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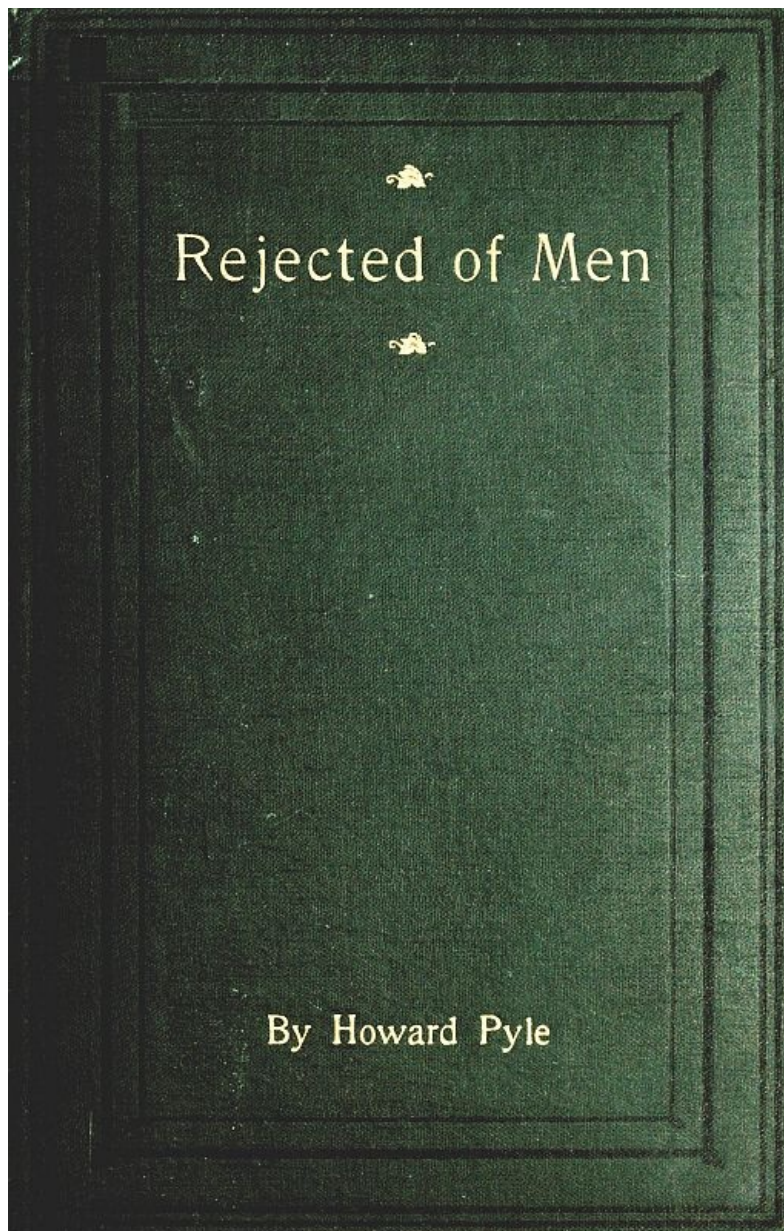
Author: Howard Pyle

Release date: September 11, 2014 [EBook #46841]

Language: English

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# Rejected of Men

## A Story of To-day

By  
Howard Pyle



New York and London  
Harper & Brothers Publishers  
1903

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Published June, 1903.

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## PROEM

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THIS is the story of the scribes, pharisees, priests, and Levites, and of certain Romans. It is intended as a phase of that divine history already told to the world, but now told from another stand-point and translated from the ancient Hebrew habits of life into modern American, so that the reader may more readily understand the circumstances that directed our actions. If it has been told aright, he may see why it was that we crucified the Truth.

We-scribes and pharisees-have been vilified and abused for nineteen hundred years because we acted as the circumstances of our lives compelled us. The fact seems to be overlooked that we were not born publicans and sinners, but upright and virtuous citizens, and that it was out of the question for us to desert our own class and to ally ourselves with those whose only recommendation appeared to lie in the fact that they were poor and lowly, or else that they were social outcasts and sinners. We could hardly be held to have been more worthy of respect if we had violated our traditions of order and of virtue to accept an entirely new code of ethics supported by such advocates; which code, if carried out, meant the overthrow of all that we held most sacred and worthy of preservation.

[vi]

The integrity of the very Church itself-the foundation of our entire system of social order-was threatened with destruction, and it was only in the extremity of our need and after all other courses of action were closed to us that we resorted to the last and sternest measure to save human society from destruction.

Surely the truth is so unanswerable as to be axiomatic, that it is better that one man should die rather than that the very laws that bind human society together should be annihilated.

Yet for nineteen hundred years we have borne the odium of having wantonly and callously performed a cruel and unjustifiable act.

Everything is in the view-point. The whole aspect of creation depends upon where the observer stands to look at it.

Heretofore these great events of sacred history have been looked upon from the point of view of that central and dominant Figure, and the great plain of the world of mankind has been seen revolving dimly and remotely around it. Our point of view-the point of view of the scribes and the pharisees, the priests and the Levites, and certain of the Romans-has never been considered and weighed in the balance.

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This is intended as a history of those affairs as we saw them, and from that view-point the divine Figure that shaped a new system that was to dominate all other systems is beheld-when seen at all-not as the pivot upon which everything swings, but as a single integer of society at large-a centre of fermentation, very distant from us-disturbing and dangerous, but remote.

For while we now and then saw Him near by, for the more part He hardly entered our lives to disturb our daily affairs until towards the last of His career.

This story that follows is intended by way of a vindication, and we challenge all scribes and pharisees of this day who read it to say if they themselves would have acted differently under the same circumstances.

The world is the world and is a very mixed quantity, being composed of good and bad in such a manner as to maintain the perfect mundane balance that God has ordained. If Herod was an unscrupulous politician, Caiaphas was a good priest; if Pilate, sitting in a high place of authority, temporized to his own advantage, the young man of great possessions who sought salvation was an honest and sincere searcher for the truth-enthusiastic and impractical, perhaps, but sincere. Such as these are a very few of the integers, good, bad, and indifferent, that go to make up the sum-total of earthly life. Such as that life is we do not make it-it is made for us; and we must obey its laws and fulfil the destiny that Providence has assigned to us. If we were made virtuous we must under normal conditