He stole down softly, not to waken the household; it was a quarter after three o'clock. He found the key of the stable, then turned into the dining-room and groped in the dim place for the sugar-bowl, and dropped three or four white lumps into his pocket.

Billy's eyes gleamed over the low door of the box stall; when his master spoke Billy whinnied softly as

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if he understood and would be quiet. He blew a clean breath in the bishop's face, and as the door slid he doubled up his forefoot to shake hands. It was the best "good morning" Billy could say, and he got his sugar for it. The bishop placed the saddle and buckled the girths, and Billy put down his big, gentle head and pushed his nose into the bridle, proud of his accomplishment. "Good Billy," and the bishop smiled, and patted him, and mounted with a spring such as he had not given for five years. He would have to turn back when he got to the river, as Higgins would be asleep on the farther side; but he would have a ride and see the sun rise. He had never felt more like it; he was delighted that he had been imposed upon by that overbearing young man with wings. What was the lost identity of that face? The bishop puzzled over this as Billy cantered along, plunging and snorting with joy to be out in the freshness.

The garden lay in the half-darkness; it was late June, and there were roses; a lattice arch loomed heavy with honeysuckle, and the damp smell met him like a wall; down by the stream there were rows

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of vague lilies. Everything was quiet, yet awake—waiting for him. It seemed as if some joyful secret was abroad which only he knew—and maybe Billy. The gray, long road was in it, and the branches bent, whispering it, and the cold, wet leaves of the trees that touched him were full of significance. The world was his alone, a world opening in his hand. Sometimes, not often, the glory of the star we live on comes fresh, and suddenly it is not words but a reality that we are part of the glory and of the fight, a cog in the scheme, each least one. The bishop, in the brightening morning, with no sound on earth but the wind and Billy's hoof-beats, threw out his arm boyishly.

“Si la jeunesse savait—si la vieillesse pouvait”—he said aloud. “I am old—I know, and to-day I am young—I can. It's a good day. Something good is to happen to-day.”

The ferryman's house was on the Lancaster side, but a hut was on this shore, where he sat often in the daytime. Out of this rose a man's figure, and stood with arms stretched and head back in a giant yawn.

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"What business have you got over here at this hour, Higgins?" the bishop demanded with asperity.

"Well—well, sir," Higgins stammered through the yawn, and the bishop laughed.

"Me! I'm waitin' fo' Squire Fassett. County Co't to-day; las' month I slep' over, an' the Squire, he come in early with his cattle, and had the devil's own—excuse me, sir—had a hell of a time—excuse me, sir—I'm sleepy—had a right bad job wakin' me. He talked some about shootin', so I thought I'd sleep handy over this side."

"Good," the bishop said thoughtfully. "You'll ferry me over? I can get to Lancaster?"

"Get to Lancaster?" the man repeated. "Nothin' simpler, bishop; I reckon," he added, apparently to Billy, "there ain't much you want of these parts you *can't* get."

There was a three-mile stretch on the Lancaster side; the bishop took it slowly; it was six when he turned into the main street, where the early birds stared as Billy's tread echoed from the cobbles. Embarrassment seized the bishop. This was an absurd performance. As soon as Billy and he had break-

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fast he would ride back to the Thickets. He drew up at a hotel and gave Billy over to a groom, and strolled to the echoing dining-room, killing time over details. He had to wait for breakfast, and when it was over he found that he had managed the day up to eight o'clock, and with that the thought occurred to him that he would wait and meet Doctor Fletcher at eleven. The ride had not tired him; in fact he felt like a walk on top of it, a good way to get rid of some of the time on his hands. There was a park on the other side of the city, and he had not seen it for months.

The landlord of the Harrington House stood on the steps and watched. "There goes the right sort of parson," he observed to the clerk. "Look at him beat it up the street. He ain't too pious to be a human, and that's what rakes in the souls. And he's awfully good comp'ny. Heaven for climate, but hell for comp'ny, folks say; but the bishop's got hell queered when he starts business up on high." In many forms good-will followed the short figure and the fine gray head; eyes brightened to see how well he looked, how young his gait.

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It was quiet in the park. It lay high, and through a vista cut in juicy green he looked across the valley, where his home lay, the big place with fields and thickets and trees, and the large, sunshiny garden. "I'm sorry it all has to go to strangers," he said aloud; then his mouth twisted into a queer, lovable, sidewise smile that was his, and he lifted himself from the bench to start back to town. With that came a clatter of muffled hoofs down the soft bridle-path, and he turned with a rider's interest in riders. A young man was galloping fast toward him through the shifting light and shadow, and the bishop, still smiling, suddenly started, horror-struck. Out from a by-path in front of the rider ran a little boy, late to school, hurrying across the park with his books and slate, oblivious of everything else. The bishop shouted, and the rider saw in time and pulled in, and the child was safe. But it had been a close shave. The horseman went on, and the bishop fell to thinking. It was odd that this thing should have happened twice in two months—almost identically this thing. Early in May he had landed from England at Quebec, and had spent three days in

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Montreal, and one morning he had driven up the mountain, Mount Royal, the park for which nature has done more, perhaps, than for any other in the world. It was bright weather, and as the carriage climbed the hanging road he had met many people on horseback. Around a turn, where the green mist of leaves arched over a level stretch, a horse and rider cantered toward him through the speckled sunlight—a splendid brown horse carrying a big young man, bare-headed, fair-haired. As pleasant a sight, the bishop thought, as one might see on earth. Then without warning there was a sound which made his pulse stop. A woman at the roadside screamed as a creature screams in a last agony. And the bishop followed her wild eyes. In the middle of the sunny road, where the shadows twisted bewilderingly, a little lad of three or four bent over a ball which rolled from him, and the flying hoofs were almost on him. The horse came galloping—a noble picture—the little white figure, stooping, fearless of death, in the sun-splashed road, death bearing down gloriously.

“Ah!” It seemed as if the round world had gasped that. At the last second the young man had

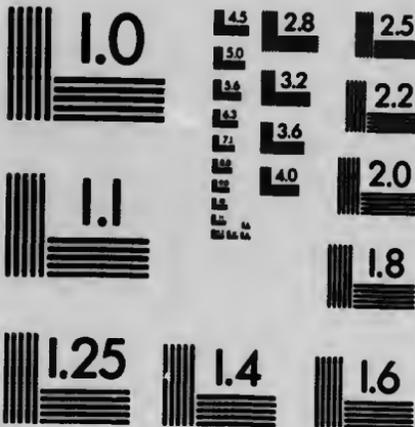
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seen, and with a turn of the hand, with all his strength, with the skill of a finished horseman, had thrown his mount. Back they rolled together in a dangerous mass, the immense hoofs and the bright head flashing. And the child scrambled away, and his mother sobbed and did not even look as he ran toward her, for before her eyes the man who had given him back to her lay where the body of the horse must crush him the next second. And as the horse rolled the great hoofs floundered in air, and somehow righted, and within six inches of the helpless head rolled back. In two minutes more they were all grouped in the road, a joyful and excited company—the woman sobbing with happiness now; the baby shrieking for sympathy; the driver swearing gleefully, regardless of the bishop, and the young man who had just grazed death up and punching anxiously here and there at his trembling animal. The bishop held the beast's head, and the boy, the cause of the sensation, played calmly with his ball. In two minutes more the woman and children had gone on, but the bishop was still helping the young man look things over.



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"Jove, that's luck—that's luck I wouldn't have dared hope for," the boy brought out. He was an attractive lad, well bred and radiantly good-looking, an Englishman, yet with a breeziness not English, and a peculiarity in his speech. It might be Canadian, the bishop thought as he noticed—it is hard for Americans to judge. "That's ripping. Thank you, bishop. Not a strap or buckle wrong, and the beggar not scratched. I couldn't do it again, don't you know." He patted the frightened horse.

"How do you know I'm a bishop?"

The boy laughed, pleased. "You are, aren't you, sir? That was easy." He put his hand on his own collar and nodded at the bishop's. "A clergyman, of course—but I'd have known it anyhow—there's something—and—" he hesitated, and then looked the older man in the eyes frankly, deferentially. "It's plain to see, sir, if you will excuse me, that you're a personage. I'm not taking liberties, am I?"

"Not a bit. I like it. I'd walk a mile for a compliment." Then he laid his hand on the broad shoulder above him, for the lad towered. "My boy, I

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must tell you something also. That was a fine thing you did."

The blue eyes opened wider. "Oh, you mean throwing the horse? It's a dangerous trick, of course, but I had to. I didn't want to, but the youngster was close. You're a horseman—there wasn't any other way, was there, bishop?"

"No," the bishop said slowly. "There wasn't any other way," and let it go at that.

"I'm glad he's not hurt," the boy explained, "because he's not mine. He belongs to a friend I'm staying with. That is"—he laughed—"I'm at his house. He and his people went off yesterday, and I was due to start for the States last night. But I stayed over for a ride. You see I was brought up on a horse, on the other side of the world, that was. And I've not had the chance lately, and I've missed it. Henderson would mind most awfully if I'd hurt Thunderbolt, and so should I. I'm keeping you, bishop." He held out his hand. "Thanks, awfully, for helping me," and the stiff formula held a heartiness which went to the bishop's heart. He was attracted beyond explanation by this boy. He

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tried to think of a reason to lengthen the incident.

"You're sure you're not shaken up? I could drive you home with pleasure."

But the young fellow laughed. "I'm perfectly fit; thanks ever so much. I hope we'll meet again, bishop."

They clasped hands as if both were sorry to part. "If I can ever do anything for you, you'll try to let me know, won't you?"

"I will, bishop," the boy said heartily. And neither remembered that they did not know each other's names, for it seemed an old friendship. And the young fellow vaulted into the saddle and was gone.

But in the mind of the bishop all that day, and for days after, there lingered a recollection of the big young figure, and the honest blue glance, and of the simplicity with which he had offered his life for a strange child's. Seldom had the bishop met any one who had so pleased him—and he did not know his name.

"I should like to own a boy like that," the bishop

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thought then, with a touch of the loneliness which sometimes caught him.

He had said that over to himself more than once in the two months since the incident, and now, in the park of Lancaster, as the horseman disappeared into the June greenness, and the startled little boy hurried off to school, he thought of his garden and his house, and the things dear to him, which must go to strangers, and the bright face of the rider on Mount Royal came with a throb of pain, and he felt his isolation and said it again: "I should like to own a boy like that." Then he trudged cheerfully back toward town, putting away, as was his habit, any personal sadness. And when he got into the city, it was only ten o'clock—an hour yet before Doctor Fletcher's train. He strolled down Brandon Street, past the court-house. The great doors were wide open, and through them rang a dictatorial voice which he knew well, the voice of Judge Lovett. The bishop halted; the winning, odd smile by which people who loved him remembered him lighted his face—a smile which drew his strong mouth sidewise in a characteristic line, keen, humorous, kindly. He

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liked Judge Lovett. He turned into the court-house, and dropped in the back row by the side of a man who made way for him deferentially.

"What's the case?" the bishop whispered.

"A murder case—young fellow's being tried for murder done twenty miles from here, about two months ago—trying to prove an alibi, but it looks right black. That's him, the big, light-haired chap." And the bishop looked, and saw the rider of Mount Royal.

Judge Lovett's voice went on, emotionless, incisive. "You say that you were in Montreal on the sixth of last May; can you prove it? Is there any one who saw you and talked to you there who would remember you?"

The bishop, standing up, staring, his pulse beating in jumps, listened to the answer.

"There is one man whom I talked to when I was riding on the mountain," the frank tones trailed off rather hopelessly, "but I don't know his name or where he lives."

At the back of the court-room there was a stir. A sudden voice lifted across the place, startling judge

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and jury and the crowded benches of listeners. "I am the man," the bishop spoke loudly and walked forward down the aisle to the rail.

There was a dramatic silence. The court-room seemed to catch its breath as one man. The judge's dominant speech broke the hush.

"Bishop," he asked, "did you see this young man in Montreal on the sixth of May?"

"Yes."

"Please take the stand," said the judge.

The bishop testified. People hardly breathed for fear of missing one of the direct words. It was clear in five minutes, and before the district-attorney finished his examination of twenty minutes or so there was no question, so that when the jury went out the judge directed them to bring in a verdict of acquittal. The bishop, stepping down from the stand, came to the prisoner. He put out his hand, his face alight, and the boy caught it in both his, and his mouth worked.

"Bishop, a man can't say 'Thank you'—there aren't any words—" He stopped.

"My lad," the lit' . bishop said soothingly to the

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towering young giant, and patted the huge fists with his free fingers as if he spoke to a child—"my lad, of course there aren't any words—there never are if you need them. *I'd* like to lay my hands on one or two to tell you how glad I am. And so glad to see you besides; I've thought about you. How did you come here?"

"It's a long story—I'll tell you. But, bishop, you—did you drop from heaven? I wanted you so—it's a miracle." And people stood about laughing and crying and listening openly, but the two did not notice.

"A miracle—yes, I think likely. But at the moment I strolled into the court-room because I was killing time till—*Mercy!*" The bishop jerked out his watch. "Nine minutes of eleven—I must rush." He caught the boy's hand again. "Come out and see me—the Thickets—any one will tell you—I can't miss that train." He looked up into the boy's face with half appeal, half command. "Don't you leave till I've seen you again."

"Not for worlds, bishop."

"Good-bye!" and the short figure bolted from the

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court-room with an impetuosity which nearly knocked over a mighty policeman on the steps.

Billy, harnessed to a runabout, trotted briskly along the road which he had covered under saddle at peep of day, and behind him two gray-haired dignitaries chattered like boys. By common consent the main subject was not to be discussed till after lunch, but the coincidence of the dream and the scene in the court-house were talked over with interest.

"It was extraordinary—quite," Doctor Fletcher acknowledged. "The verses in your mind gave rise to the young man with wings; but what made him tell you to go to Lancaster?" The bishop was silent. "Had you been planning to go to Lancaster? To meet me, for instance?"

"No. I didn't feel up to the trip."

"Some shaft of memory projecting itself on the weakened consciousness during sleep," Doctor Fletcher reflected. "A lucky accident for the prisoner."

"It was not an accident," observed the bishop calmly. "It was an intervention."

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The doctor considered. "A lot about dreams—unknown. Theories. Memory, personality, suggestion, telepathy—more, likely before we let go and say supernatural."

"If there is anything supernatural." The bishop caught it up. "Perhaps it is all in nature, only we don't know. The most advanced of us stands before psychology like an ancient cave-dweller before electricity. We see gleams from the penumbra of a new universe. Two hundred years ago everybody jumped at that word supernatural, and burned some of the people concerned and worshipped others. To-day we clamor as promptly that there isn't any penumbra or any universe, but somebody has scratched a match. However"—the clear, assured voice, so compelling in its flexibility, its sympathy, changed swiftly—"however, Jim, we both use very beautiful long words when we prod each other a bit. Don't we?"

"Why do you put rubber pads on that horse in summer?" inquired the doctor, and the talk fell to Billy's shoeing.

After lunch the bishop and the great doctor, the

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"Jim" of his lifelong friendship, went into a pleasant room with broad open windows looking over the drowsy garden. Muslin curtains flapped in the breeze; bees hummed outside; the fragrance of roses was in the air, and a puff of wind lifted to them the smell of honeysuckle. The old friends sat and smoked and talked cheerfully of big affairs and of little ones, of the bills before Congress, of the last scientific discovery, of the doctor's grandchildren, of boys of fifty years ago and doings of them then and now. Then, when the cigars were finished, Everingham, the village physician, had come in and there had been twenty minutes of serious short questions and answers, and then Everingham had gone and the two were together alone again. Doctor Fletcher was silent. He got up and went to the window and stood with his back turned and his hands in his pockets looking out on the garden. With that the telephone on the study-table rang and the bishop went to answer it. But as he stood with his hand at the receiver, ready to take it down, he turned his face to his friend with an unspoken question, and t' e great doctor wheeled sharply and crossed the

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room in long strides, and his arm was around his friend's shoulder.

"Tell me, Jim," the bishop said quietly.

"I can't," said the doctor, and his forehead suddenly was against the black clerical coat.

Then the bishop, with his calm hand over the shaking one, put the receiver to his ear.

"Yes, this is he," he answered composedly. And in a moment: "Oh—yes. I'm glad. Surely, my boy. Come at once."

Under the big oak in the garden, by the stream which was the garden's boundary, were placed wicker chairs and a table. One went through the honeysuckle arch to get to them. There were tall lilies along the stream and blue ranks of larkspur towered beyond; the hollyhocks were showing spots of color in the high rows against the hedge; stone steps led to the little river, and a boat rocked, tied; the water tinkled; it was as pleasant a place as might be where two old friends should sit of a warm afternoon and smoke and talk. They went there, the bishop and his guest.

Doctor Fletcher, straining after composure, bent over a blossom.

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"A verbena, isn't it?"

"Jim, you're probably the original of the man in the story who knew only two botanical names of flowers—aurora borealis and delirium tremens. That's philox."

The hearty contempt helped to steady the stricken man. No one of his patients had ever seen the great physician unnerved, but to-day the match shook which he held to his pipe; for a moment he could not light it. The bishop laughed and his mouth twisted whimsically.

"Nonsense, Jim. You mustn't be upset. You and I know better. It is a crisis, of course, but there is nothing final about it—you know all I can say. Old age and death are just a sort of measles in the cosmic childhood of us eternal people. We'll sit in gardens and talk together thousands of times again—better gardens than this, maybe, though I can't imagine it." He looked about him wistfully. "To my mind it's like the hill of Zion here—'a fair place, and the joy of the whole earth'—'the whole earth'—that's me." He went on: "I'm not bothered. That is—well, if I could manage two things the way I want I'd be satisfied to leave the job and move on."

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"What things?" the doctor demanded eagerly, stretching his fingers across the table between them.

"You can't manage them, old man."

"What are they?" the doctor insisted.

The bishop drew a long puff at his pipe and gazed off toward the hollyhocks, where a vivid blur of cherry lay in the swinging green. He took the pipe from his mouth and held it on the table. The back of his hand just touched his friend's. "Two things. One is, if I could get hold of Basil Lynn and make that thing straight. The other"—he hesitated, and then snapped out: "I do hate to have this place go to the Williamsons."

Out of his sadness the doctor laughed. "It shouldn't have to," he agreed. "Why not make a hospital?"

"Not much." The bishop's eyes flashed. "Butchers in white pajamas—like you—around my halls? No, thank you. And I've left stacks of money to hospitals, Jim—don't nag me—you know that. This place is different—it's got to belong to people, not charity boards. Yet Tom Williamson doesn't differ much from a board," and he smiled sidewise.

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"Thoroughly good."

"Good? Oh, mercy, he's good," groaned the bishop.

"But he'd never give Billy sugar. And imagine the dogs playing with Tom Williamson! And so dull, Jim—so deadly dull! If I heard—Tom—talking platitudes in my garden"—the bishop brought his fist down with a thump—"I'd come back. I'd have to. The digitalis would die—drought kills it."

"Tom's not the point," Fletcher suggested. "Not your cousin."

"No, it's Anita," assented the bishop, and knocked the ashes from his pipe. Then, confidentially: "She's so fat."

"Jerry," said the doctor, "you may be a bishop, but you're unregenerate and full of sin."

"I am ashamed, Jim. Poor old Tom—he is a nice fellow, and Anita is kind. I'm sorry, Jim," the bishop said penitently, and then changed as swiftly. "All your fault. I only talk this way to you. You always did inspire me with the devil." And they laughed a little together.

A silence fell again. The pipes burned, and the bishop's dark eyes stared absently across the tran-

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quil spaces of lawn and the flower borders to the fields spread beyond in sunlight.

At length: "‘Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams,’" he mused aloud.

"Boy with wings?" Fletcher asked.

"Yes. I wish I could remember the face. Queer I can't. A light was on it twice as if to give me a good chance." He was silent again; then: "Jim, I wish I owned a boy like that."

"I wish to heaven you did, Jerry," and with that a horse turned in at the gate and trotted up the gravel. Through the arch the two saw a tall figure spring down.

Black Peter, the butler, brought him out to them in the garden and the doctor stayed to regard him gravely and approvingly, and strolled away with inelastic step across the lawn to the house.

"Young man," shot the bishop at him, "the first thing I want to know is your name."

The boy's eyes widened. "You don't know my name, sir? But how should you? It's Basil Lynn."

In the still, bright place time and tide seemed to

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stop. The pipe in the bishop's hand fell and rolled away, and the newcomer sprang after it and brought it back, smiling. Then he saw the bishop's face.

"What is it? Are you ill, sir?"

The bishop took the boy's hands and stared up at him, and stared—and yet stared. And the boy turned a slow red, but stood quiet. "Why, it's plain," the bishop said. "Your father's size, but your mother's son. Her son."

The lad's face lit. "Why, bishop—you knew her?"

The bishop still questioned the bright face with his close gaze.

"I don't remember my father," the young fellow said. "He died when I was a year old—they say I'm built like him. But this is my mother's"—he put his hand through his thick, straight, very light hair. "I'm mostly like her, I think."

"She is alive?" the bishop asked.

"Oh, yes—bless her," the boy beamed. "But I've had to leave her in England." He hesitated. "I can tell you anything, bishop. We're poor—I've come over to make money, and then she'll

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come. She wants to live in America. I must get to work. I'm anxious to work—I'm in a hurry to get my mother."

"'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace,' " remarked the bishop.

The boy looked dazed—almost smiled. The bishop was not at all solemn or what is called religious; he had the air of stating something which gratified him.

"Sit down," he ordered. "I've a great deal to say to you." He broke off and stared once more at the straight-featured, glowing young face. "It's just the sort of boy I like," he considered out loud, and "it" looked astonished and reddened, and laughed and looked pleased, but the older man did not notice. With preoccupied movements he filled his pipe and packed it, and lighted it and drew a puff, as if his soul were on it, the boy meantime bursting with wonder. "A great many things to say to you. How old are you?"

"Twenty-four." A moment's silence.

"It was eleven years before you were born. You were the only child?"

"No—two others, older; they died."

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The bishop reflected, his luminous eyes on the boy's face. "You are like her. I'm glad."

"So am I," the lad smiled, and waited in an agony now of anxiety to know what it all meant. A minute, two minutes, and he still waited.

"Let me think," the bishop crossed his legs with deliberation, and puffed a cloud of smoke and gazed at it, absorbed, as it rolled toward the hollyhocks.

"Let me think."

"Yes, sir," and the lad shut his lips, as it might be to shut in something which kicked and struggled. The bees hummed: the bishop smoked as if hours were nothing, nor yet a young man exploding with curiosity. At length he put the pipe down on the table and pushed it from him.

"I'd better tell you the whole story," he said gravely. "I have never told it before. Thirty-five years ago—eleven years before you were born—I was a lawyer, alone in the world, as I am now." He stopped a moment, and suddenly smiled at the listener. The lad flushed as if he had been called. "As now. I met—a young girl—and fell in love with her. It was—the only time in my life. She was

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much younger than I. I can see now that she never cared as I did—my impetuosity forced her—but I did not see that then. We were engaged. Then, the autumn after, a man—a stranger—came. He had letters to me from a cousin of mine. My cousin spoke highly of his ability and of his social qualities. He gave him also letters to a Mr. Seaton, the president of a large mine, the Scylla Mine. I felt—his—charm at once. He was a big fellow, very handsome, very attractive. I did what I could for him—it was a good deal, for I knew many people. Through me he went into a business—temporarily, for we both thought his best chance would be with Seaton. But Seaton was off in China and would not be home till spring. Other chances came, one or two almost as good as the Scylla, but I felt sure that with my influence to back him he would be taken into the mine, and it ought to mean a career. Then I began to see that—she,” the bishop spoke a bit difficultly, “was attracted by him. She did not realize at first, and I tried not to believe it. But I grew to—” The speaker hesitated and then looked the boy gently, frankly in the face. “I loved her. I

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grew to hate—the man. It poisoned everything—hate does, you know. One day alone in my office I was brooding over it, and Seaton came in, the president, you remember, of the Scylla Mine, just home from China.”

“‘You know this man?’ he asked me.

“I said ‘yes,’ quietly enough, and Seaton explained that they wanted a superintendent, that Jerome, my cousin, had written enthusiastically of this man, but that he did not put entire trust in Jerome’s enthusiasm. He had heard,” the bishop hesitated, “he had heard something not altogether favorable about—about the man.”

The boy listened, bewildered. What was the story—why should he know it?

“I did not believe this at the time. I knew the man to be able; I thought him fitted for Seaton’s place. I made up my mind what to do, believing this. Seaton went on to say that he would rather take my opinion.

“‘You know him well?’ he asked. ‘You’ve known him some time—seen quite a bit of him?’

“I said simply: ‘Yes.’ You know, my boy, that

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one can at times lie and steal and commit murder with a syllable? Well, I did that. But Seaton wanted it clear. He looked at me sharply.

“‘I’d be obliged for your opinion,’ he said. ‘I’m going to do as you say. Tell me this: would you yourself put the man in a position requiring not only brains but trustworthiness?’

“I waited a minute, a whole minute I think, not because I had one shred of doubt as to the crime I was about to commit—I waited to give emphasis to my answer. Then I lifted my head and looked Seaton in the eyes and said: ‘No.’ And many a man has been sent to state prison for less wickedness than those two small words, that ‘yes’ and that ‘no.’”

The wrinkled hand that lay on the table was clinched; never, in all the sermons that had cut to the souls of men, had the wonderful voice, with its intense reality, sincerity, been more charged with power than as the old clergyman told, in bare words, the story of his own sin. The boy thrilled as if a drama was played before him; it continued.

“I blasted the man’s future with two words. It closed the way for him in America. Seaton and I

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were his sponsors—any opening worth while would be referred to us; Seaton was not a man to keep still about such things. Within a week—" The bishop stopped. The strong tone hardened a little. "Within a week—she—the girl—told me that she was ready to keep her word and marry me but that she loved him. No"—the old man answered a look from the young one impetuously—"no—no one may blame her. She was honorable, true—only—she cared for him, not me. How could she help it?" The bishop's sidewise smile came swiftly, without bitterness, only sadly. "He was brilliant, winning, and a great, splendid picture of a man. And I was—as you see—small and ugly."

A glance of surprise flashed from the young eyes. "I don't see, sir," he said bluntly, and stared at the figure in the chair, a strong note in deep black of clothes and sharp white of collar, against the softness of the summer setting.

It is said that in another life the bodies we shall wear—not of flesh and blood, but as real—will be the close expression of personality; life loves sometimes here to take a human face and work out on

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it that thought. The bishop's shone with the signs of such modelling. The man who at thirty-five had been, for all his intellect, ugly, at seventy-five carried a face whose radiance startled strangers in the street.

The bishop answered the boy's look more than his words with a quick smile, and his eyes were pleased. Then they grew sober. "I must tell you the whole of this—you'll see why. I went to Italy the night that she told me, and when I came home she had married him and gone away. I heard of them after that once—that his affairs had shaped as I'd planned—he had found no door open to him and had gone finally to—to Australia."

The boy started. "Australia?" he repeated.

"Yes. I tried not to know of them for three or four years, so it happened I had no clew when I wanted it. For I wasn't quite bad enough to be satisfied with the successful villainy. I had been brought up to be honorable, and I grew restive. Moreover"—he hesitated, and then his glance rested a moment on the thatch of fair hair and he went on—"moreover, I was unhappy to think that I had

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brought unhappiness to the woman—I loved. The woman whom I have loved—always. I wanted to make her life bright—I had shadowed it. That thought haunted me. After three or four years I made up my mind to find him and tell him and make amends. I had a great deal of money. I had no doubt I could find them. But I couldn't. I moved heaven and earth, but I couldn't.

“And success poured in. I was a proverb for luck. It was all empty to me—and so I handled it carelessly, and everything prospered—the world was my oyster. And there was no one to work for but myself, and I loathed myself; with every good gift I was wretched. Men kill themselves sometimes in such a mood—I was near that.”

The flowing voice was arrested. The bishop glanced up contemplatively and lifted the discarded pipe.

“You're not going to stop, sir?” the boy ventured, dismayed. The magnetism which had held all audiences, always, did not fail with this audience of one. The flashing, humorous smile answered.

“I've not tired you yet? I was thinking if I could make you understand what happened. It was

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an event, yet it's hard to make it show as a fact. Probably you haven't yet had the experience which could explain what I mean. So you must take my word for it that there is an experience which comes to many people and which throws a new light." He stopped as if choosing his words. "We stumble along with our eyes bound tight with the world, the flesh, and the devil. We see under a bit, but it's blind work, and one gets knocked and banged. Then some one comes along and lifts the bandage, or a man may push it up himself when things hurt—the event is objective or subjective. Anyhow, suddenly one sees the road and the light that shines down it. It makes the difference."

The boy nodded. "I'm not very old," he said, hesitating. "But I've gone through a bit and I believe I understand."

"Good!" the bishop threw at him. Then: "It's queer," he mused, "that we don't keep clear vision when we've got it. It's so much easier. But most of us don't. We mostly pull the same old wool back over our eyes and begin bumping about again. A few don't—they're the saints. They live on earth,

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and after, in the kingdom of heaven. Mighty few—but—I think—some.” The bishop’s eyes were as if they took in things not present. “Most of us fall back; and that’s what sin is—to walk in darkness deliberately. However—this is a shame—I’m preaching at you, and taking advantage.” His smile flashed. “But that illumination of sight which can’t be described any more than you can describe love or hunger happened to me. I went to church—I didn’t do that often—and I heard a sermon. The message arrived down that much-travelled road. A man preached, and his key unlocked my door—and I came out. It was an old idea which released me, but I found it new. It was the idea that the best thing to do with a life is to give it away. When I left church that day I’d decided to do things. I went into the ministry and went West into logging-camps. Doing that, remorse lost its sting. I wasn’t allowed to right the wrong I’d done, but it seemed coming close if I righted other wrongs.”

The eyes of the old churchman had travelled away beyond the burnished young head, beyond the sunny hedges, into years gone by. He was re-

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viewing his work and it interested him; mostly he did not remember the present or the listener as he talked, as the blaze of his spirit lighted up the old battle-field.

"The men I lived with were rough as beasts, but I really liked them, and so they let me help them. They didn't know that they were helping me. I told them the truth and at first they were going to shoot me." The bishop laughed. "Oh, yes, several times. But they got into the habit of letting me live and letting me talk, and by degrees I showed them things which staggered them. Many of them had never seen decency, and the minute they looked at it they liked it. People do—there are few bad people. Mostly ignorant."

The born preacher had forgotten his audience, as a born preacher must. He pushed back his chair and clasped his strong, old hands behind his head, and his eyes were on fire.

"Danger, squalor, men; great forests, dirty camps, and me, just me, changing eternity, opening humanity for caged brutes. Preaching behind a barrel with a cloth over it, firing rounds of hot

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shot from that pulpit. Exciting—I should say so! I might be knifed, I might be blessed—you couldn't tell. It was living!" He caught a quick breath as if the thought of those vivid days filled his lungs.

The boy was staring, amazed, eager. "Bishop," he threw at him, "bishop—you are Gerard—McVeigh."

"Of course." The arms came down, the bishop stared too. "Of course. Why?"

"I only knew your name this morning, Bishop McVeigh. Of course *that* name—all the world knows it. Your work in the camps—it's a romance. My mother used to read all she could find about it. Why, I knew that she knew you! She was proud—that you had been her friend." The boy looked at the older man with a thought dawning in his eyes.

The bishop spoke hurriedly. "I'm glad that she remembered me. But I mustn't digress. I want to tell you——"

"But," the boy interrupted, "excuse me, sir—but—you refused two bishoprics, and you're—Bishop McVeigh."

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The old face flushed a trifle, and then: "You know all about me, I see," and he smiled. "Yes—I wanted to stay with my loggers. But this diocese—" He hesitated. "I had business training. It was needed here. I came reluctantly, and because it seemed a duty, but I've been many times rewarded." He looked about the bright garden with an odd expression, as a stranger might have looked, taking it all in. "I've been happy here for years. I could be happy here years longer."

"I hope you will be, bishop," the boy said, a bit shyly as if afraid to be thought presuming to make a speech so obvious to a man so famous.

The brilliant old eyes moved to meet the lad's with an odd look. "Talk to me about yourself," he said shortly, and then, without waiting, told the story of his dream. "I can't remember the face of the angel," he said. "I wish I could. It bothers me. But he was the angel of life for you, my lad, that young man with wings."

The boy's face filled with a rush of color. As the bishop's sentence ended, he sprang to his feet. He spoke in an awed voice. "Bishop, I hope you won't

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think me irreverent, but I believe God sent you that dream—straight.”

“Yes,” the bishop answered calmly. “I think so.”

“Let me tell you,” the young man begged. “Last night for me was—horrible. I was here to help my mother. I’d got tied up in that ghastly net, perfectly innocent of it all. My mother was going to hear, instead of the good news I’d hoped to send, that I was to be hung for murder. It would kill her—kill her with torture. And I couldn’t do—one thing. I thought of you, of course, and it came to me what you’d said that morning as I went off—do you remember? You said: ‘If I can ever do anything for you you’ll try to let me know, won’t you?’ That pleased me, you know, bishop. I’d never met anybody like you, and that you should take the trouble seemed wonderful. I knew you meant it, too. So last night in my trouble I thought of that and of how I did not know even your name. It’s an odd thing to talk about to any one, bishop, but I have to tell you. I prayed. Prayed for all I was worth that you’d help me—that you should be let know.

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I said aloud over and over: 'Make him go to Lancaster—go to Lancaster.' I thought with all my strength; I tried to get a word to you, somewhere, somehow—I couldn't tell where or how. And it got there. Good Lord!" the boy gasped.

The bishop gazed at him thoughtfully. "Yes, it got there. It's wonderful, of course—most things are wonderful. But it doesn't surprise me. It's not the first time that the Lord has made his angels messengers. 'Angel' means messenger, as you know—that's their business. I wish I could get that face," he complained half to himself. "It bothers me."

The great young fellow was shaking. He stared with enormous eyes at the bishop. He was beyond words. But the bishop smiled his quaint, queer smile and went on quietly.

"Doctor Fletcher, whom you met just now, would call this affair suggestion or telepathy. I call it 'the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes.' Probably we mean the same thing—a mere difference of phraseology."

The boy burst forth. "It was my angel of life. He and you gave me my life. Bishop—I don't know

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how to say it, but—I'd do anything. If only I could show you!"

The bishop reached across the table and laid his long, steady hand on the trembling fingers. "I'm going to ask you to do something," he said reassuringly.

"Will you?" The boy's face lighted.

"But tell me about yourself and your plans." And in a few words it was told; a meagre story, yet wide with courage and manliness. "So you're only from Australia this six months, and you've got no friends and practically no prospects," the old churchman reflected aloud, and then was still, his eyes alive with thought. "My boy, I'll just say a word—first. I intend to look after you. You've dropped into my clutches, and I mean to clutch you. You're the best thing that could have happened to me on earth. If you'll do one thing for me."

"What?" the astonished young man threw at him.

"I didn't quite finish my story. You must wonder why I told it to you. You have it in your mind? That I ruined a man's career? Deliberately, out of jealousy and hatred I ruined a man's career?"

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"Yes," the boy answered and smiled, but the bishop did not smile.

"Do you want to know the man's name?"

"Yes." No faintest thought of what was coming concentrated the vague surprise of his mind. The bishop's dark, luminous eyes played across him. A cricket sang his sudden drowsy song from the lily bed.

"The man's name was Basil Lynn," said the bishop.

The boy stared blankly for a long minute. Then: "You mean—it was—my father?" he brought out in successive shocks of words.

"Yes." The grave eyes read him.

"Then—it must have been my mother—it was she—who hurt you?"

"Yes."

The boy waited, battling for the ground under his feet. At length he lifted his head, and his eyes met the older man's with a collected seriousness.

"What is the thing I can do for you, bishop?"

Over the face of the old clergyman, as he watched, came a deep sadness. "Perhaps—I'm afraid—it's

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asking too much of you," he said. "I want you, in your father's name, to forgive me."

A flame leaped into the boy's look. "Bishop—oh, bishop!" He bent and caught the old hands as if they were a woman's hands. "As if there could be any debt between us that wasn't *all* on my side," he cried. "She—my own mother, who is me—she made you unhappy and drove you to the one wrong thing you ever did. But we won't talk about it!" He was very close to the black-clothed, quiet figure, and his big fingers fell on the bishop's shoulder. "Talking's no use—it's time that tells. Wait till I can put in years to prove that I mean what I say. You'll let me be—the rest of your life—a little bit what a son might have been?"

He stooped anxiously to the face below, and with that he saw that the eyes of the bishop were filled with tears. And through them he was smiling.

"It's *just* the sort of boy I like," brought out the bishop emphatically. "My son—the rest of my life. But—" He stopped a moment and then spoke in a delighted tone. "That's wonderful," he said. "That's the greatest thing anybody in the world could do

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for me. And you're the only one who could do it. But it isn't for long, my dear—" He hesitated a mere second. "Doctor Fletcher told me to-day that I've only two months more to live."

At the quiet, cheerful words the lad started erect, horror-struck, and through the boughs of the great oak a slanting sun-ray fell suddenly on his young face and played there, and the bishop tossed up his hand sharply.

"The face!" he cried out. "It was your face! Your angel of life!" and then, as the lad dropped on his knees and bent his head wordless on the table before him, the bishop laid his hand on the fair hair as if in a benediction, and suddenly once again the queer sidewise smile, amused, whimsical, lighted his face.

"My angel of death," said the bishop.

AMICI

AMICI

Who cares for the burden, the night, and the rain,
And the long, steep, lonely road?
When out of the darkness a light shines plain,
And a voice calls hail and a friend draws rein
With a hand for the stubborn load?

HE strolled across the road and stood with both hands on the rail which guarded the landslide, and looked into the distance. Below him, at the foot of the landslide and rolling to the river and lodged in the hollows were tin cans and burnt-out kettles and broken china; the Western city had dumped its refuse along this way. From below, untidy children screamed in an untidy garden. But he did not hear or see these things.

Back of him a woman ran down a path to the gate which he had left swinging, and latched it and stood a moment watching him. All his life he had looked into the distance, she considered. A smile came, for the woman loved him. She lingered, gaz-

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ing at the tall figure with its air of distinction, its shabby clothes. A breeze lifted the loose hair, and she knew, though his back was turned, how a brown-gray lock had blown across the broad forehead—the forehead of a thinker, a dreamer. She sighed. The wife of an unsuccessful inventor is likely to sigh often. She turned to go back, but a little lad scrambled suddenly over the fence.

“Letter, Mrs. Ellsworth,” he exploded. “Mother says come s’afternoon. Mother says postman made mistake.” He was scrambling back in the same second, with consistent suddenness.

She looked at the letter, saw that it was addressed to her husband, glanced at him, and went with it into the house.

The man, unconscious, still stood with those glowing eyes miles off, where the river widened and lawns sloped to it and large houses overlooked it. He threw back his head and gazed high into the orange and rosy sky, and laughed.

“Up as far as that gold-edged fellow—farther. It seems queer that I’ll be swimming there before long. But I shall. And *my* aeroplane won’t tip over.”

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He thrust his hands into his pockets and smiled happily. "I've done it; just to get it on the market and I'll have made good. I'll have earned my place in the world. And a fortune for Margaret and Jack. Her drudgery over. Margaret," he repeated half aloud; and again: "Margaret." Then a cloud drowned the brightness from his face. "If I could get money for the model," he spoke aloud. "The thing is so sure. It's a hideous joke not to have a thousand or two now."

His mind, working this way and that trying to find a solution for the problem, his thought traveling along all possible ways, came shortly on another thought, stirring sorely at a touch.

"The fellows," he murmured. "A lot of them have money." He drew his hand sharply from his pocket and thumped on the rail. His dreamy eyes flashed. "Not if I starve," he cried. "Never that. I won't poison the memory of college days. I've got my place among them yet; they don't know; nobody knows."

He dived into a coatpocket, and brought out a letter. Looking over his shoulder, one might have

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read that the class of such a year of Yale University would hold its thirtieth reunion three months from the date; that it was hoped that John Ellsworth of this class would be present; that he was requested to let the class secretary know. Signed with a name which brought to the man's lips a half-laugh.

"Little old Saint Peter," he murmured.

With that his face was grim. Peter Price had sent a letter with the formal notice; a friendly, easy letter, taking it for granted that all of the "boys" would bring to Alma Mater this June some simple gifts of the years. Such gifts as success and good spirits and manly work well done; money to enrich Yale perhaps; perhaps big lads to carry on her banner; perhaps honored names for her roll of fame. The man's head bent farther over the flimsy rail. He caught at it again with both hands. He stared, not away now at the gleaming, darkening river, but at the rubbish—broken pottery, old chair-legs, things whose day was done. His day was done; he was fifty-two, and had not made good; he was a failure. They had expected great things of him; he

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was to have been a Newton, an Edison. He was to have made the class illustrious; they had said it, patting him on the shoulder in generous boy fashion, that last day in New Haven almost thirty years ago. He remembered well how, a dozen boys, they had stood together on the campus, under the elms, very tender-hearted over each other at this parting of the ways, very shamefaced at their unaccustomed softness. Jimmy Pendleton, his chum, with an arm stretched to Ellsworth's shoulder—for Jimmy was short and chubby—had fallen into prophecy.

"We're all great men, that's sure, but it's Johnny who's going to be our crown of glory. He's going to invent things. Flying-machines will be play. You listen while I tell you that this class will be known as the class of John Ellsworth." And the others had growled assent in deep, friendly young voices, while Ellsworth called them all "darn fools," with love and gratitude bursting his ribs. He had felt fairly sure that Jimmy was right.

"Apollo, too," Jimmy went on, for Ellsworth had been voted the "best-looking man." "And our star

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singer. I'm no inventor, and I can't sing, and something tells me I'm no beauty either," and he rumbled his shoe-brush black hair sorrowfully.

Again the group agreed cordially. "You sure are not, my son." Peter Price had spoken. "You're neither inspired nor beautiful—so's you'd notice it; but don't worry, you may be an honest man yet."

Ellsworth, across the stretch of years, recalled such details. The years had been before him then, and sunshine had flooded them. But one by one his inventions had gone wrong; fate had been against him. And now that he had at last a certainty he must wait, honor and wealth within reach of his hand, till some other man, whose hand was not weighted by poverty, should lift it and grasp success. It is a thing that happens to inventors; many times a man has died broken-hearted close to his heart's desire.

"Down and out," Ellsworth said. And stood, bent, in the twilight.

So he turned and came slowly to the large, old, half-empty house, and a sound of music floated to him, and a light shone through the curtained glass.

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He halted. He must not frighten her. He opened the door, trying for commonplace cheerfulness. But she saw. She was playing at her old tinkling piano; the music stopped.

"What is it, John?"

It was futile to lie to Margaret. "Just bothered over my job," he said.

Her arm was about his neck. He drew her down beside him on a sofa, and like an unhappy child laid his head against her shoulder.

"Don't bother, dearest," she spoke.

"It's not just that, Margaret," he said then. "It's everything. I'm down and out. I've kept you down with me. You might have been rich, happy——"

"I am happy," she interrupted.

"You're wonderful," he said. "My best friend; my only friend now. I used to have a lot and they're all gone. Except you, my darling, I haven't a friend in the world."

"John, don't," she begged. "It's not our affair if we have friends. We've just got to live our lives as well as we can, and let the rest come or go." Her

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eyes fell on the letter. "For you, John. It might be from a friend, this very letter. Read it, dear. It's from New York. It might be good news."

He shook his head; then tore the envelope. As he read his face darkened. His wife waited.

"What is it?"

He stared angrily at the paper. "It's—insult," he said. "Read it."

She took it from him and the man went and stood with his head against the mantel, his face in his folded arms. She read, and waited a long minute, considering. "I can't see it that way."

He whirled about. "You can't see it as an insult that some man should want to pay my way? As if I were a pauper?"

The woman considered again. "We're not paupers, but we're—poor. This man must be rich. He must be fond of you to want you there. He must have a feeling for other people's feelings, because he keeps back his name so that you won't have any burden of gratitude. That's fine-grained and delicate of him." She looked again at the letter. "The secretary, Mr. Price, says that no one but he himself and the man

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himself will ever know." She waited a moment, tense, biting her lip, thinking hard. Then: "I want you to go, John," she broke out beseechingly.

"Go?" He looked at her in amazement. "Go? On charity?"

"Not charity, friendship," she insisted. "Think about it. You care a lot for your class; suppose you had plenty of money and heard that one of them had none—wouldn't you be eager to do this very thing? Could you do it in a kinder way? Wouldn't you think it selfish of him to refuse you the joy of doing that? Isn't it as big to take generously as to give generously? He has a chance to give you money and he's taking it; you have a chance to give him pleasure and you're— Don't refuse it, John," she pleaded.

"Why, Margaret," he answered wondering, "what has got into you? You're so proud, so independent; more than I. However poor we've been, I've known that you preferred it to letting any one, your cousin for instance, help us. You sent back his check. And you're asking me to accept money from a man whose name we don't know."

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"Ah, but I know he's heavenly, or he wouldn't have done it like this," she threw back. "And not knowing the name helps. It's as if an angel had flown down with manna. It would be silly to refuse manna. And, John," she went on eagerly, "there's possibility in it. When they heard about your air-ship——"

He made a quick gesture.

"No, you wouldn't ask them; but you couldn't refuse to let them have shares in a great— And there would be business men who would know how to organize——"

He interrupted. "Margaret, you're dreaming. You know how I am; it's impossible for me to exploit myself. I might not tell them if they asked." He went on sadly: "I was thinking to-night that none of them knew I was—a failure."

Her arm was around his neck again; her lips on his cheek. "You're not!" she cried vehemently. "Success isn't all making money; success is being somebody, something. And you're that. There's nobody so wonderful—" She flew back without a pause. "But that's not what we're talking about."

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John, you know how I'd guard your self-respect—and I want you to do this. It might mean everything. If you could only, this year, get the aeroplane started, Jacky could go to Yale." A thrill shook her; his arm around her, he felt it, and his will and his pride were like wax in a flame.

"Where is Jacky?" he demanded.

"He had to go to the office after dinner"; she spoke reluctantly. "Extra work. But it means extra pay, and he won't be late to-night."

He groaned. "The boy is only seventeen; he ought to be studying and playing tennis; I can't bear to have him spend his youth and strength in a railway office."

"Don't worry, dear; Jacky is boiling with youth and strength. And he's enchanted to make money."

Again Ellsworth groaned. "It's wrong; it's my fault." He got up and paced the room; his soul was in torment. He went on fiercely: "If I were a steady-going dry-goods man; if I knew how to run a paper factory! Fool! I'm good for nothing. If I could make hair-pins!" he added longingly.

The woman laughed. "You're so absurd, John," she said.

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"It's not absurd." He halted before her and fired the words indignantly. "If I had a satisfactory business in hair-pins you would have a limousine and Jacky would be in college instead of in a railway office nights—at seventeen." He hesitated. "Sometimes," he went on in a low voice, "I'm not sorry that the two older ones died."

"Don't, John." The woman threw out her hands passionately. "I miss them—always. I never get over missing them. Don't say you're not sorry." Her face was quivering. Then she pulled herself together with a quick effort. "We mustn't talk about the babies. It's Jacky now. John, I do think it might mean everything for him that you should go to New Haven in June."

The man looked beyond her dreamily from his gray, vision-seeing eyes; one might have thought his mind had wandered from the subject. Then he spoke in a matter-of-fact way. "If you think so, Margaret, I'll go."

The class of thirty years back had taken for commencement week the largest house to be let in New Haven. The Thirties, as the youngsters called them,

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were an impressive body. There was a cabinet officer and an ambassador and a United States senator, a famous physician, and a handful of judges; there was a capitalist with a name spoken in whispers, so colossal was his wealth; there were railroad presidents and a great engineer and lesser fry who were yet not small fish. It was an uncommon collection of personages for one class. And not one of these grandees was allowed to pay fifty cents for his own taxicab or the price of a glass of beer. Each had made his contribution as he felt it fit for the reunion fund; each had all expenses defrayed from that fund, and no one but the class secretary knew what proportion each had given. They were for those days on a level—sons of Alma Mater, brothers.

Most classes coming back to reunions at Yale wear a costume for commencement time. It is considered that this common dress helps to wipe out inequalities. The Thirties wore this year blue blouses of workmen, to signify, it was said, how they felt themselves laborers in the thick of the world's work. The strong blue made an insistent note of color

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about New Haven in those bright days of late June, and the grizzled heads and thoughtful faces were more distinguished for the severity of the setting. Peter Price, driving a magnificent sixty-horse-power car, in such a blouse, in the blue-crowned, visored cap of a mechanic, was a study in incongruity.

"Saint Peter," remarked the finished and cultivated ambassador to a great court, sitting in a profound chair with his heels on the table, "Saint Peter is fooling us. Where's he got to? He's been gone one hour and forty minutes and what he's after heaven only knows."

"Likely all for your own good, Wuggie," came soothingly from the great doctor—the Beloved Physician, men called him. "Little Saint Peter's doing good deeds in the dark; that's his way. You'd better shut up and keep cool, or you'll have apoplexy; you're getting powerful fat."

"I'm not fat at all, Molly Allen," growled his Excellency. The distinguished heels came down. "I'm going to find Saint Peter. He's up to some deviltry, and we'd better trail him. Who'll come?"

A dozen blue blouses poured out of the front door.

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Lazily they strolled in a long, erratic group up the diagonal walk across the green, past the three churches and into College Street. Arm was linked in arm; hands were on shoulders; they were more unconscious, more careless to the seeming than the grave lads in their scholars' caps and billowing black gowns, the men of this year's graduating class, whom one met as they swept, alert, serious, from one responsibility to another. These older men in their workingmen's blouses, covering shoulders which were holding up the nation, these iron-gray men, lounging up College Street, smiled a little wistfully at the black figures swinging past, at the untired eyes, solemn to-day with this great business of graduating. Such as these had they been on that day in June thirty years back; such as themselves would these become when thirty years should be gone. "Good luck! A happy voyage! God bless you!" the gentle half-smile of the old fellows in midocean said to the youngsters as they hurried past, setting their new white sails. But the youngsters did not notice.

"Where's Saint Peter?" demanded the ambassador, halting his blue squad.

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With that the senator wailed suddenly as they stood, eleven strong, in College Street: "Oh, little old Saint Peter—hurry up."

As if in answer, a mountainous touring-car swept around the corner of Chapel Street. Behind the wheel was a small man of fifty-odd, in a blue blouse, in a mechanic's cap, blue-crowned, visored. At his side a dried-up, tiny countrywoman, in an apologetic black hat, sat stiffly. A purple ribbon was around the hat, and dusty, artificial violets on its brim. A clean, brown calico dress went with it, and a worn and patient but spirited old face. Under the queer hat one saw gray hair strained back and screwed in a knot; life had few frills for this farmer's wife. A large basket of eggs was held in her lap. Peter Price drew up at the curb.

"Mrs. Ryder," said Saint Peter, with great courtesy, "let me present Judge Whalen and Mr. Cutting and Dr. Allen and Mr. Pendleton; and Mr. Ellsworth and Judge Arbuthnot; and Mr. Secretary Loomis, and—see here, fellows, that tonneau holds five, not fifty—and Senator Butler and Mr. Garden and Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Digby."

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The blue-bloused regiment closed, bareheaded, around the little old woman.

"Pleased to meet you," said Mrs. Ryder happily, as she bowed at each name. And one felt that she was pleased to meet one. Mrs. Ryder would have been, with a chance, a famous hostess. "Are you young men comin' back for your fust meetin'?" she snapped out, quite in the spirit of the game, in her quaint, sharp, old New England voice.

And the "young men" roared at her unexpected little joke. Not at all shy was Mrs. Ryder, but enchanted with the situation. To the ambassador, inquiring, she explained how old Whitey and the buggy had broke down as they come along with her eggs, and how Saint Peter had rescued her with his chariot of fire. Saint Peter looked shecpish. Would they guy him, or wouldn't they?

"Better climb out now," he threw back to the mass-meeting in the tonneau. "Mrs. Ryder and I must get to market with our eggs."

"They're perfectly beautiful eggs," reflected Jimmy Pendleton. "I need some eggs. What'll you sell them for, Mrs. Ryder?"

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"Let me in!"

"We all need eggs," rose in chorus.

"How much, Mrs. Ryder?" demanded the president of the R. V. & St. M. Railway.

"Wal, they're some dearer than last week," hesitated Mrs. Ryder.

"Yes, yes. Much dearer. I think I noticed they were two dollars a pound," suggested the United States senator.

And jeers arose from knowing ones. "They don't sell eggs by the pound, you poor old idiot. Two dollars a box," corrected Mr. Secretary Loomis, and Mrs. Ryder shook with laughter.

"Eggs is sold by the dozen," she stated.

"Of course. I knew that sounded queer," agreed Jimmy Pendleton. "Two dollars a dozen it is. How many dozen?"

"I couldn't cheat you young boys," said Mrs. Ryder. "Eggs is twenty cents."

"Apiece," stated Pendleton firmly.

"No, *sir*," responded Mrs. Ryder as firmly. "A dozen, ef you please."

"But not such eggs," said the doctor. "See, boys, what a lovely color these eggs are."

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"We couldn't take them under fifty cents a dozen," said Jimmy Pendleton.

And Mrs. Ryder's New England conscience was carried by storm, and the total sum of fifteen dollars travelled from various pockets to her ancient leather purse.

"Now, I'll do some tradin' at the store," she announced with perfect confidence in their interest.

"You run along with your eggs to headquarters, Saint Peter," ordered the ambassador, "and we'll wander back and meet you." And the big touring-car had glided away.

Ellsworth, among the others through this episode, contributing his share, had yet felt himself an outsider. To all of these men the dollar given the old country woman was less than nothing; to him it was an item. As he realized what this difference stood for, he felt himself of another world. There were men among these far from rich, but he was the only one who might not throw away a dollar. And with that a rush of despair came over him. Why had he come? Why had he let Margaret persuade him? He must go back and face a life doubly hard be-

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cause of this taste of care-free life. Nothing had happened which could help him; nothing would happen. Margaret's eyes would ask, and he would not be able to meet her eyes. He felt physically sick as he thought of that. No one had spoken of his work except in general terms; he had shrunk from details because he had no record of work accomplished. There had been a glow of happiness in seeing the remembered faces, in hearing the old voices; they had been glad to see him, friendly, quick to give him his ancient place of honor among them. In the rush of the first days, in the levelling atmosphere which the blue blouses created, he had forgotten till this moment that these were successful men; that he was that grim thing—a failure. The kindly farce of the old woman and her eggs waked him. Not one of "the fellows" was poor as he was poor. Even Jimmy Pendleton—but, Ellsworth reflected, what did he know about that? Jimmy at fifty-two was the natural development of Jimmy at twenty-two, short, mild of face, carefully dressed, chubbier; his shoe-brush mop of black hair replaced on top by a shining baldness. There was a half-deprecating air about Jimmy

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which seemed to tell of a career not too glorious; it was comforting to Ellsworth.

Yet even Jimmy had tried to pay the old lady two dollars a dozen for thirty dozen eggs. Sixty dollars! Ellsworth, sauntering across the sunny green, bit his lip. How many years was it since he had spent sixty dollars thoughtlessly? When he and Margaret were married there had been enough; they had not worried when his models had taken large sums and had not returned them. But now there was no money even when its return would be certain. He thought with a pang of his flying-machine, the long-sought sure thing, doomed to lie idle till some luckier man should invent one like it and win fame and fortune. How "the fellows" would have patted him on the shoulder if he had had that success to bring to the reunion! It was cruelly unjust; he was torn with keener suffering than he had felt in all the years before.

By now the party had turned into the big house, where a blue banner hung out with the legend in white letters: "Headquarters of the Class of —." Blue blouses poured from rooms to meet them; voices

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and laughter filled all the place; Saint Peter was back, and he and his eggs were the joke of the moment. Ellsworth shot through the gay crowd and made his way to a little smoking-room. No one was there. He dropped into a chair by a table; his arms stretched out, and his head fell on them. Down and out. The men's laughter rang through the hall. Why had he come? What could these men, with their full lives, their honors, and their large affairs, care for a bit of wreckage washed among them by a chance wave from the lost sea of boyhood? He would go back to the woman who loved him and whose life he had filled with disappointments, and carry to her this disappointment more. Down and out.

"Johnny."

He started angrily and stared up at the man whose hand was on his shoulder.

"Jim! How you frightened me! I'm deadly sleepy." He rubbed his eyes, where tears were. "I'm not quite fit, and I dropped into a chair—" The words trailed off.

But Jimmy Pendleton was looking at him as he would have let no man but Jimmy Pendleton look.

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He was searching into his soul, without pretence of doing otherwise.

"Johnny, old boy, get it out of your system. We didn't room together three years for nothing. I know something is on your mind, and I know you'd be better if you could talk it over with a man. You know I'm to be trusted."

Across the torture that wrung him it seemed that a strong hand had laid a check. The twist of the rack had stopped; slowly, as he stared into the face of the man beside him, dim things that looked, far off, like hope and courage and peace, stirred out of the dark of his consciousness. Jimmy Pendleton's hand was on his; it was Jimmy's face he saw, but it was a transfigured face. Jimmy might be fat and short and bald, but how had it happened that one had never before seen the strength in the square jaw and the keenness in the eyes, the air of power in the man? He knew in that second that here was a personality on which he might lean.

"Tell me, old chap," said Jimmy, and pressed down the weight of his steady hand.

Ellsworth told. He poured out the aches that had

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festered through sore years; the things which even Margaret had only half known. The sting of long misery washed away in the cool river of the other's understanding silence. He talked on disjointedly, easing his soul at every breathless sentence. At last the tale was told, all of it. A tale of fortune failing by a hairbreadth; inventions patented and never known; discoveries anticipated, a month, a week, by some other; years of patient experiment come to nothing. He spoke haltingly of his wife, the girl whom Pendleton had also known, of her unfailing courage; of the two dead children, of the boy who could not have his birthright of opportunity.

"I haven't been lazy, you know, Jim," he explained. "I've worked. But it does seem as if I played in bad luck. And lately I've lost confidence. Except in this last thing; I have to believe in that; it's the real thing. If—" He stopped.

"What, Johnny?"

Ellsworth put his hand in his pocket, hesitated, looked at the other man doubtfully. The truth was that he had kept a small drawing of his beloved machine by him, with a half-formulated idea of

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being ready if any chance should come. Here was, perhaps, the chance. It flashed into his mind, it was a pity that it was only Jimmy Pendleton. But he drew the drawing out slowly; a thin paper with orderly, intricate lines, numbered and lettered. The sight of them made a new man of him.

"Look, Jimmy!" He spread the paper. "Isn't it a miracle that nobody has thought of this? It's the simplest thing—it's inevitable—it's sure." His face was brilliant. Pendleton bent over the paper. "You see, it's this way," Ellsworth said, and explained.

Slowly Pendleton's expression changed. What had been sympathy turned to critical interest, to surprise, to analytical study of the thin little paper. After a long pause he lifted his head. "Johnny," he said, "I'm not an expert, but I know something about it, and I believe you're right. I think you've got a big thing."

"Think!" repeated Ellsworth indignantly. "Think! —I know it. There's no earthly question that it's a big thing." With that he groaned. "Will it ever do me any good?"

"What do you mean?"

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Ellsworth hesitated. "I can tell *you*, Jimmy." He had it in mind that this was a poor man too. He would not seem to be asking for help.

"Go on," said Pendleton.

"The point is—the point is that I haven't money to make my model."

Pendleton stared at him as he talked swiftly, explaining the need of money, two thousand dollars perhaps. Pendleton, silent, stared. With that the voices down the hall were shouting a name.

"Ellsworth! Johnny Ellsworth," they were calling. "Come down and sing; oh, Johnny Ellsworth."

Pendleton's chubby face lost the masterful lines. He chuckled. "We'll have to go," he said. "I'll take this," and he folded the drawing and put it in his pocket, and caught Ellsworth's arm and drew him down the hall and into the big room where the greater part of the Thirties were gathered.

"It isn't time for lunch," the ambassador explained. "And Molly Allen has been talking medicine till we're sick, and we want you to make music, Johnny Ellsworth. Get up there and sing till you bust, please."

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Ellsworth found himself swung to a chair which appeared on a table, and a learned judge was playing "Lauriger Horatius" on the piano, and he was singing it in the lovely tenor which had never grown old, which had a subtle tone somewhere in it which gripped the souls of human beings. The men's voices rolled into his when the chorus came, and all the house rang with strong music.

Ubi sunt o pocula
Dulciora mellæ
Rixæ pax et oscula
Rubentis puellæ.

The swinging old air thundered like the diapason of an organ. And as it ended, "Give us a jolly one," the senator cried. And the judge at the piano dashed into "Dunderbeck," and Ellsworth was leading, beating time with his hand, while every man jack, he who could sing and equally he who could not, was roaring out the classic lament:

For long-tailed rats and pussy cats
Shall never more be seen;
They'll all be ground to sausage meat
In Dunderbeck's machine.

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Some of the stouter lads of fifty gasped a bit then, while the judge tinkled an interlude on the keys. Then the doctor spoke, out of a cloud of cigarette smoke which banked his chair; lounging, with his legs crossed, and his keen face thrown back, and his eyes—the luminous blue eyes which could hold, it seemed, every worth-while human expression—with those extraordinary eyes on the ceiling, he spoke out of the smoke:

“There’s one song, you fellows, which I like to think hits off our class. The words aren’t much—pretty poor,” he reflected, half aloud, “but they seem to—do. ‘Amici.’ I’d like to hear Johnny Ellsworth sing ‘Amici.’”

Instantly Ellsworth was pelted. “‘Amici’—sing ‘Amici,’” they threw at him.

The judge struck a chord; the crowded room was still. Then the beautiful voice, with its haunting under-quality, which caught at the secret softnesses in souls, floated out over the company of middle-aged men, and behold they were boys again. Very quietly they listened. The famous doctor’s eyes were still on the ceiling; the cabinet minister stared hard at



The beautiful voice, with its haunting under-quality, floated out over the company of middle-aged men.

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the window; the bishop's big gray head was bent, and his look introspective; most of them gazed at Ellsworth singing. Then the chorus came, and with a stir as if a breeze had touched all across a field of corn, the whole room blew softly, deeply, into the music.

Amici usque ad aras,

and the rest.

So they sang it, gathered back to their old altars, the men who had been friends for thirty years.

When the judge's fingers lifted from the last note there was a silence which said things none of them there could have said in words. It spoke, as a silence will sometimes, of memories and faith and loyalty. It told, as each man looked at the faces about him, carved with the tools of Time, the sculptor, the silence told of sorrow and joy, of lives each with its full measure of fighting and of pathos, but each lived by the line of straight honor, without which one does not comfortably face Alma Mater. An every-day group of American men. A country is not going to ruin at once which shows by the hundred such sons.

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"Come down, Johnny Ellsworth; you'll never sing better than that, so you'd better stop now," said the ambassador, and Ellsworth, his hand on the offered shoulder, saw the light flash in something bright on the ambassador's lashes, and wondered if it were possible that Wuggie Lawrence had been actually touched by his singing. Then they were in motion again and pouring out, a burly regiment, up the street to lunch at Commons.

There were two special cars waiting, after lunch, to take them, *en masse*, to the game, the Yale-Harvard baseball game, which takes place on Tuesday of commencement week, and is the rallying of the returning classes.

"I'll save a seat for you, Johnny. In the first car."

Pendleton called this as John Ellsworth flushed past him up the stairs, when they had come back from lunch. The writing-room was full, and Ellsworth wanted to send a word home. He ran up the two flights and began his letter. Doors were all open this midsummer day, and across the hall two maids, unconscious of him, were talking noisily.

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Ellsworth heard them without hearing the words until a name made its sharper impression, as names do.

"J. H. Pendleton," the woman said. "Yis, it's sure him. The short, fat one. That's the awful rich Pendleton. Nora McGinnis, she says last night as how Barney O'Neill he says as how he gits tin thousand a day."

Ellsworth got up and shut the door. Jimmy Pendleton. Of course. Even Ellsworth had heard of J. H. Pendleton, the financier. But he had never thought of his old chum as such a person. Nobody had told him. Everybody had taken it for granted that he knew. Jimmy Pendleton! And he had been patronizing him as in the college days, when he with his music and genius and good looks was a great man, and roly-poly Jimmy did not count. Suddenly he remembered their talk before lunch. He had given his confidence; he had uncovered his poverty, his need of money. His face flushed. He remembered that no word was said as to helping him; he thought, with bitter illogic, that friendship ceased at the point where effort came in. It was pleasant, this class feeling, for those who had prospered; for the

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unlucky it did not exist. The rich man had listened, and then had been glad to end the subject by carrying the other off to sing songs. Down-stairs the voices surged up louder, and little by little died away. They were gone to the game. This afternoon's events were the culmination of the reunion of the classes; but he could not go. He stared out into the tree-tops; his half-written letter fell to the floor; minutes went by and rolled into half an hour, an hour. He did not stir. An hour more he sat there, sinking ever deeper into unhappy thoughts. Then his misery focussed suddenly into a push of despair. He would not meet them again; he would go home. Hurriedly he began to pack.

There were two trolley-cars to take the Thirties to the game. Jimmy Pendleton saved a seat, but as Ellsworth did not come he got out and went through the second car.

"Anybody seen Ellsworth?" he asked.

Nobody had. Then the car started, and he rushed back to his own place. Out at Yale Field things moved rapidly, yet even there, as the blue-bloused Thirties formed in procession, Pendleton cast a

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glance about even then for Ellsworth. He had a word which he was anxious to say to him. Coming out on the car he had sat next the great engineer; he had taken out Ellsworth's drawing.

"What do you think of that, Digby?"

And Digby had studied it while the car shot through the sunshiny city and the uproarious crowds. He lifted his head at last, and turned and searched till he found a man two seats behind, the Secretary of War.

"Pass this to Loomis, please," he commanded the men between, and spoke across: "Tom, you'd better get that thing for the government. It's Ellsworth's. It's a go. Look at it."

And Loomis had looked, and laughed. "I don't understand a word of it," he had thrown back, "but if you say it's a go, that settles it. Where's Ellsworth?"

The question repeated itself to Pendleton marching down Yale Field. "Where's Ellsworth?" he wondered over and over. A vague uneasiness disquieted him through the bright turbulent afternoon, but it was not till he found himself in the midst of the mad

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dance all over the color-starred field, celebrating Yale's triumph, that it came to him, with that unreasonable certainty which boys call a "hunch," what had happened. Something had upset the man, and he had not come.

"Great Scott!" thought Pendleton; "it wouldn't surprise me if he had taken a train."

With that he knew that he must find him. It was hard to miss being with "the fellows" when they marched down the street together behind the class banner to make their call on the president; he cared very much that his voice should not be part of the ringing shout which would send up the name they all delighted to honor in the Yale cheer for the president of Yale. But somebody had got to see to Johnny Ellsworth.

He brushed an automobile as he left the grounds and, looking up, saw friends. "For the love of Heaven give me a lift," he begged. "And drive fast. Important business. I've got to get to town."

So that the sea of people had hardly begun to trickle back into the city when he was landed in front of headquarters.

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"Mr. Ellsworth here?" he demanded of the servant who met him.

"Just gone, sir."

"Gone? Where?" threw back Pendleton.

"Couldn't say, sir. But he had a dress-suit case. Perhaps he's took a train, sir."

Pendleton whirled. He looked about for a taxi, for anything to take him to the station; everything had gone to Yale Field. The servant, watching, understood. "Mr. Price's car, sir—" Pendleton vanished to the garage. In three minutes more he was whirling toward the station. In five minutes he was dashing through the archway to the tracks. A train was slowly pulling out. He looked up at the car windows helplessly as they passed, and suddenly, out of one of them, Ellsworth's face of tragedy looked down at him. He caught at the hand-rail and swung on. He walked down the car and dropped down.

"Why the devil do you make a fellow run on a hot day?" he inquired, and fanned himself with his hat.

Ellsworth stared. "What's this for, Jimmy?" he said. "It's no good. I'm going."

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"Old boy," said Jimmy Pendleton, "you're going to Stamford good and plenty. That's the first stop. I'm going there, too. But do you know what will happen then?" There was a lawless gleam in the speaker's eye. He went on: "We'll get off at Stamford, and we'll catch the next train up."

"No," said Ellsworth.

"My son, I don't want talking back," answered Pendleton. "We're going, you and I, to New Haven, to Digby and Loomis, who are hot on your trail, with that picayune little paper of yours. Digby took one look and told Loomis to lose no time pinching it for the government. So Loomis is sitting on the front steps waiting for you to come and pick up your everlasting fortune."

Then for one moment the good angel was frightened, for his charge turned pale and trembled.

"Cheer up, old man," adjured the good angel. "It's good news. It's all right."

"Jimmy, are you lying?" demanded Ellsworth.

"Don't be an ass, old chap," pleaded Jimmy earnestly. "It's Gospel truth. You've arrived. I never was so pleased in my life, Johnny. Give

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you my word." In a handful of sentences he told his tale.

"But what made you stampede, you old goat?" he inquired. "I thought you were happy as a clam after you had hypnotized us with that voice of yours. What got into you?"

And Ellsworth, laughing shakily, told his tale.

"Of course, I didn't say anything definite," Pendleton said, "because I wanted you to get the start as your right, not as a boost from me. I thought of Digby at once. So you couldn't bear it that I've got money," he added, a bit wistfully. "Why, that's all I've got. I haven't any music, or looks, or genius, or any boy, or"—his voice broke on the little word, but he went on thickly—"or any Margaret."

There was an odd silence for a second, and Ellsworth slewed about and looked at him. Pendleton's commonplace blue eyes met his with a look not commonplace, a look defiant and tragic and lonely. The blind was down and the soul of the man was at its windows. Ellsworth's gaze was a question. Pendleton answered.

"Yes," he said, "that's it. I loved her. Nobody

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else, ever. But of course you won out. And you've had her. And you think your life has been hard. Fool, Johnny Ellsworth. Me, I've had millions—and nothing else. Millions aren't particularly cosey to live alone with."

Ellsworth's hand was on the other's now. "I never knew," he said, stammering the short words.

"Well, you know now," said Jimmy Pendleton, "and if you grudge me any fun I can get out of being a millionaire, you're a devil. That boy of yours. *I'm* going to send him to Yale; *I'm* going to take him abroad; I'm going to—oh, damn."

"What?" Ellsworth laughed.

"Why, you'll be rich in six months. The boy won't need me."

"You shall go halves in the boy, Jimmy," the other spoke brokenly. And then, in a flash: "There's a man in the class I must find now, and I don't know who he is."

"What do you mean?" Pendleton asked.

And Ellsworth told the story of his coming to New Haven. As he finished, staring with a new passion of affection at the bold head and unclassic

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profile turned from him to the flying landscape, he felt his pulse leap and stand still. In that second he knew.

"Jim," he said, "it was you."

Pendleton turned his head and looked at him.

"I suppose you'll want to pay me," he said sadly.

Ellsworth, quite careless of the hundred or so people about them, put his arm around the other's shoulder. "Never, Jimmy," he said. "You'll never see a cent of that money till your dying day. So give it up. And I'll never thank you. I—I can't."

"Go to thunder," remarked Pendleton savagely. And then, after a pause: "Wouldn't you have done it?"

"Margaret said that," Ellsworth threw at him. "Margaret said it would be selfish not to take it. She said that the man who did that thing in that way was heavenly. That's her word, heavenly."

There was no answer, but the slow red which spread to Jimmy Pendleton's bald head showed that he heard.

"I thought I had no friends," Ellsworth spoke a moment later. "I thought you fellows were kind-

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hearted, but would draw the line at taking any trouble."

"Johnny," said the other, "I want you to cut out that. It's poor. It's cheap. Don't be a conceited ass and think you're the only man with decent feelings. The cockles of your heart warm up when the class is concerned, don't they? You'd go a long way for one of us, wouldn't you? All right, then; why shouldn't we be as decent as you? We are; we're pretty fond of each other, and you're one of us. Moreover, you ungrateful chump, you're a special one, for that voice of yours gets us where nothing else can. Nobody gives a hang, except to regret it for you, if you've pulled off success or not. That's your damned self-consciousness, don't you know. And look here, Johnny, it's nothing new to say, but the world is full of friends if you'll hold out your hand and take 'em. Most people are kindly; they're only hesitating for fear you'll snub them, just the way you're hesitating. It's such a foolish waste of energy to be always on guard against a lot of well-meaning good souls. When we get back to New Haven to-night just look at the fellows with

A M I C I

new glasses—try rose color. See a friend in each one of them; he's there all right."

"I'll do anything you say, Jim," said Johnny Ellsworth. "I believe in one man now for good. I didn't know a fellow could have as good a friend as——"

"Oh, shut up," said Jimmy Pendleton.

There is a celebration at Yale the night before commencement day which turns the campus into a stage-setting of an unearthly play. The scenery is an orgy of light and shadow; the music is a whirlpool of bands and voices of men. The townspeople are barred, but around Phelps's archway they gather by hundreds to watch the classes march through. For all over New Haven that night are class dinners, and from the dinners, which are early, the classes in costume march in procession and, carrying torches, pass into the campus. By nine or ten o'clock alumni are congregated there from all over the world, of all ages, from the lads who graduated three years back to gray-haired men who went out from college forty-five or fifty or even more years ago.

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Around the edge of the campus are small tents, each forming a casual headquarters for a class, over a keg of beer. The bands play by turns or all together. The men sing as they march; the place is sulphurous with the reek of torches. In orange blurs against the thick air torches flame out, a dozen torches, a hundred, spotty, dancing on the smoke-filled atmosphere. The atmosphere is pinkish; the windows of the buildings about flash red reflections. The quiet elms stand above this turmoil and rustle in the June night breeze.

"Welcome back, boys of mine," they seem to say. "You are mad with play to-night, but so were your grandfathers sometimes; so will be your grandsons. Come back to me always and play, always safe, always boys, under my branches."

And the pink smoke and the flaring red brightness lift to the branches, and the light shines on the under side of the leaves, and, against the absolute blackness of the night above, the million leaves of the campus elms have the look of carvings in the roof of a limitless cathedral.

The runaways had just missed at Stamford an

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up-bound train and had waited a long time for the next. When they finally landed at New Haven it was eight-thirty in the evening. They had dined en route, and Pendleton was in the blue blouse and cap which he had forgotten to change in his rush after the escaping Ellsworth. They stopped at headquarters to leave Ellsworth's bag and to let him get into the class costume. Then, through the delirium of the town, the staid old New England town gone mad with color and uproar of two thousand "boys" of all ages, they hurried to College Street. In the tunnel of Phelps's archway Jim Donnelly, Yale policeman, friend of every Yale boy for uncounted years, opposed his authority to trespassers, let pass the rightful lords of the campus. He honored the late-comers, as they forced their way through the crowd, with a short nod.

"Better hurry up; the Thirties are at it," he admonished them.

Over the wall of the buildings one heard not a sound in College Street; even in the archway one did not hear. As the belated men stepped into the campus the noise burst on them like a clap of thunder.

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Bands played, lights flashed, brilliant figures wove and interwove, men's voices filled all the air. Through the kaleidoscopic crowd a man might thread his way, but there was no empty space in the campus. It was pandemonium let loose. With that, one caught here and there a costume, a face, which one knew. Then, as they stood peering, out of the smoke and darkness, out of the mad uproar, coming to them as if out of a wood, was the head of a column of marching men. And the men wore blue blouses. The Thirties—his class—his friends. By the knowledge of the friend beside him he knew that. They came on, cheered, challenged, greeted now and again out of the waving, changing crowd, marching steadily along, the workmen of the nation.

And as they came, suddenly, by a miracle, the bands all stopped playing at once; there was a moment's lull, and one heard individual voices in the half silence. And then their own band, the blue-bloused band of the Thirties, broke into music; an indeterminate chord, and it swung full into the familiar rhythm of "Amici." The foremost men were at Phelps's archway by now, and somebody

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shouted "Johnny Ellsworth," as they saw him and connected the song with his singing of it that morning. And behold, all along the line they were calling his name, as if they knew, as if they welcomed him back to hope and life and undying friendship.

Ellsworth, dizzy with happiness, took the torch that "little old Saint Peter" thrust at him, and fell into line beside a fat, short, bald-headed man whose face shone to him like the face of an angel. Digby and Loomis were ahead; he had met their smiling eyes, and he knew with a choking gladness that they knew that he had a right in this column of efficient workmen; that he had not come with empty hands to Mother Yale; that he, too, brought his offering of honorable work to lay on her altar. He could not find his voice; but the ambassador, turning, threw back a word.

"Sing, you devil," he ordered. "What are you good for, Johnny Ellsworth? Sing."

And with that the voice came, and above the others, clear and sweet through all the others, it lifted suddenly, with its undertone of words unsaid, of things men never tell, of friendship eternal. The

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strong tones of the world-worn men followed that wonderful voice, and tears shone in some eyes as they sang, not knowing that the man who led them was sending up a thanksgiving.

So the Thirties marched about the campus, with torches flaring and bands playing and the classes shouting, and Ellsworth's voice led them singing "Amici."

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THERE was consternation in the great offices of Marcus Trefethen, for the chief had given an order that could not be understood. It was a sentence of twelve words, but its result, carried out, would be the sacrifice of more dollars than might be calmly contemplated. Beside infinite further consequences—throwing away, for instance, the glory, now almost in reach of these offices, of seeing their head the richest man on earth; that was a probable result if the twelve words went into action. It is easier to knock things to pieces than to build them. A great fortune assured, a great place in the financial world won, a future tremendous enough for a Dumas romance lying a few steps on—and the man who had done the work was tossing these immensities from him like playthings. What did it mean? Three men skilled in affairs, in touch with the delicate

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pulse of business life, bent their heads together and discussed it. Friday the policy of the office had been in the full vigor of its unhurrying, unrelenting swing. Saturday the chief had been restless, and had gone away and left things in a plastic form which needed his master-touch—an action out of character. And the first thing on this Monday was the extraordinary order. As long as they dared they discussed it, Compton and Barnes and Haywood, the three who stood next the throne, and at length, not over-eagerly, Compton knocked and went into the inner room of the great man and closed the door. He emerged five minutes later with a slight dizziness in his air. He answered the inquiry of his associates' attentive silence.

“It's so,” he said. “The order is to be carried out. He's gone clean mad. ‘All negotiations as to the Southwestern road to be stopped at once.’”

In the inner room a man sat at a desk littered with the crisp sheets of a large mail, and stared out of the window, down over a wide landscape of jutting roofs and soaring sky-scrappers, over a harbor filled with shipping, and a broad quiet ocean. He

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was a big man, with a look of bygone athletic form; his face was lined, and every line meant accomplishment; his mouth was set now as if he were this moment engaged in something whose doing called for force. He drew a breath, and spoke aloud.

"It's done," he said. "Thank the Lord it's done. Compton and the lot think me insane; but they can't undo it now. Thank the Lord it's done." Then he dropped his head into his hand and, gazing once more across the brilliant volcano of the feverish city, across the water-city of masts and smokestacks, his eyes rested on the sea. With the crystal-clear, unwavering, and rapid consideration which was his greatest power he reviewed events; he followed up a clue which Compton and Barnes and Haywood had missed. Clearly as if it were a business affair he reviewed the time—but fully he did it—no moment of the three days' crisis was forgotten. For an hour he sat so, withdrawn from the whirlpool in which he had been the master-swimmer, which flowed about him yet.

On Friday at ten there had been a short meeting of the directors of the Imperial and Western Rail-

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way; seven men present had decided in half an hour a few questions which would affect twenty thousand. The Southwestern Railway, covering much of the same country, willing or unwilling, was to be consolidated. Unwillingly it would be, for it was an old road, with a large clientage which could be held in spite of the new Imperial, and the routes differed enough to make both still useful. That was the point. If there was money to make, why should not the Imperial merge the Southwestern and make it all? There was a large mortgage on the Southwestern, and Marcus Trefethen held the bonds; the Imperial and Western was richer; they could afford to lower their rates, forcing the older road to do the same; it was a question of a short time before the Southwestern would be making no money and would be unable to pay interest on the mortgage. Trefethen could foreclose—the two roads would merge. And beyond this, to Trefethen's far-seeing eye—the eye of a poet in stocks and combinations—sounded the rhythm of a greater combination, a poem in which railroads rhymed to each other, and whose metre was the swing of accumulating millions. It

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was not money he wanted—he had plenty—it was the interest of the great game which drew him, the poet's joy to fit the verse and realize the vision.

The seven men decided that there was no reason why money should be made within reach of their grasp which they did not grasp. Marcus Trefethen unexpectedly demurred for a moment. In a flash of memory it came to him who the president of the Southwestern was, and that all his fortune was in the road.

"It seems a bit brutal," he said, "to undo solid work of forty years' standing."

"It's a case of the survival of the fittest," Carroll's harsh voice answered. "Centralization makes for efficiency—this is a world where the inefficient goes under."

"The Southwestern isn't inefficient. It's a well-managed business, with a future as well as a past."

"That's why we want it," Harrington slid in with suave readiness, and the others laughed cheerfully. Carroll took up the thread.

"Don't strain at a gnat, Trefethen. You're new to this business of absorbing small corporations,

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but if you want to do large work you've got to get used to it. If you believe in evolution you must see the reasonableness. The big beast preys on the little one through nature, and you can't stop with a jerk when you get to man. We're part of the scheme. Like the other beasts, if we want to live we've got to eat small fry."

"Live!" said Trefethen, and he threw a glance around the circle of multi-millionaires, and gave a short laugh.

Van Vechten spoke. "All this is a side-issue," and his glittering small eyes ranged about. "The point is whether our railroad can afford to let the old Southwestern, with its large business as a carrier of both passengers and produce, and with the prejudice of habit in its favor, continue to exist. If we do, the Imperial can't be a great railroad. We shall not only be forced to divide profits—we shall have to contend for our existence. The Southwestern stands for equal rates, and other theories worthy but impracticable. It will bend our policy into the same lines. At this moment we are richer than they, and can force them to sell—it is lack of business

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initiative to hesitate. As to brutality, I don't take that seriously—sentiment has nothing to do with business. What reason, as reasons are known in affairs, is against our absorbing the Southwestern?" As the chilly tones fell, the men who listened saw no reason. Trefethen sighed as if he were tired.

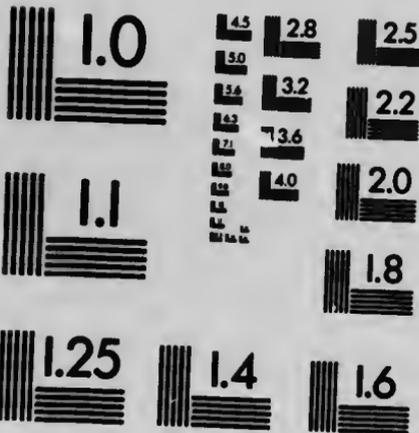
"Of course," he said. "I meant it; but I was mistaken. It's my first affair of the sort, as Carroll said, and I'm not used to it. But it's got to be done. The American Beauty rose at its finest is only obtained by nipping off buds. Well, we'll make the Imperial an American Beauty, and nip off the Southwestern to begin."

As simply as a golf club committee arranging for new greens details were settled, and the meeting ended; clerks in the great offices lifted their heads to look sharply as the members of it filed out, for this in flesh and blood was the plutocracy about which one read in the papers. The most important of them all, left alone, turned to the calendar on his desk, where his time was spaced into half-hour, sometimes into fifteen-minute divisions, to see what came next. As he whirled about on his swinging



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chair, a knock sounded at the door. Young Haywood opened it.

"The Assistant Secretary of the Treasury had an appointment at this hour, sir."

"Yes."

"He telegraphs that he is detained in Washington and cannot be here till to-morrow."

"Very well." But Haywood stood in the doorway. Marcus Trefethen lifted his head. "That's all."

"Yes, sir"—the young man hesitated. "I'm sorry to trouble you, but there's a lady here——"

"A lady?" Trefethen's tone was surprised and not pleased.

"I hope you won't blame me—she is not an ordinary person; she is anxious to speak to you."

Trefethen glanced at his calendar. Here was an empty half-hour, too long to sit idle, too short to substitute any business effectively. He might as well fill it in this way. "Show her in."

In a moment he was standing before a slim woman of forty who carried her straight figure and wore her well-made clothes with certainty, and the

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air of a person used to consideration. She put out her hand frankly.

"I used to know you, Mr. Trefethen. We went to school together—Sarah Speed." Trefethen remembered well enough. It was one of the old names in the old Southern town. "I'm glad to see you," he said cordially, stirred a little, as a reminiscence of the place and times stirred him always, and he placed a chair for her.

"I'm afraid you won't be when you know my errand," the woman said, and looked at him earnestly with wide gray eyes. Her face was troubled and sad, he noticed, for all her look of prosperity. He awaited developments. "I'll try not to keep you long," she said; "but the matter is life and death to me. I am Mrs. Ruthven now—Morgan Ruthven, the president of the Southwestern Railroad, is my husband." The man knew now, and his face hardened as he hardened his soul, and the woman saw it.

"Of course you know what I'm going to say"—her voice shook and then she lifted her head courageously. "I realize that it is awfully unpleasant

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for you, and not quite fair—you're here for business, and it's unbusinesslike to have a woman break in and beg for mercy. But it isn't just mercy—it's justice. You are going to force the Southwestern into a position where you can foreclose on it. It is a personal sort of business, that railroad. My husband's father was its president before him, and it has been prosperous and honorable forty years. It is now. They don't want to sell it. They're willing to make terms with your new road. You haven't any right to force them out simply because you can. You——”

Trefethen interrupted gently. “I know all this, Mrs. Ruthven,” he said civilly.

The woman caught her breath and made an evident effort for calmness. “I know you do. It's foolish of me to try you on that side. I won't waste your time,” she brought out quickly. “What I want to do is this: I want to tell you what it means to us, and let you see if it means as much to you. My husband is very ill. He has been in an alarming state for a week, and to-day and to-morrow are turning-points. His business is on his mind, and last

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night when I was trying to calm him I thought of coming to you and telling you how things were, and asking you to remember old days and"—her voice broke, but she cleared her throat quickly and went on in even tones—"and just be merciful. Of course you have every right—I don't mean moral—but every legal right to wipe out the old Southwestern, but you don't understand. If I go back to Morgan and tell him I've failed with you it will kill him as surely as if I gave him slow poison. The doctor said yesterday that everything depended on his being kept cheerful. Cheerful!" She laughed, half choking. "Keep a man cheerful on the rack! And there's more—the boy. He is to graduate at Yale this summer, and he's a boy who deserves—everything. The happiest, cleverest, best boy! Best at everything—away up in his classes—a hero among the other boys for athletics. But I mustn't bore you," she caught herself. "Only he—he isn't just an ordinary boy"—and she laughed a little, tremblingly, knowing well enough through her trouble that all women think that of their boys. "He isn't," she insisted prettily. This wife of Morgan Ruthven's

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was an attractive woman, Trefethen acknowledged to himself unwillingly. "I want you to realize about Carl, because then you will know how impossible it seems to take away all his chances, that he has worked toward for years. Such a good boy, Mr. Trefethen," the gray eyes glowed with the soul close back of them. "He has worked so hard and been so happy. And"—she threw this impulsively at him—"he's captain of the 'Varsity crew. You're a college man. You know what glory that means. To give all that up—graduation with honors—the great race—it's enough to break a boy's courage. It would break my heart to have him. He has been promised a trip abroad with his best friend, a boy like himself, and after that he is to have a special course in Germany. He is full of ambition and vitality. He could do anything—be anything. He'll have to give it all up—if you ruin the Southwestern. You see what it means to me—my husband's life, my boy's future."

Marcus Trefethen was uncomfortable and annoyed as the low, eager words stopped suddenly. This was all beside the question. The question was

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this—to make a gigantic enterprise must small interests be sacrificed? It had been answered. They must. That being the case, why should he harrow his soul with the details of each sacrifice? It served no purpose, his mind being made up, and it might unsteady his nerves, which he needed to keep steady. While he considered how to put things most concisely, the intense voice went on:

“Rich men nowadays, great financiers, seem to have a new standard of right and wrong. I don’t see why. I don’t see why the old standards of honesty and fairness don’t apply as much to magnates as to every-day people. I don’t see how it can make you happier, anyway. There’s no real happiness in doing wrong, and it’s wrong to crush life and hope out of people just to be richer yourself. You can’t be good and do that, and you can’t be light-hearted unless you’re good—and it’s worth a few millions to have a light heart.”

The gentle, stirring tones stopped. The woman was full of individuality and charm, and she had thrown all of it into her speech. The quiet room was as if swept with the rush of a mountain stream.

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But the man who listened meant to be the rock that such a stream dashes against to break in foam. He looked at her with cold, half-shut eyes.

"Mrs. Ruthven," he answered, "you are very eloquent for your husband's cause. If eloquence might affect a business decision of importance, in which a number of large interests are concerned, yours would succeed. I considered this view of the question before I came to any arrangement. I was reluctant"—there were other things which Marcus Trefethen was going to say in poised sentences, but they were suddenly caught from him. The woman was on her feet; color flooded her face and her hand flew out in a gesture of command as she gave a quick gasp.

"Don't go on—it's no use—I see," she said. "I'll go home now." And before he could reach the door she had opened it for herself and passed out.

Always as direct and swift as a Winchester bullet, velocity and penetration seemed to be added to Trefethen's mind through the hours of that day. Every second was full, hands and brain were

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full to overflowing, yet not for one of the busy minutes was the memory of the morning's interview crowded out. Through the voices of men who talked to him, with his intellect keyed to its keenest to follow, to lead theirs, he heard all day the soft inflections so incongruous down there in his office. He saw again and again the gray eyes as she threw out her hand, heart-broken, scornful. It stabbed him that he should have broken her heart—it stabbed him again that she should despise him. Clearly Marcus Trefethen was not yet an expert in the art of being cold-blooded; the woman had got on his nerves—he could not shake off the memory of her. It was annoying. He dined at a club with men who were not concerned in the life of his daytime, and his spirits rose, and he walked over to his house later with a light step.

“All I needed was to get out of the rut,” he said aloud and set himself to reading. And there, in pages of a book on Tibet was the face, the agonized gray eyes; the descriptions of Lhasa read with the woman's subtle accent. He threw down the book irritably. “I've overworked. I thought it was

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impossible, but I must have done it. 'This is morbid. I'll get to bed early and sleep it off.'

Out of the blackness, as he lay staring, he heard a low voice say, "The happiest, cleverest, best boy!" "Stuff!" Trefethen spoke aloud to himself. He was a bachelor—he had no boy—why should he care about a boy? Doubtless she had exaggerated the whole business. Probably this boy was as commonplace as the average—each woman thinks hers exceptional. Yet at three in the morning he turned impatiently and said words aloud to try if that might break their hold. "He isn't just an ordinary boy—he isn't!" he repeated aloud. And then for a short time he fell asleep. But at six his eyes opened and his brain searched miserably for a moment after the thing that was haunting him. Only a moment—the thing was at hand. He sprang out of bed.

"I have to shake off this possession—it's out of proportion," he said to himself and dressed, and astonished a sleepy valet by ordering his saddle-horse at seven.

But the park and the spring freshness and the

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plunging beast gave him only temporary relief. In his office at ten he felt, with almost a terror, the possession taking hold again. He read his paper sternly, missing nothing, but his grip on his own powers was not as firm as yesterday. He had a nervous dread of certain things he must see in print. There they were—Morgan Ruthven's name and the situation as it was known outside. He flapped the page over, and his eyes rested on the column beyond. Sporting' news—from long habit it held his eye—the news of the athletic world had been interesting to him for twenty-five years.

“Boat-races at New Haven this afternoon.”

The paper fell to the floor. He knew what he would do. It would straighten him out as nothing else could—he would go up to New Haven and see the races. Twenty-five odd years ago he had been captain of a famous crew, and boats and water fascinated him to this day—the charge of scene, the air, the old sharp interest in a race—these would make him over. It was fifteen years since he had been at New Haven. No one there would recognize him. This was not one of the great regattas which

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would draw crowds of people who might know him. He could come and go alone and unnoticed. He would do it. He went through his mail, gave orders, changed appointments, and at twelve o'clock he was on the train at Forty-second Street.

At two he went out from it into the New Haven station—into a throng of fresh, boyish faces—with a sense of exhilaration. He rushed for a car and hung from a strap with enjoyment in the discomfort of it. Soon some one got out, and he dropped into a seat by a pair of big shoulders which prodded into him. The owner twisted about.

"I beg your pardon," he said in a frank young voice. "I'm afraid I'm taking up too much room, but I'm wedged into this crack on the bias, and I can't help it," and the two laughed together.

There was an irresponsible gayety in the air, and Trefethen found himself catching it. This friendly, honest-faced boy, with his enormous, inconvenient shoulders, pleased him. He fell to talking—asking questions about the new buildings, about the regatta, the university. Surprised, amused, he felt the old enthusiasm of Alma Mater rising in him. He

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was a Yale man—this lad was a Yale man—the brotherhood asserted itself—for years he had not had this feeling. Past the green, serene with its three churches set like oases in its broad expanse, they shot; past rows of New England homes straggling with a dignity which money does not achieve into Whitney Avenue with its wide lawns and fine old houses, crowned with the great sweep of the Hill-house place, and its dominating, pillared mansion. And about there the car jolted and stopped. Looking ahead, there was a line of other stopped cars—a block forward. By slow degrees the passengers got out, and studied the case, and speculated.

“Let’s walk,” said the boy. “It’s only a mile.”

And Trefethen, with a flattered sense of being officially taken into the guild of the able-bodied, swung out by the side of his new friend into a gay stream of people headed for Lake Whitney. His sponsor had gathered him under his wing with the simple, unconscious air of an older brother, which, to the man used to dictatorship, gave a piquancy to the situation. It was pleasant, if funny, to be looked after in this kindly way.

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"My name is Richard Elliot," said the lad, without preface, and gave his year, and turned his brown eyes consideringly on the older man.

Trefethen hesitated. Not to return this frank confidence would be ungracious, yet his name suggested himself too much just now throughout America to risk telling and hope to be unidentified. He compromised.

"My graduation is a quarter of a century or so ahead of yours, I'm sorry to say." He smiled. "And my name is Lord"—and spoke truthfully, for this was his unused middle name.

At that moment the lad's coat swung open, and Trefethen saw, pinned on his waistcoat, an Alpha Delta Phi pin. From some atrophied muscles sprang a throb which astonished him. Out flew his hand, the boy's eyes met his, and their fingers slid into the fraternity grip.

"Why, this is bully," spoke the youngster joyfully. "I'm awfully glad I met you. I wonder if there's anything I can do to make you enjoy yourself. Tell you what"—he went on in a burst—"ginger! I'm glad I thought of it—come out on the water

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with me, will you, Mr. Lord? I've got a canoe, and my side-partner's sneaked—can't find him. Anyhow, there's plenty of room, even if he turns up, if you'll sit tight and part your hair in the middle. Are you used to boats?"

Trefethen smiled. "That was my business when I was in college."

"What, were you on a crew?" the lad asked, his eyes bright with interest.

Vanity betrayed Trefethen suddenly. "I was captain of the 'Varsity crew of my year," he stated, and then felt alarmed to see the impression.

Elliot stopped short, quite casual as to halting a long procession back of him. With that he gave his own knee a sounding slap.

"Ginger!" he exploded. "Ginger! Hullygee! and I never suspected. I might have known you were something with that build," and he glanced over Trefethen's figure searchingly. "Nobody has that look without its meaning something. Ginger!" he murmured again with no sense of monotony, and swung on, gazing sidewise admiringly at the embarrassed Trefethen. "Why, this is simply great,

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Mr. Lord," he addressed him. "We must have you over at the boat-house to meet the men—maybe you can row on a veteran crew—I don't know how that is—that's not my line—but anyhow they'd love to meet you. Lord—Lord," he reflected. "Don't seem to remember the name—but the crews are not in my beat, as I said—they'll place you fast enough at the boat-house. What's your year?"

With that Trefethen realized that his incognito was in peril. "It won't do, Mr. Elliot," he said firmly. "I'm tired and came out for a lazy afternoon, and I don't want to meet people, even Yale men. I'm not up to it. I'll be delighted to go out in your canoe if it won't inconvenience you, but I'm a back number, and would only be in the way at the boat-house."

"Back number nothing," responded the boy earnestly. "Of course they'd be proud and glad. Yale men don't shive their chaps who've won laurels for them. Did you win, by the way? What class were you?" he demanded.

Now Trefethen's crew had gained an historic victory, and to give his class might place it and him.

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He did not want to be placed. He had an uneasy feeling that the multi-millionaire Marcus Trefethen would lose this unique comradeship which the obscure graduate Lord had found. This afternoon he had no use for his millions and his powerful name.

"Don't pin an old bald-head, young man," he argued. "Don't you see I'm ashamed of my age?"

The boy drew his brows and looked surprised, yet the glory of a crew-captainship overshadowed this exhibition of human weakness. "All right," he agreed; "but I'll look you up, you know. What difference does it make, anyway? Did your crew win? You can tell me that, Mr. Lord, and that's the point."

"You bet we won," Trefethen threw at him emphatically, like another boy.

"Hooray for you!" said the youngster, and laughed for pure love of Yale's greatness, and with that they were at Lake Whitney.

Girls and young men shifted in and out through a scene of gayety. Gray-haired men, men in the prime of life, and not a few older women with pleased faces to be there, thronged the landing-steps, and em-

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barked every moment in boats of all sorts. And in every mouthful of the spring air Trefethen drew a breath of that clean and happy out-of-doors' enthusiasm, of forgetfulness of people for deeds, which is the inspiration of right athletics. In five minutes, Elliot, serious and business-like over his responsibility, was pushing his canoe from the dock with a well-handled paddle, and Trefethen sat facing him in the bow. He realized so the tremendous development of the young figure as, his coat off, the big muscles worked through a thin silk shirt.

"You must be interested in something muscular by the look of you," he said. "What's your specialty?"

The frank eyes dropped. "Oh—I'm not so good as I might be at anything," he answered, and his manner was confused. He went on quietly: "My stunt's football, but I'd like to do it better than I do."

"Some failure to make good, poor lad," the older man thought to himself, and said aloud, with friendliness, "That's too bad—you're a strapping fellow. I should think you'd be strong at athletics if you

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really tried. But I dare say you make it up some other way. Probably you're a fine scholar."

The boy laughed. "Oh, no. Well, I'm not a positive disgrace to the family, but I haven't made ΦBK by a good bit. Oh, no, I'm afraid you wouldn't call me a search-light as a student. I'm afraid I'm better developed on the physical than the mental tack—can't be good at everything, you know. At least most can't. There's only one fellow I know in Yale who's all 'round first-class, and he's a miracle." The brown eyes flashed sudden fire. "Gosh!" the lad shot through set teeth. "Gosh! I wish I had the killing of that man!"

Trefethen looked at the irate youth in surprise. "The miracle?" he inquired, smiling. "Do you want to kill the miracle?"

"No; oh, no." Elliot's responsive smile did not come. He was too stirred. "Not him—of course not. He's the finest chap in Yale University—the pride of the whole class. He's a peach. Why just let me tell you, Mr. Lord, what that fellow is: He made ΦBK, he was on the Junior Prom. Committee. He made"—the boy hesitated and spoke low—"he

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made Bones. He's good enough for the tennis team, and he could have been on the football team, and he's captain of the 'Varsity crew. *You* know what that means. He should have been here to-day—and he's gone. And the Harvard race in June will have to do without him. We'll lose it, likely, because of him. He's gone—gone!" The boy hurled the word at the man.

"Where has he gone—how?" the other asked eagerly, carried away by the speaker's intensity.

The paddle dipped in water for two liquid beats before he answered, and then it was with an evident effort for self-control. "It makes me so hot I can hardly talk about it," he brought out in repressed tones. "But you're a good sport, and square and all that—you'll appreciate how we feel. Last night at the training table the captain had a telegram and a special delivery. His father has been ill, and his business has all gone wrong, and he's—ruined. Just plain that. And when they were certain of it, yesterday, he got a lot worse at the news, and they were alarmed and sent for Carl. And the money's all lost, you see, so he can't come back. It's a darned shame!"

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the lad brought off losing his grip on himself again. "I'd like to have that man, that captain of industry, that robber baron, who's got Carl down and out, at the end of my fist"—the great young hand shot out, clinched. "It's Marcus Trefethen—the Marcus Trefethen, you know—and if I got within ten feet of him I'd beat his bloomin' brains out." The man in the bow, eight feet away, gazed thoughtfully at the speaker.

The canoe had worked up the lake; far away beyond the bridge was a stir as if those there could see the first crews of the first race coming; dozens of boats, gay with boys and girls and talk and laughter, lay below, beyond them, but at the turn where the canoe floated it was quiet. There was deep silence.

"It's all his work. He's a thieving, cold-blooded monopolist," the boy went on angrily. "He doesn't care how much flesh and blood he chops into hash to feed to his great fortune. He doesn't care that Carl's father's railroad stands for forty years' solid, honest work. He doesn't care that wrecking it is going to kill Mr. Ruthven—that Carl's got to give

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up his career and grind for bread and butter—all that's nothing."

The vehement voice stopped; the boy was out of breath, and the man felt a necessity to put in a word. "There are usually two sides," he said. "Possibly Trefethen may not be free to stop the workings of a great affair—there are many men concerned in such a business. And perhaps he may not entirely realize the suffering entailed." He wondered at his own tone, at his desire to conciliate. Why should he care how a college student judged his conduct? But he cared.

The boy's eyes, gazing up the course, questioned the distance. His big shoulders stiffened to alertness. "They're coming," he announced, and a twist of the paddle set the boat sidewise so that Trefethen also could see. "Ginger, they're coming fast! It's the Columbia freshmen against ours—golly, I hope we smear 'em! We lead—see—gosh, we've got a good lead!"

Garnished with strange interjections, the pleasant, well-bred young voice went on in staccato sentences, and Trefethen, still thunderstruck by the bolt that

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had been launched from the blue at him and all his works, watched the play of excitement on the unconscious face. The clear eyes followed keenly every movement of the rapidly nearing crews; they glowed with joy as the Yale boat forged ahead; they darkened tragically as the rival shell crawled up on it. It was a spirited scene and the impersonal rush of interest all about him carried the man out of himself and into the bright flood of enthusiasm. Suddenly he found himself cheering madly, waving his hat as the blue coxswain, megaphone strapped to his mouth, howled hoarse encouragement to his men—as the crew of Yale swept past and first beyond the finish stakes. How glad the boy was—and how glad he himself was! When had he had such a day?

“Hooray for Yale!”

He shouted, and laughed as he heard his own voice. He caught a long breath and drew in a mouthful of sentiments—sport—fellow-feeling—the game played fairly—he nearly choked with the unfamiliar taste—but he liked it.

The first event was finished. “Rain,” young Elliot announced, turning up his face. “We’ll put

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in under the bridge till it's over. I'll hurry, so we'll get there before the holy-poly."

The canoe flew in under heavy stone arches only just in advance of a crowd of others. Everybody knew his friend, Trefethen remarked. There was a shouted word for him from almost every boat which scurried in for shelter, and the boy responded with ready friendliness always, yet also, it seemed to the older man, with an unconscious air of being somebody. A rowboat with two students came bumping alongside, and one caught the stern of the canoe and pulled in to it. "Here, you, Dick—you can't take all of the roof, if you are a great man," he threw at Elliot.

"Lots of room," said the boy cheerfully. "I want to present you to my friend, Mr. Lord. Mr. Selden—Mr. Van Arden," and two hands gripped him heartily in spite of the inconveniences of the situation. "Mr. Lord was captain of the 'Varsity crew of his year," Dick Elliot hurried to explain, and there was instant deep respect in the newcomer's manner. "Won't go to the boat-house. He's tired—doesn't want to be fussed over," he forestalled their sug-

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gestions, and they met this with a cloud of protestation. He ought—the men would want to see him. It wasn't right for Dick Elliot to keep a good thing to himself.

"Ought to get you two out of conjunction, anyway," Van Arden remarked in a half-shy, eager, boyish manner. "Two captains in one canoe are overallowance!" and Trefethen looked inquiringly at him and then at Elliot.

"Why, he doesn't know," Jimmy Selden burst out. "Mr. Lord doesn't know that Dick Elliot's the great and only captain of the football team! Holy smoke! But they make 'em ignorant down in New York!"

And Trefethen—railroads and combinations entirely overshadowed—was deeply confused. Certainly he should have known—Elliot—last November's victorious team—certainly. But he had forgotten the first name; he hadn't thought of such luck—he simply hadn't placed him. And the boy laughed at him as a kind and modest emperor might laugh at an obscure subject unaware of his greatness.

"Tell you what," he flung at them, "if Mr. Lord

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is game, what do you fellows say to coming to feed with me at Mory's this evening?"

"O. K.," spoke Selden. "We'll come, anyway."

"No, you don't," responded the host promptly. "This is a party for a distinguished stranger, and there ain't going to be no party without him. Will you come, Mr. Lord?"

"My train goes at——"

"Oh, there's another one at nine, and ten—and maybe eleven," urged Jimmy Selden. "And we'll have big chops and wonderful potatoes and——"

"Look here, Jimmy, who's giving this dinner?" demanded Elliot. "Will you come, Mr. Lord? We will have those chops and things, and they're great; but it's none of his old business."

"Yes, I'll come," said Trefethen. "I never was as hungry for a chop in my life."

"Let's invite Pearly Gates, so he can sing and tell about outdoor sports," suggested Selden enthusiastically. "And you might ask Pat O'Connor—he does lovely stunts. And what about——"

"Jimmy," shouted the entertainer, "will you let me run my own dinner?"



"Two captains in one canoe are overallowance!"

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"Well, I don't know," growled Jimmy. "The last one wasn't satisfactory. You've got the cash, but I've got the sense."

And with that there was a spectacular, close race coming down the water—the rain was over—the canoe and rowboat flew out to posts of vantage, with parting arrangements for dinner-time called back and forth.

Mory's is a low, wooden, two-story house on Temple Street. Trefethen, looking at it, as he and Elliot turned the corner that evening, suddenly remembered it well. It had looked just like that, small and dirty-white, twenty-five and thirty years ago. Up five or six steps and into a side door they went. In each of the three or four rooms—low rooms, with bare floors and a few cheap sporting prints about the walls—are perhaps three heavy oblong oak tables covered thick with initials cut deep into the top. They are initials of students of Yale who for twenty-odd years have been making monuments of Mory's tables. Against the walls of some of the rooms hang other tables, initial-covered, and the legs taken off. Freshmen are not allowed in this holy

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place, but the three upper classes constantly give dinners here—little dinners of six or so, for the most part, and the boys sing college songs all through them. The especial feature of such a meal is a chop, enormous in size, and served on a plate twelve or fourteen inches across and supported by glorified potatoes. The chops and potatoes at Mory's are famous.

Marcus Trefethen looked over the array of grouped letters, many of them standing for names now on the country's roll of honor, carved when their owners were fresh-faced lads like these who stood about him, who leaned over him with a big young hand now and then familiarly, comrade-like, on his shoulder. Earnestly they studied out famous name after name to show him.

"There's a futurity list, too, you know," Van Arden spoke in his buoyant, eager way. "Here's Dickey Elliot's mark—football captain to-day, President of the United States to-morrow—who knows?"

"What's the matter with Daisy Van Arden, editor *Yale News* to-day—Emperor of Russia next week-ski?" Jimmy Selden contributed, and then,

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in an awed tone, with a big forefinger pointed to letters freshly cut, "Boys, here's Carl."

"Ah!" A sound that was half a groan came from them all in unison, and they leaned across each other's shoulders and looked. "C. R." and the year. There was a minute's serious silence as the heads bent, crowded together.

"It's a darned shame," Dick Elliot said slowly, and then: "Well, let's have some eats. Our table's this way, Mr. Lord."

Selden's suggestions, though frowned upon, had been carried out rather closely. Pat O'Connor, indeed, turned up missing, but enormous chops and marvellous potatoes appeared, and Pearly Gates was on hand with the two gifts which made him a desired dinner guest. His father's fortune having been won by Gates's Pearly Capsules for Rheumatism, it was perhaps inevitable that the heir, Alexander, should be known in college as Pearly Gates. He was a Glee Club man with a remarkable voice, and, as Selden put it, a "peculiarly ready warbler," and also he was born with a marvellous ineptness for athletics which amounted to an in-

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verted genius. It had been discovered that his *au naturel* descriptions of a sporting event threw a light on the occasion which could not be found otherwise; also it was impossible to him, though healthy and well made, to jump, run, vault, swim, skate, play football, baseball, tennis, or any known game.

"The blame thing can walk," Elliot assured Trefethen, patting the exhibit fondly as he inventoried his qualities. "Show the gentleman how pretty you walk, Pearly," he urged, and Pearly beamed from behind his glasses and kicked out affectionately. "Trainer says he's made up all right," Elliot went on. "It's just a sort of foolishness of the muscles. We're proud of him, you know," he explained. "He's the only one. There isn't such a fool in college. Pearly, which will you do first, sing or tell Mr. Lord about the football game?"

"I'll do anything you want in about a minute," responded the obliging gentleman, "but I do like to chew this chop. Let me alone just a minute. Talk about me, but just let me alone."

"Now look here, Pearly," Jimmy Selden spoke severely. "I didn't get you here to eat—primarily,

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that is. You were asked here to sing and be foolish—now do your part like a man. You're to amuse Mr. Lord. That's what I got you for."

"You got him—I like your nerve," observed the host, outraged. "Am I giving this dinner, I'd like to know?"

And the songster stuffed food placidly as war went on over him.

"In a way—in a way, certainly," Selden agreed soothingly. "But you know, Dickey, you do give the rottenest dinners when my fatherly care isn't about you. You know you do. Now you'd never have thought of Pearly, would you? And he's going to be the life of the thing in a minute. Pearly—that's enough—tune up!"

"All right," agreed the sweet-tempered youth, and pushed his chair away a bit and tossed back his blond head, and out through the room floated, in the purest, most thrilling baritone, the words of "Amici."

Our strong band can ne'er be broken;

Firm in friendship's tie,

Far surpassing wealth unspoken,

It can never die,

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he sang, and the words and the young voice went to the soul of Trefethen. Twenty-five odd years ago a lad like these and other lads, his friends, had sung that song in these low, old rooms, and in their hearts was the promise—he remembered how hotly it had risen in his—that the good friendship would last out their lives. How had he kept it? What had he to show for the years—what that was worth the price paid—good-will toward the world, belief in ideals, altruism on fire to brighten the earth? Little by little he had paid these out, each bit wrapped in its cover of happiness, for a heap of money. The boys were all gone—the men—his friends— He had not seen any of them for years. He had not taken any interest. Now he thought of it, he had no friends. His fortune had followers; he had associates—that was all. And with that all the voices together rose happily in the chorus:

Amici usque ad aras

Deep graven on each heart
Shall be found unwavering, true,
When we from life shall part.

“Hooray!” yelled Jimmy Selden vociferously.
“Pearly, you’re the shark on the warble. Now buck

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up and tell Mr. Lord how you saw the football game."

Pearly was seized with shyness. "You fellows make a fool out of me," he complained.

"No trouble at all," Selden assured him.

"It's this way, Mr. Lord," the pink-faced, spectated, good-humored songster confided. "All these chaps pretend they see extraordinary things and talk about 'em with queer words an' things. An' I don't understand an' I don't think most of the others do. So I just tell 'em about how it looks to the eye of nature, an' they think it's funny. 'Tisn't funny. I don't think it's funny. I went to that game an' I ate my sandwiches in the open, on a shelf with more like me. Humans—rows of 'em—thirty thousand. The fellows trotted on, pitter-patter, lookin' foolish, and all of us cheered—thirty thousand. Then the other fellows trotted on, lookin' foolish, an' we cheered. I knew precious little what they were doin' in the game, but it was pleasant to know they were doin' their best an' that we had an object in bein' there 's long 's they kept it up. They squatted and reflected an' then they fell on each other, an' then everybody rose and yelled and waved flags and

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Yale had the ball—or else Harvard had it. Then they scattered out, and Harvard's red-head got hurt once in so often, and then twice somebody—I think Yale—kicked the ball over the shinto shine at the end. Oh, this is truck"—he appealed to his *confrères*—"don't make me tell any more," he pleaded. And Trefethen shook with laughter as he had not shaken for years. "'S cruel to make sport of my infirmity," reasoned Pearly. "But it looked that way to me, anyhow."

The dinner was over; pipes came out of coat pockets. Elliot produced cigars for his guest of honor, and the military formation of the party "fell out" about the table; chairs grouped at every angle. Jimmy Selden pumped a profound sigh.

"Gosh! how Carl would have enjoyed them mushrooms!" he said sorrowfully.

Dick Elliot's level black eyebrows drew into a frown. "I don't know if we'd better talk about Carl to-night," he said. "It's a pretty melancholy subject to drag a visitor in on," and he turned to Trefethen. "You see, Mr. Lord," he explained, "the whole college is sore. Ruthven was popular with both

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the undergraduates and the faculty. Everybody was proud of him. He was just a miracle, you see. A whooping good fellow, a fine student, but no grind, and a tiptop athlete. The worst is the race in June. There's nobody fit for his place. Harvard will likely smear us. It's taken the heart out of the whole business. It's hard on us all."

Van Arden spoke in his nervous, graceful way. "It's hardest on Dick, Mr. Lord. Ruthven was his roommate, and he and Dick had it arranged to go abroad after they graduated this summer. It's been cut and dried for two years."

"Yes, Dickey-bird's chief mourner, all right," Selden agreed sadly, and with that he burst forth: "If about four like us had Trefethen clasped inside these loving arms, we'd fit him for a career of sausage-meat pretty quick."

"I give you my word," Dick Elliot said, and he threw back his great shoulders and threw up his square chin, and his brown eyes blazed at Trefethen—"I give you my word, Mr. Lord, that if that man Trefethen should get alone with a bunch of us to-night, feeling the way we do, I'd hate to be

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responsible for his safety. I believe we'd hurt him."

This nervous English and the muscles that loomed back of it gave the guest of honor a sensation. He pulled at his cigar, and his eyes did not meet the football captain's.

At last, "You're a belligerent young lot," he reflected aloud, and then, "I dare say the man's a beast," he brought out slowly, "but you boys ought not to be swept away by half of a question. Remember, there are always two sides—get at the other and found your judgment on knowledge—don't let personal feeling piace you."

"It isn't all personal feeling, Mr. Lord," Van Arden threw at him eagerly. "It's the big question of the day; it happens to have fired a broadside into us just this minute, and we're hurt and howling—but it's the big question we're up against—the magnates—the huge overweight fortunes that destroy the balance. You're an unprejudiced man"—and Trefethen smiled inwardly—"you know they don't play the game fairly, these captains of industry—don't you?"

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"I do not," Trefethen said with emphasis. "I know of no proof for a general statement like that. Of course there is plenty of advantage taken—you can't help that when men are human and the stake is worth while, but——"

"You can't help it?" Dick Elliot flung at him. "Of course you can help it—if you're civilized and decent. What's a standard for if not to live up to, Mr. Lord? What would you think of a football man that 'took advantage' and then said he couldn't help it because he was human and the game was worth while? We're penalized if we try that on; we're kicked out if we keep it up—and that's right. Lord, that stake looks bigger to us than a billion dollars! I don't see why fair play isn't the thing—the only thing—for a white man after he leaves college as much as before."

"Hold on, Mr. Elliot, give me a show," Trefethen protested. "I'm not advocating dishonesty. I was going to say that there are hosts of men who have made fortunes honorably—don't you hope to be rich yourselves?"

There was a short stillness, and Pearly—the

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richest—broke it. They turned in their chairs and looked at him surprised. "Seems this way to me—like th' story in th' op'ra, y' see. When the gold shines over the waters of the Rhine, an' the Rhine-maidens guard it, it's nice, an' everybody would like it. But when the ugly dwarf, Alberich, climbs up and grabs it, you feel as if you'd rather get nothin' than get it by turnin' into a beast like that."

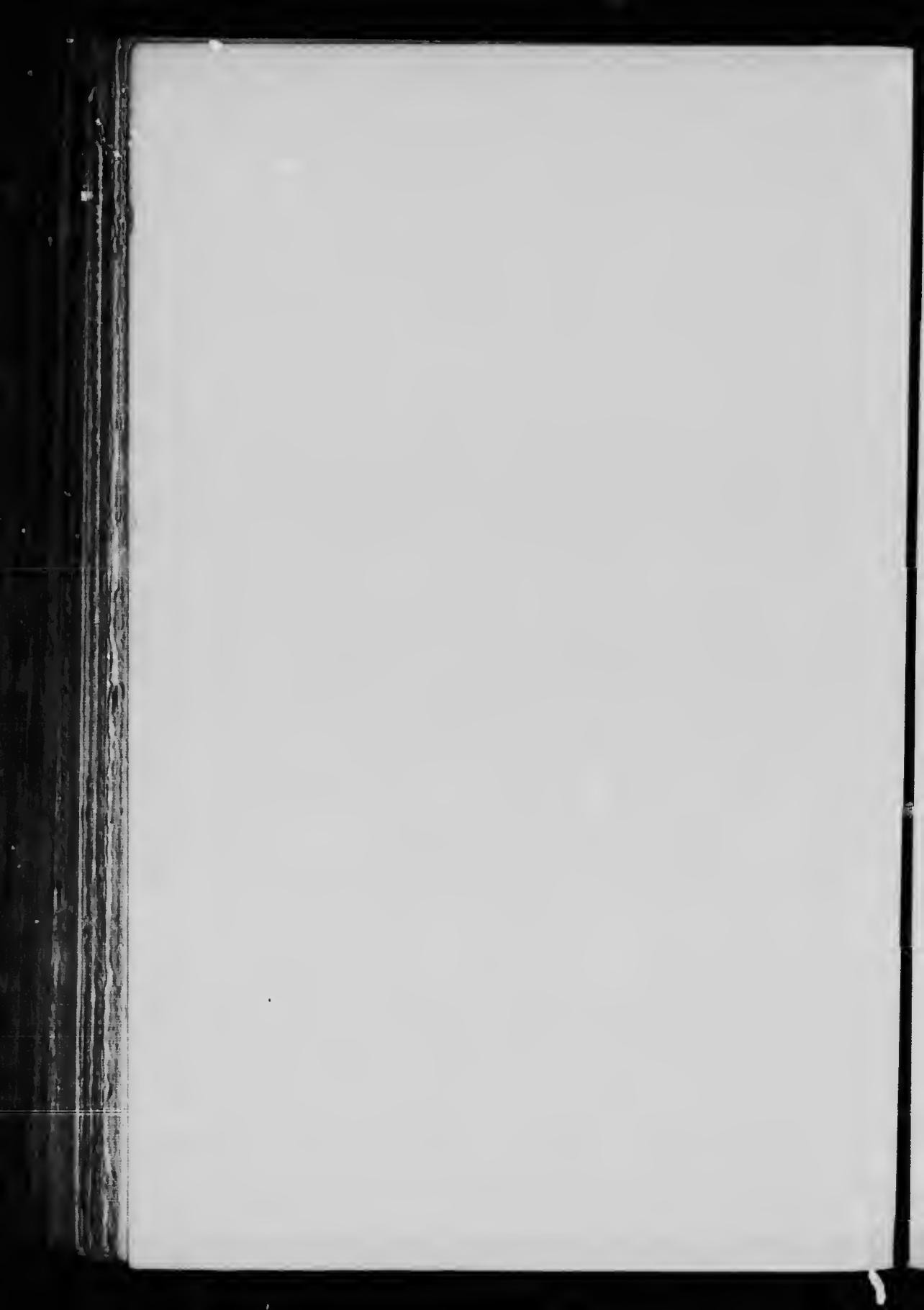
"Hooray for Pearly! He's turning into poetry," Jimmy Selden contributed in an undertone, but Van Arden's keen face was alert and serious.

"It's so, what Pearly says—he wouldn't have any money but clean money. Nor I. But there's more. Even if huge fortunes are made straight we don't want them—Americans. We don't want kings, good or bad, and we don't want plutocrats, good or bad. They don't fit us. We won't have them, either, I'll bet," he added sagely, this college editor, speaking as a man with his hand on the pulse of the people.

"You've missed some points," said Trefethen quietly. "If we didn't have variety we wouldn't have civilization. It's the men who step out of the ranks who make progress. We'd all be cave-dwellers



"I don't see why fair play isn't the thing—the only thing—for a white man after he leaves college as much as before."



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yet if some old skin-dressed fellow hadn't begun to accumulate stone knives and oyster-shells. I dare say they called him a menace to society. It's better for the world that some houses should be filled with pictures and books than that all should be hovels alike."

He stopped and considered, puffing at his cigar thoughtfully, and the bright-faced boys, sitting about the table, regarded him eagerly, respectfully.

"The race is tied together. The whole procession moves up when the leaders take a step. The hovels of to-day have luxuries the palaces didn't have once. It's competition; it's survival of the fittest that raises the standard for all. To the man fittest to organize and lead goes the prize. It's right it should go to him; he has earned it. He has created capital by efficiency. Before long his income inevitably exceeds his expenditures. A fortune is made, and it is a benefit to mankind that men of mental grasp should handle such fortunes, have the power to found libraries and hospitals and great public works; doing good to thousands, rather than that the money

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should be dribbled out in small sums among those who can't accumulate and who can't spend wisely."

Van Arden was on his feet; his tall, nervous figure quivered with intensity. "That's the optimist view, Mr. Lord; that's not the average. Here and there, one in a thousand, maybe, is a magnate who takes his luck responsibly, but mostly what you see is vulgar greed—use of privilege without genius—brutal indifference, power used tyrannically, cynical hardness to human feelings. Why, the papers are chuck-full of it. Look at our case; look at this Trefethen." He stopped and smiled a frank deprecation. "You see, I'm back to the personal view. I own up. Well, it isn't an abstract question in New Haven to-night. It's concrete as the dickens—it's Carl."

"This Trefethen," lighting a fresh cigar, did not care to smile back into the sincere eyes; he occupied himself closely with the cigar. The football captain thundered in.

"Carl!" he echoed dramatically. "Of course it's Carl, and he's an illustration of the whole mess. What sort of fairness has been shown in his case?"

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Legal, all right; but that play wouldn't go in football. Just because Trefethen & Co. think they might as well make all the money in sight. He's rolling now, but they say he's going to be the richest man in the world—a sweet ambition! Hope he'll enjoy himself! I'll bet a doughnut he isn't happy this second. I wouldn't be in his skin for a dollar a minute."

And the silent Trefethen squirmed under that skin and agreed.

"He's a Yale man," put in Van Arden reflectively.

"More's the pity," growled Elliot. "We're not proud of him. Do you suppose any of us will ever turn into case-hardened octopuses like that? Ginger! I'll make a try at least not to be a disgrace to my Alma Mater." With that, as his guest sat quiet, his eyes on his cigar, "We're giving Mr. Lord a dickens of a gay time," Elliot announced cheerfully. "Unloading all our kicks for his benefit. Now cut it out, fellows. Mr. Lord's not crazy about our great thoughts on political economy. He's no captain of industry—" All at once he seemed to realize that in fact they did not know what their guest might be. "You said you were a lawyer, didn't you?" he demanded a bit anxiously.

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Trefethen smiled. "I've been called as bad as that," he answered truthfully—for he had been admitted and had practised twenty years ago. And the boy was quite satisfied.

"That's all right," he said, relieved. "Pearly Gates, you sing."

And Pearly's lovely voice floated out as promptly and as easily as if some one had started a music-box. First an old song adapted to the football captain of the year, and all the room—but one—joined in as he led it:

Here's to Dick Elliot, Dick Elliot—

Here's to Dick Elliot, he's with us to-night.

He's with us, God bless him; he's with us, God bless
him;

Here's to Dick Elliot, he's with us to-night.

With its never-ending chorus of

Chug-a-chug, chug-a-chug, chug-a-chug—

Then, slipping effortless from one air to another, he was singing a favorite of Trefethen's own time.

Winds of night around us sighing,

sang Pearly,

'Neath the elm-trees murmur low.

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And the other voices joined in, and the deep sound flooded the room as the boys sang words about

The merry life we lead 'neath the elms,
'Neath the elms of dear old Yale.

They were out in the street now, marching together, arm linked in arm. Dick Elliot's big hand was on the older man's shoulder, and the touch was pleasant to him—so pleasant that his voice stopped in the middle of a line once, and the phalanx burst into a roar of young laughter.

"Did it swallow a fly?" Jimmy Selden inquired impudently. They were all boys together now for sure.

So, singing and laughing, the five went down the dark street to the station, Trefethen in the midst, the guest, the hero, quite dazed, and happy as he thought he had forgotten how to be happy.

"You wouldn't let us give you a real red celebration," Selden explained, as they stood on the platform, waiting. "It was fitter that a crew captain should be officially blown to a party, and that dinner wasn't much—just a snack. But we

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done what we could—I done my durndest,” he finished modestly. And Dick Elliot’s scornful “Huh!” came out of darkness.

“Did we give you the time of your life? Do you like us?” Jimmy investigated further, and Trefethen laid a hand on his arm.

“You’ve given me the best time I’ve had in twenty-five years,” he said. “And I like you a lot.”

“Well, we like you; you’re the right sort,” Van Arden’s quick tones threw back frankly, and with that Pearly broke easily, sweetly, into

He’s a jolly good fellow
As nobody can deny.

And the others chorused it with ringing notes. And as the train moved slowly out—Trefethen standing on the platform, watching his friends with intent eyes, with a new sense of loneliness—Pearly Gates’s thrilling, clear music rose again in “Bright College Years,” the other voices instantly lifting to his.

The seasons come, the seasons go;
The earth is green or white with snow;
But time and change shall naught avail
To break the friendships formed at Yale

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they sang. And the train moved faster, and the boys stood in the half-light of the station, arms around each other's shoulders, leaning on each other, singing. And the train drew away.

On the 27th of August the *Celtic* sailed from Liverpool for New York. As the land of Wales melted into clouds a young fellow with conspicuous, broad shoulders walked aft and fell into conversation with a man who stood watching the fading earth-line.

"I never can take any stock in the ship till the land's clean gone," the man said. "It will be gone in a few minutes now." He glanced about the deck as if the next interest were awakening. "A crowd on board," he said. "Quite a lot of celebrities. Have you noticed the passenger list?"

"No," answered the boy politely, but a bit absent-mindedly.

"There's Lord and Lady de Gray, and a French marquis—I forget his name; and a Russian prince—I can't pronounce his. And there are several big Americans. That's Trefethen over there—Marcus

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Trefethen, the capitalist." He nodded across the deck where a tall man stood alone, smoking and staring out at sea.

The boy turned. "Marcus Trefethen? I'd like to see him." His eyes searched. "Where?"

"The tall fellow with a cigar—right where you're looking." The gaze changed to bewilderment, and with that there flashed to his face an astonished delight. "Marcus Trefethen your grandmother!" he threw at the man, and with a leap he was gone.

"Mr. Lord—why this is great! You haven't forgotten me—Dick Elliot—the races on Lake Whitney last May. Yes—I didn't think you would." Trefethen's hand hurt with the grip it got.

"So you and young Ruthven had your trip, after all?" he said five minutes later.

"Golly! Did we!" responded Elliot with enthusiasm. "Never had such a bully time in all my life, and Carl's as happy as a king—his father all right, his two years in Germany arranged, everything going his way. The finest chap. I wish you knew him! Wasn't it queer, though, about that

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old Trefethen, the octopus? Nobody understands, but he suddenly just took the clamps off, and buzz! the wheels went 'round. The Southwestern Railroad came to, and is going like a queen, and Mr. Ruthven was well the minute he heard it—pretty near dead he was, too. Carl came back to college with howls of joy, and he rowed the race, and we smeared the Harvards, and the whole thing went like a book. What do you suppose happened to old Trefethen?" he shot at the other. "Lost his mind, didn't he?"

"Old Trefethen" puffed at his cigar. "Hadn't heard of it," he said tersely.

"Well, I'll tell you one thing, Mr. Lord. I feel differently toward that old galoot. Since the Southwestern business I respect him. I don't understand, but I swear I respect him. I've read every scrap about him in the papers, and I've formed an opinion. It's my idea that he's decided there are better games than being the richest man in the world. He's certainly thrown away his chance for that, by what they say."

"He certainly has," the other responded, as one

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having authority, but the boy did not notice. A flash of amusement lit his face and his words flashed after it.

"Do you know, Mr. Lord—that's queer—I'd forgotten." The hurrying words fell over each other. "You were pointed out to me as Trefethen this minute. That's how I came to see you."

The man knocked his cigar ash into the sea. "Curious," he said quietly. "It's not the first time, however—I look like him." He went on: "Tell me about yourself. What are you going to do when you get home?"

The bright face grew serious. "Well, Mr. Lord," he said, "I'm in bad luck. Not the worst, for my people are all right, thank Heaven—but it's bad. My father's business—he's a steel man—is in poor shape, and it's about inevitable that he's got to fail. If he could raise a hundred thousand he could tide through, but he can't do it. It's too much for the small people, and the big people won't risk it—and he can't ask them. So. They wanted me to stay over with Carl and finish out my six months, and I could, for the trip is off money that was left me.

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They said they'd rather have me, and I'd only be in the way at home, and all that. But it seemed to me that if the governor was in a scrape I'd better go and stand by him. Even if I'm not good for much at first, I might help brace him up. Don't you think I was right?" he asked wistfully.

"I do, indeed," the other answered with emphasis. And then slowly, staring at the earnest face: "I wish I owned something like a boy to stand by me in time of trouble." A quick color rushed to Elliot's cheeks.

"If you mean that—you don't know me much—but if you'd let me—I'm not a lot of good yet, but I'm trustworthy. I'll stand by you, Mr. Lord."

It was very boyish, but it went straight. So straight that Trefethen did not speak, and the lad went on eagerly: "Looks like you were in a scrape this minute, from the cock of your eye. Is it money? All right. Here I be. Just use me for a battering-ram or any old thing, and I'll take charge of you and the governor together."

At that Trefethen found his voice and his hand fell on the huge shoulder. "You're adopted," he

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said. "Just remember that. But I don't need you just at present—not that way. I'm doing rather well financially."

Suddenly he drew back a step, and put his hands in his pockets and stared at the boy quizzically, a slow smile coming in his eyes. "You're a dear lad," he said, and his voice sounded strange to him. "But you're an expensive luxury. That afternoon at New Haven cost me five million dollars down, and Heaven knows how many more by this time." The boy stared, amazed. "I don't grudge it, you know. What I got for it has paid, and will. I got a new point of view and a sense of proportion. I got a suspicion that what men want millions for is happiness, and that millions don't bring it; I got a startling and original impression that the only way to get anything out of life is to live it for other people; I got the thought that service and not selfishness is the measure of a man's value, and I got—oh, I got this thing rubbed in with salt and lemon juice till it smarted like the devil—I got the idea that to play the game fairly is the first thing required if you mean to be a man at all."

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The boy gasped. "Who are you?" he stammered. "Wait a minute. I was just going over the edge of a precipice. I'd have slid down pleasantly—a long way down—and I'd have wallowed in gold at the bottom, and it would have been a mighty cold, hard bed, too. I'd have been miserable and lonely, with half the world envying me, after I'd got there. But there were two or three strings tied to me yet—and they were lying up on God's earth above the precipice, and you boys got hold of them and yanked me back. Great Scott, but you yanked manfully!" he said, and laughed and shook his head at the memory. "It wasn't your political economy—I'd read things something like what you said. But I saw myself through your eyes—honest eyes. You had nothing to gain or lose, and you gave me your sincere thoughts—and you gave 'em from the shoulder, you'll allow me to say. Jove, how you roasted me! A spirit that I'd forgotten about was in every word, and I caught it, and I'm trying to keep the disease, for I believe that, from a practical point of view, it's the spirit that will bring a man peace at the last—and all along."

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"Who are you?" Dick Elliot demanded again in a frightened voice.

"I think you half know," the other said. "I'm Marcus Lord Trefethen, and I'll never be the richest man in the world, and I thank Heaven for it. Don't hate me, boy—don't be afraid of me, for your friendship's important to me," he went on. "You remember what you said—you'd stand by me. I need you now." And the young face brightened and smiled frankly at him.

"Ginger, I'll do it, too!" he said. "You're worth saving. You can't phase me just by being a bloated bondholder, Mr. Lor—Mr. Trefethen."

"That's the sort," said Trefethen gladly. "And as you belong to me a bit—adopted, you remember—you're to take that hundred thousand to your father from me. We'll send him a Marconi that will stagger him."

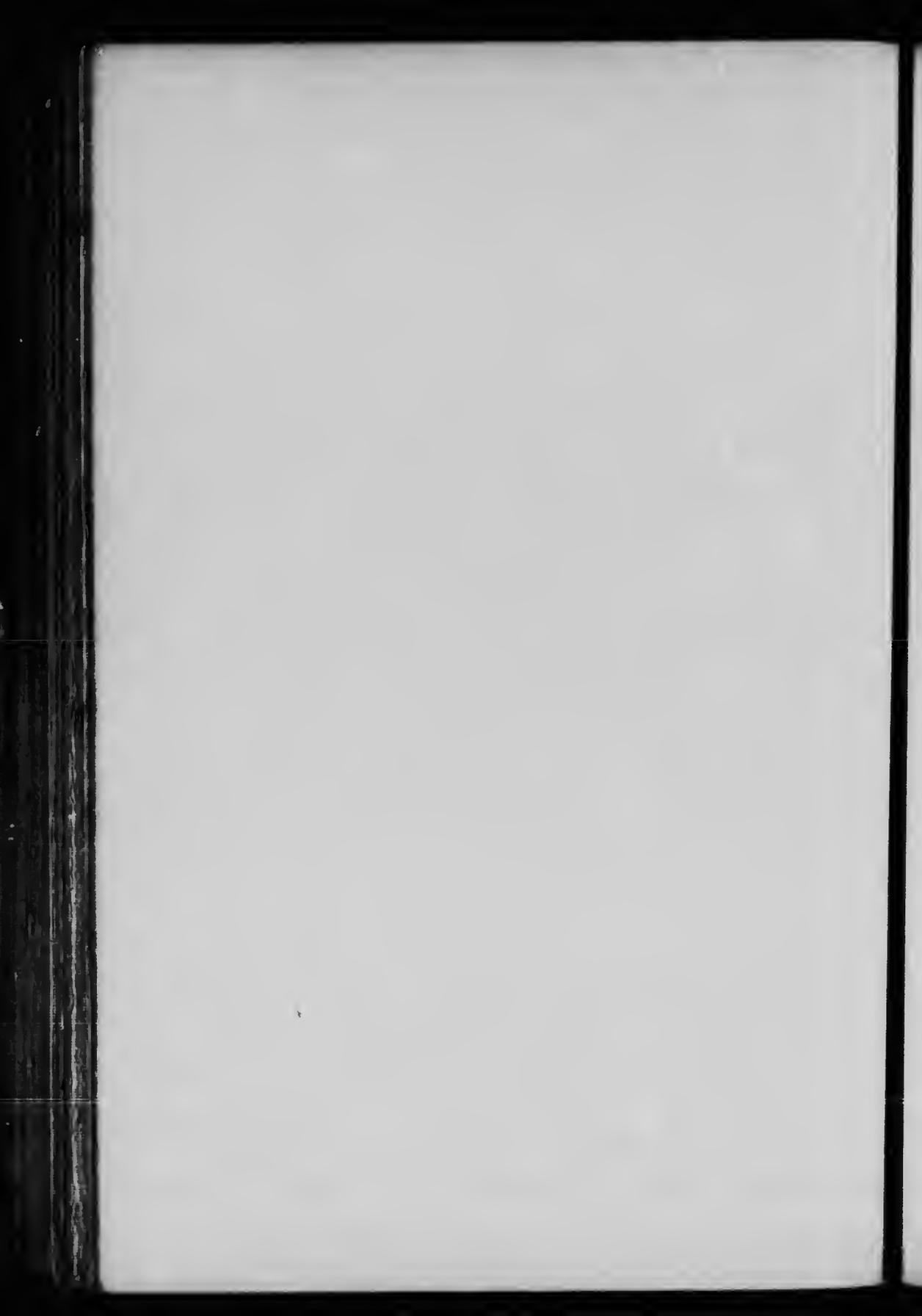
Elliot gasped again. "Oh, no—I can't do that—I wouldn't have told you," he stammered.

"Come, Dick, don't be a jackass," advised Trefethen. "It's business—I'm lending it to him—I'll skin you both yet." And then, as he still hesitated,

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with wide troubled eyes on the great man's face, Trefethen put out his hand and found the football captain's fingers, and twisted them into the fraternity grip—and the old college boy smiled at the young one. "Brothers, aren't we?" he demanded. "You've done a lot more for me than I can do for you," and with that, a flash of misty mischief coming into his eyes. "'By ginger,'" quoted Marcus Trefethen, "let me 'make a try at least not to be a disgrace to my Alma Mater.'"

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CAPTAIN FITZHUGH told me this story as we sat in the last seat of the last car of the Empire State Express, west-bound, and flung off the line of the Hudson River Railway from the reel of the gilt-iron observation-car just outside. Misty mountains lay on turquoise sky, cotton-wool clouds hung over the broad silver of the river; patches of vivid green—yellow-green of juicy grass, gray-green of shadowy willows, black-green of pine-trees—shouted aloud of the spring. "There's the old Point!" Captain Fitzhugh said suddenly, breaking off a sentence to say it.

The low mass of the West Point stables lay gray across the river, and beside it the round-arched end of the Riding School. The Memorial Building, new and magnificent, stood higher up, and the slender shaft of the War Monument shot above the trees by the Parade Ground. A bit of the hotel showed near it. If you knew the Point you could see the whole well-groomed place through the scrap of foreground

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—the crossing paths, the sweeping drives, the big empty Parade, the row of officers' quarters that looked across from white-curtained, hospitable windows.

Captain Fitzhugh shook his head with a reminiscent smile, and stared dreamily at the fast vanishing hillside. Then it was gone, and he turned to me. "I remembered a tale of my youth in that two minutes," he explained.

"I was looking at Flirtation Walk and thinking of the blue eyes and brown that have made my poor old leather heart beat, under those trees. Then I got around to the corps, and my class, and then suddenly I remembered little Marcus. Do you think it would bore you to hear about little Marcus?" It was unnecessary to answer. He went on. "It was the worst hole I was ever in, and I used to be an expert on holes. Duncan was my wife that year—Jack Duncan of the 'Fighting 9th.' "

"Your wife that year!"

"You don't know the expression?" asked Captain Fitzhugh. "The cadets call their roommates wives." He smiled. "Well, then, Duncan was my

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wife, you see, and Hill and Carruthers were across the hall, and we four were thicker than thieves. The tactical officers had a bad time with us, for what one didn't think of another did, and the rest covered up his tracks."

"What did you do?" I asked, settling myself comfortably into my blue velvet chair.

"We raised Cain. We did all the old tricks, and a good lot of new ones out of our own mighty intellects. We kept an afternoon tea-table up the chimney all winter, not that we liked tea, but we liked to break regulations. Then Carruthers went to New York every Saturday night for months—all one winter—in civilian dress-clothes which he wasn't supposed to have. His patent leathers lived in my arctic overshoes. There was much other nonsense, but the liveliest was the little Marcus episode. It began when Hill and Carruthers were in our room one night, and we got speculating how far it was possible for cadets—for us—to go. We discussed old scrapes and suggested new ones, and finally one of the four struck out the great idea."

Captain Fitzhugh's easy tones went on, full of

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present joy of life and past whirlwinds of mischief, and as he talked the Hudson River rolled away unseen, for the tale held me. Yet the words of it are as lost as the sunshine of that May morning. The atmosphere of the post, and flavor of cadets' quarters, the West Point argot, not to be reproduced, the little touches which make local color, these could be rightly given only by an army officer and an ex-cadet. So I must tell the story as it stays in my memory—the simple tale of little Marcus.

I could see the four soldierly lads, in their gray uniforms, as Captain Fitzhugh talked, in the bare, orderly room, and I could imagine how their jaws dropped as the inspired one brought out "the great idea"; for young Machiavelli, searching for a deed of daring, had suggested that they should keep a baby in their rooms for a week. The grotesqueness of the thought made it the more appealing, and at once they planned a beginning. Carruthers was singled out to correspond with an orphan asylum. His aunt in New York was interested in one and he had been there with her and remembered the address. On the instant he wrote, and his letter ran:

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"MATRON ST. WINIFRED'S ORPHAN ASYLUM.

"DEAR MADAM: My sister and I, being maiden ladies of thirty and seventy years of age——"

"Gosh!" remarked Hill. "Sisters! Why didn't you make them grandmother and grandchild?"

"What?" Carruthers looked up annoyed. "What's the trouble? Oh—well, that is far apart. I'll join the dames." He scratched a figure. "Fifty and fifty-one—that's safe, isn't it?"

"Go ahead," was the consensus of opinion.

"Of fifty and fifty-one years of age, and being very lonely alone together, as we have neither of us ever succeeded in getting married——"

"Or seldom," murmured Hill.

Carruthers glanced sternly at him.

"Desire to purchase or obtain by gift a sound, kind, and well-broken child, of about one year, light-colored preferred, with good wind and good eyes, and, if possible, no vices."

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"Send that to a horse exchange," advised Jack Duncan.

"Tommy-rot!" said Carruthers politely, and went on.

"We would like to have such child sent to us for a week on approval, and guarantee to treat it with perfect kindness and hygiene. As reference for the integrity and spotlessness of our characters we are happy to name——"

"Who the deuce are we happy to name?" inquired Carruthers despondently. "That queers it."

There was deep thought. "Here's a name," suggested Duncan. "It sounds like those two nice old ladies, the Misses Bellingham, who live down near Highland Falls. Just sign it their name and give the chaplain for reference."

"The chaplain!" The boys gasped.

"Just the thing," said Duncan confidently. "He'll give them a rattling recommend, and he's too much of a gentleman to tell them their char-

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acters are questioned. Besides, he'll never think of it again after he mails the letter. I know the chaplain. He's a good sort—he doesn't fuss."

"Proceed!" ordered the chorus.

Carruthers read aloud as he wrote:

"we are—happy to—name—that noble and uplifting—leader of—religious thought——"

"The chaplain would swat you if he heard you call him that."

"Hill," said Carruthers, with irritation, "you've done nothing but criticise and kick. If you can write better, do it. As far as I can see there's not a fault in this letter, so far. Now let me finish. Where was I? Oh—'leader of religious thought.' That's enough about the chaplain.

"Anticipating news of our sweet charge, who will become, we hope, the support of our declining years, we remain,

"Sincerely yours in hope,

"THE MISSES BELLINGHAM.

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"Now, Hill, any more criticism?"

"If the asylum people think the old ladies are going to make the child support them, they won't send it," objected Hill gloomily. "And it's not etiquettical to sign your name 'The Misses Bellingham.' Ought to sign it their front names and no title."

"But I don't know their front names," complained Carruthers.

"Might be Letitia and Mary," suggested Duncan. "Make 'em that and have the letter sent in charge of Fitzhugh, else it will go straight to Letitia."

"Why in charge of me?" Fitzhugh straightened suspiciously.

"Because you've been sitting there asleep, and haven't helped a hair, and it's time we made you," his wife answered, with severity. "Georgy, put in a P. S., and say it's more convenient, owing to the storms, to have an answer sent in charge of Letitia's and Mary's nephew, Cadet Theodore Fitzhugh," he directed the author.

Carruthers scribbled obediently.

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"Why the storms?" Hill ventured. "There aren't any storms."

"Oh, don't be such a fuss!" said Duncan. "Of course there aren't, but it prevents suspicion to give reasons, and they won't investigate our weather."

There was silence for a moment while the boys stood over Carruthers, an erect and stately young trio in their gray and gold, and contemplated his finished labors. Duncan and Fitzhugh, leaning on each other's shoulders, nodded with satisfaction, and Carruthers grinned with modest pride.

"Good work, lad!" said Fitzhugh, and slapped the scribe.

But Hill put his lips together. "Now look here!" he said; "that letter's no good."

"No good!" echoed Duncan and Fitzhugh, and Carruthers asked frowning:

"What do you mean?"

"Why, this"—Hill sat on the edge of the chair and put his elbows on the table aggressively—"it's not businesslike. It's drivel, and it's too long. You ought to talk to the point and not put on frills."

Carruthers threw down his pencil. "All right then—you do it."

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Duncan, the conservative, was wary. "Your letter's a good one, *I* think, Georgy," he said; "but we want the best possible. Hill might have something still better up his sleeve, and we'll need the devil and all his works to worry us through this. Take some paper, Mountain-tops, and see if you can beat Georgy."

Hill pulled the pad toward him, helped himself to the pencil, and wrote fiercely. Then, running his fingers through his thick black locks with an air, he read:

"MATRON ST. WINIFRED'S ORPHAN ASYLUM.

"DEAR MADAM: Please notify if you can send to address below, on approval for one week, one white child, nine months old, weight thirty pounds, no teeth, blue eyes. Adoption to follow if satisfactory. Refer to Reverend Edgar Stuyvesant, Chaplain.

"Very truly,

"(MISSES) LETITIA AND MARY BELLINGHAM.

"Care CADET THEODORE FITZHUGH,

"U. S. Military Academy,

"West Point, N. Y."

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"There!" Hill looked at his colleagues to mark the effect.

Duncan voiced the sentiments of the three.

"Won't do, Topsy." He shook his head gently but firmly. "You'd never get one to order exactly like that. What do you think they'd do if they hadn't it in stock—whittle the kid to thirty pounds? And pull its teeth? It's all right, you know, if you were ordering chickens, but Georgy's has more feeling, more what you'd expect from old ladies with a kid in their eye. I think we'll send Georgy's letter, won't we, boys? Here, you—copy it."

And Carruthers was planted with pen and ink while the others discussed ways and means.

"It'll need peculiar things to drink," said Hill, undiscouraged by his lack of success. "My sister has one that size, little Jimmie, and it drinks—let's see—something you see advertised. I don't know but it's some sort of whiskey."

"Oh, no," said Duncan decidedly. "I'm sure it couldn't. Awful way to begin to raise a kid. I'm against that."

"Well, perhaps I've got it twisted," acknowledged Hill. "But it's one of those things."

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"Little Jimmie has naps," went on Hill. "They sing him to sleep."

"Holy Moses!" groaned Fitzhugh, who was the musician. "I see myself singing this thing to sleep!"

"And they change little Jimmie's dresses afternoons, and put on clean ones—why, sometimes he's dressed as much as four times a day." Hill's face was rapt with reminiscent pride.

"Look here, Topsy," said Fitzhugh nervously; "you'd better not get the idea that this kid is to be modelled on your little Jimmie. Not much. If it comes out alive from its outing to the country, it's all we ask. Most of the time we've got to keep it up the chimney."

"Let's turn Wipes on the case," suggested Jack Duncan, the fruitful thinker. "He has kids of his own, and he can get points from his wife. He'll keep it dark, too."

For Wipes was an old collaborator in crime. He was what the cadets call a "policeman," an orderly detailed to take care of cadets' quarters.

"Little Jimmie has a crib, white iron and brass," Hill struck in, quite carried away by poetic possibilities. "We'll have to have something for our

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young one to sleep in. And toys, you know. I could write my sister for some of little Jimmie's——”

“Hill,” broke in Fitzhugh, “cut it out. You’re losing your mind. Thought you wanted to be businesslike. This infant isn’t going to live in luxury. It’s going to live, we *hope*, but that’s all. Leave your sister’s kid lay.”

Duncan, tactful as always, put in his word. “Anyway, there’s no use settling things till we hear from Mrs. St. Winifred. First, we’ll mail Georgy’s letter. Then, if they’ll let us have the kid, we’ll call in Wipes and plan our campaign with that breadth of foresight which has before led our banners to victory.”

Five days later saw Fitzhugh a widowed sojourner in his room, with silence across the hall where Hill’s and Carruthers’s steps were wont to echo. Scarlet fever had broken out in the academy, and the three, Jack Duncan, Carruthers, and Hill, were among the first to be sent to the infirmary. The cases were light, but the disease broke up the gay partnership, and Fitzhugh was low-spirited.

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As he came into his room there were letters on his table. He took them up half-heartedly and slipped them through his hands. Two bills, a letter from his mother and—he glanced at the printed words in the corner of the other envelope. "St. Winifred's Orphan Asylum." His blood ran cold. In the worry of his friends' illness he had entirely forgotten that letter of Georgy Carruthers's, mailed the morning after the council of war. He held the long envelope by two fingers, and stared at it as if afraid to open it. Then he took courage, cut the flap, and drew out a page or more of handwriting. This is what he read:

"MISSES LETITIA AND MARY BELLINGHAM.

"DEAR MADAMS: Your letter of the seventh was received and we are happy to look forward to placing one of our little ones in your care. We wrote to the chaplain, as suggested, and the response was gratifying. Therefore, as we are satisfied with the home offered, we shall not wait to hear further from you, but send by four o'clock train on Friday, in charge of an attendant, little Marcus."

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The paper dropped from the boy's hand as if a bullet had struck it, and his lips moved in wordless anathema. He sat for a moment stunned by the blow, then picked up the letter and read on.

"We send him, as advised, to your nephew, Cadet Theodore Fitzhugh."

The lad groaned.

"He is a fine child of ten months. Feed him condensed milk. It should be prepared in the following way."

Fitzhugh skipped four lines.

"This should be fed to him every——"

He skipped again. His eyes wandered down the page, and he read aloud, in a gasping voice, bits of sentences:

"His bath should be tested with a thermometer."
"Must have four hours a day of fresh air." "Sleeps every morning from ten to——"

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He sprang to his feet, dashing the letter to the floor, and marched back and forth across his room, muttering. Then he rubbed his eyes as if to see better. "What under the canopy *am* I going to do?" he groaned.

A subdued but firm knock rat-a-tat-tatted at the door. "Come in," moaned the cadet, too lost in misery to try to pull himself together, and in the open doorway Wipes stood saluting.

Wipes was a tall, ugly soldier with a large nose, a red complexion, and a wooden expression. Fitzhugh greeted him like a messenger from heaven.

"Wipes! Oh, Wipes!" he cried in a bleat of joy. "I'd rather see you than any one on earth."

"Very good, sorr," said Wipes, and saluted again. Under his stolidity was a heart much like hominy served for breakfast—as warm, as soft, as steaming with fragrant kindness. In spite of experience, such a greeting flattered him to its depths. It was five minutes before the boy's nervous statement made apparent impression on the slaty surface of Wipes's intellect. Then a smile expanded slowly

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over the hatchet face, as if a mountainside had cracked.

"Wipes, if you grin like that I'll kill you," said Fitzhugh, exasperated, and Wipes answered respectfully:

"Very good, sorr."

Fitzhugh went on. "It's up to you to get me out of this hole. It's the worst one yet, but you've never failed me, Wipesy. Now tell me what can be done? The kid's due"—he took out his watch—"oh, momma! In an hour. Something's got to be done, and quick."

"If ye'd excuse me, sorr," said Wipes, "Oi've 'n idea."

"I'll excuse you this time," Fitzhugh agreed. "Get it out of your system."

"F'r me to meet th' kid, sorr, and sind him back."

For one moment of exquisite relief Fitzhugh felt almost sentimental toward Wipes. Of course! Why had he not thought of it? He wrung the soldier's hand till the cracked-rock smile split his face again, and then he rushed into arrangements. Wipes's words were few and direct, and what he said he

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seemed to swallow back half-way out, as if with regret at the outlay. But Fitzhugh was equal to the talking. Wipes was to say that the Misses Bellingham had suddenly decided to go abroad for a year, and had given up the idea of adopting a child; that they were on the point of so writing the matron when her promptness forestalled them; the trip of attendant and child was to be paid for, so that there should be no discussion. The young man brought out some bills.

"Wipes, I'm broke, but it's cheap at bankruptcy."

But the soldier refused the money. "F'r me to sind in th' bill, sorr, whin th' job's done," he remarked half-way down his throat.

Wipes went off, and Fitzhugh watched him from his window as the ship that bore the cargo of his safety or destruction. His figure, fine and erect, swung with vigorous strides along the diagonal path that crosses the Parade, and the boy, his eyes glued on that one dark-blue spot, did not see another figure advancing to meet it, till the man stopped sharply. Then, with a jump to his pulse, he saw who it was. But why should Julia Duncan be talking to

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Wipes? However, there was no time to meditate over that—it wouldn't help to be late to cavalry-drill.

But a vision haunted him as he took hurdles with his arms crossed, and made flying leaps over his horse galloping down the tan-bark. It was the vision of a slim figure in a tailor-gown, a glory of red-gold hair gleaming under the black of her hat. That was all he had seen as she talked to Wipes, but he knew the details, the laughing face, the brilliant white, small teeth almost always showing, and the mischievous eyes with tawny lashes. A fascinating face, full of charm; and the drowsy voice, with a reedy note, like a child's voice just awakened, the quick wit, and innocently naughty ways—he remembered all that, too.

In and out through the strenuous mazes of cavalry-drill went the glint of red hair and the shine of white teeth, and the echo of her laugh. The evening was his own till nine o'clock, and "a spirit in his feet" led him to the house where she stayed, Colonel Emerson's house, looking up the river.

"What were you talking to Wipes about, on the Parade this afternoon?"

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"Who is Wipes?" demanded the laughing, slow voice, and Fitzhugh thought how pleasant a thing it was to realize a vision and an echo.

"Why, Wipes—our policeman. You oughtn't to talk to the men; they're not allowed luxuries reserved for the corps."

"Oh, you mean that bright-red soldier, Weiber—I forgot Jack called him Wipes. Why, I know him. Fascinating man! I know his wife, too. She's not just fascinating; she's always scrubbing the children, and I'm sure she's right, for they never look finished. I go to see her sometimes. That is, I went yesterday." And Fitzhugh reflected how nice it was in girls to go to see poor soldiers' families. It flashed across him that perhaps he would stroll down to visit the Wipeses some day himself, when he knew she was to be there.

Nine o'clock was removed from eight by about five minutes that evening, and his dreams afterward were empty of little Marcus and filled with a bewitching, mischievous personality. But a shock was in store for him. The next day when Wipes appeared, his vermilion face seemed longer. Fitzhugh had waited for him feverishly.

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"Is it all right, Wipesy? Did you get him off without trouble? How much do I owe you?"

"F'r me to sind in th' bill whin th' job's done," gulped Wipes.

"Isn't it done? What do you mean? Why isn't it done?"

Wipes, in throaty gurgles, told his tale. The attendant had thrust the child into the soldier's arms and jumped back on the train, refusing to listen to reason. She was not going back to New York, she was going up the river to visit her cousin—she had no further concern with the baby than to deliver him at West Point. She laughed at the idea of taking him back to the city. The train went on, and Wipes was left standing with little Marcus howling in his arms.

Such was the tale. Fitzhugh stared in horror. He gasped before he could speak.

"Wipes," he whispered, "where is it? Here?"

"Yis, sorr—me wife's got it."

Fitzhugh breathed again—how good, how thoughtful of Wipes—and he had never dreamed of this obvious plan, either. Mrs. Wipes—of course—what more natural?

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"Wipes, you're a fine fellow—you're glorious, old Wipesy!" he exploded. "Tell your wife I'll pay anything she wants—anything. Only keep it. Will she keep it? It's only a week. She will, won't she? You tell her to keep it, Wipesy."

"Very good, sorr. I'll tell 'r. She'll keep 't," the soldier answered in vocal shorthand, and Fitzhugh, trembling still, shaken with emotion, was yet relieved and grateful. Wipes turned to go, then wheeled. "Miss Duncan, sorr."

Fitzhugh opened startled eyes at him. "What about Miss Duncan?" he demanded, with dignity.

"Oi met 'r with th' kid 'n me arrms."

"Well? She knows you have children, doesn't she?"

Wipes shook his head. "'Twas tagged."

"Tagged?"

"'To Cadet The'dore Fitz'ugh.'" The name sounded like a sneeze.

"Oh!" The boy fell back in his chair. "And she read it, of course. What did you tell her?"

"Oi said 'twas yer pa's coachman's kid, sorr, th't 'd need of air."

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Fitzhugh's people lived in New York. It was far-fetched, but yet the gods were good, for they might have lived in San Francisco. Fitzhugh blessed the soldier again. "Wipes, you're a lot brighter than you look. What did she say?"

"She said how good 'twas 'f ye, sorr, t' remimber th' poor."

Fitzhugh smiled placidly and was aware of a warm feeling around his heart.

"Oi told 'r ye'd not like ut mintioned outside, sorr."

"Wipes," said Fitzhugh, "you're a born gentleman, you certainly are. Your tact is remarkable. I'll make this up to you somehow, Wipesy."

"F'r me to sind in th' bill whin th' job's done," repeated Wipes oracularly, and went.

To the nervous and lonely cadet it was a godsend that he could even partly discuss his dilemma with Julia Duncan. He longed to tell her the whole situation, but feared her teasing spirit. She would worry him unmercifully, and it might make him ridiculous in her eyes—he dared not risk that. It was not so bad to pose as a philanthropist, unintentionally of

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course. He chuckled with satisfaction at the accidental air of the discovery—of how he appeared not to let his right hand know the good his left was doing. But he must see her and talk to her about it.

The next day was Sunday, and when the cadets had formed and marched away after service, a gallant and soldierly sight, he dashed back from his quarters to the chapel door, and walked home with her. He blessed Colonel Emerson for living far around the turn, beyond the Parade—a quarter of a mile more with her was worth while.

She began talking about the leaves that were coming on the trees, the spring in the air, the misty look over the piled hills beyond the river, and Fitzhugh fairly jumped with nervousness. It would seem like ostentation to lug in the coachman's baby before she spoke of it; but here they were half-way around the square, and she was still going on about spring-time! And her eyes were dancing as if it were the best joke in the world. He wrenched the conversation off by main force.

“How is Jack, Miss Julia? Does he write you at all?”

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"Every day." She glanced up at him. "Every morning I get a nasty letter that smells like a drug-store, and every afternoon I send him a nice, clean one. I shall write him something about you to-day."

"About me?" Fitzhugh tried to be careless. "Is there anything interesting enough about me to put in writing?"

The girl's glancing eyes seemed to watch him. "Yes, indeed. I'm going to tell him how good you are." The cadet felt a dash of discomfort, and the drawling, soft voice went on. "I think he'll be surprised. Isn't it a new thing, this Coachman's Babies' Fresh Air Society of yours and Mr. Wipes?"

The cadet stammered. "I—it was an accident—I—I didn't mean any one to know about it."

"That makes it twice as good. It's wonderful that a young man should take such an interest in the poor and in children, but that you should go to the trouble of getting one up here and keeping it for—a week, didn't Weiber say? And then to be so modest about any one's knowing it! Really, that's perfectly fine of you! Shows so much generosity

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and thoughtfulness, and at the same time such an unostentatious sort of character!"

Fitzhugh wondered afterward if there was a touch of mockery in the grave interest of her tone, but at the moment he felt that he was all of that and more, and the feeling was agreeable.

"Don't," he said. "You praise me too much." And he almost forgot, in his satisfaction, the true history of that baby.

"Not a bit. I'd enjoy praising you more." Fitzhugh jumped, for a laugh came running over the edge of the sentence. "It's nothing—only a joke I thought of," she went on quickly, and so easy was her laughter always that he only smiled in approval. "I called on little Marcus yesterday afternoon, and found him a cunning rat. Don't you want Mrs. Weiber to bring him up to see you some day?"

"No—Heavens, no!" said Fitzhugh promptly, in alarm, and again the laughter bubbled over.

"You're not half properly interested in him; you ought to be trundling him about the Parade in the Weibers's baby-carriage every afternoon. You know you're responsible for that child every minute he is

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here—do you know that? You are. If he gets health and strength out of his visit, it's to your credit; but if he falls ill and dies—that's your fault, just the same."

"Oh, don't," groaned Fitzhugh. "What a thing to say! Don't say it."

"Oh, I have to—it's true," Miss Duncan responded firmly. "He doesn't look strong. But it was *very* good of you to have him up, and I'm sure I hope he won't die or anything."

Dancing eyes and white teeth joined in the smile that softened this ominous last speech, and Fitzhugh swung away down the shaded country street with a cold dislike of the innocent little Marcus in the bottom of his heart, but a very warm feeling for the innocent-seeming Miss Duncan filling all other space.

Neither Miss Duncan nor Wipes could persuade the cadet to see his charge. There he drew the line. But the horrid fact of its presence in the post weighed less and less upon him, and the daily accounts from the girl and the soldier began even to amuse him. He was planning how he could boast to the three

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lads of his skilfulness in putting the affair through by his unaided intellect. It grew to be a habit to expect, as the carpentered visage of Wipes appeared in his doorway, the report of:

"F'r me to say from th' missis, sorr, 's how's the kid's hearty."

A habit of a few days, for one morning there was silence, and Wipes's head wobbled solemnly. Fitzhugh did not pay much attention. Wipes's manner was not dramatic enough in its shading to convey a very instant impression.

"Kid all right?" asked the boy cheerfully.

"F'r me to say from th' missis, sorr, as how's the kid's awful sick."

Fitzhugh dropped his book on the floor, and the front legs of his chair came down with a crash.

"What the deuce do you mean, Wipes?"

"Croup, sorr. Crowed awful all last night. Throat's all full up. Ain't no better th's mornin'."

"Have you had a doctor?" asked Fitzhugh, with the solicitude of a fond parent.

And all that day as he went about his regulated succession of duties, the thought went with him like

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a weight of cold lead of little Marcus crowing mirthlessly on a sick-bed, and of Julia Duncan's firm dictum: "If he falls ill and dies that's your fault."

He had an engagement to walk with the girl in the afternoon, and he kept the appointment with eagerness, but for the first time failed to forget everything else in the charm of her presence. There was an impressiveness about her manner.

"He's a pretty ill baby." Her lips closed tight and the bright head nodded. "I was there this afternoon."

But she would not discuss the situation with the miserable cadet, who went back again and again from her sunshine to the cloud that hung over him.

"Don't talk any more about that wretched young coachman," she pleaded. "There are so many jolly things; what is the use of dwelling on the bad ones?"

And Fitzhugh, for all his admiration, could not help wondering if she were a little heartless. He had the latest Wipes's bulletin before he went to bed, and it was unfavorable. Little Marcus was distinctly worse. The young man lay awake with pangs

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of remorse and fear of retribution gnawing at him. When he slept, the haggard face of an unknown child and its ghastly, hoarse crowing—Wipes's word had taken disagreeable hold on his imagination—haunted him. He waited for the soldier with sick impatience, and the first glimpse of the man's face was enough.

"Wipes! Don't tell me—" His voice failed.

"Kid's dead, sorr," was Wipes's terse response, and Fitzhugh fell in his chair as if struck there by a blow.

The worst had come, probably exposure, expulsion from the academy, the shame and disappointment of his people, his career ruined before its beginning, and, worst of all, a life lost by his silly play. There seemed to be no crack in the blackness that descended upon him. Wipes was vague and unsatisfactory about arrangements.

"F'r me t' look afther th' job to-day, sorr. Don't think of ut till t'morr'r," was all he would say, and the boy was too sick at heart to press the point.

It was all he could do to crawl about from one recitation, one drill to another, and as to not think-

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ing of it "till to-morrow," as Wipes suggested—he thought of nothing else. It was a Wednesday, and that night he was to dine at the Emersons with Miss Duncan. Only one other cadet was there, and while he sang rag-time songs with Mrs. Emerson, Fitzhugh and the girl went outside, where the spring twilight was dying across river and hills and filtering through the sweeping elms which stand, like stately old officers, all along the gravelled driveways.

Little Julia Duncan looked up at the tall cadet, his white face towering above her grim and miserable in the dull light. "What is it? You look desperately ill. You hardly spoke at the table. Is anything wrong?"

"Wrong?" His voice was full of reproach. "Don't you know that child is dead—little Marcus?"

The girl dropped into a chair and put her head on her hands against the piazza-railing. Her shoulders were shaking a little. That was too much for Fitzhugh in his overwrought condition. He put his hand tremblingly against the ribbons and lace on her shoulder and it slipped down, past the short sleeve, over the warm arm, to her fingers.

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"Dear—don't cry," he said. "Are you crying for me?"

Swiftly her face lifted and a shock caught the boy as he saw the blue-green eyes full of the well-known laughter. His hand left hers with a start, and he drew himself up.

"I beg your pardon," he said. "I made a great mistake. I thought you were gentle—" The rush of his feelings drowned the sentence that tried to be restrained. "I didn't know before how cold-blooded a girl could be," he cried roughly. "I thought you everything that was womanly. I gave you credit for being sorry for a chap in trouble. But I was wrong. You're no friend to me; you're amused because I'm wretched; you think it's a joke that a poor little child has died from my fault; I don't believe you have any heart." The boy's bitterly wounded feeling was in his shaking voice.

Then looking down at her, she lifted her face to his and he saw an astonishing sight. The bright eyes, their mischievous dancing all quiet, were filling slowly with tears.

"I'm sorry you think so badly of me," she said,

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and her voice broke in the words. Then: "I'm going to tell you—Jack may kill me, but it has gone on long enough. I won't have you tortured for Jack or anybody. It's all—one—big—lie!"

Fitzhugh gasped, shivered with hope. "Lie! Little Marcus isn't dead?"

Then the laughter broke through the tears softly for a moment, and her voice was sweet as a child's as it trembled between the two. "Dead, no! Nor alive either! He's just as dead as he is alive. There isn't any little Marcus—there never was. It's all a joke of those wretched boys in the infirmary. They cooked it up among them there, and Mr. Carruthers did the letter. Jack wrote me, and I coached Wipes, and kept them posted every day. I thought it was so good for Jack to be amused. But I didn't know it would make you really unhappy. They were going further, they were going to have a mock funeral and make you come, but I told them I wouldn't help in that. And Jack said then I must keep still and not tell you. It was to be to-morrow. Will you forgive me? Will you take back those bad names?"

I think Fitzhugh, the cadet, must have inter-

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rupted Miss Duncan rudely then, for Captain Fitzhugh, the officer, stopped and laughed and would not tell me what happened next.

The Empire State Express, leaving the shining Hudson forgotten in the background, rolled into Albany as he finished the tale. He stood up to put on his overcoat, but bent from his erect six feet in air to stare outside, as the train stopped slowly.

"I should think you'd have gotten even with that girl," I reflected aloud, my mind still on the story.

Captain Fitzhugh smiled and nodded at a charming woman with beautiful bright hair who looked up eagerly at the car windows.

"I did," he said as he held out his hand to me for good-by. "I did. I married her."

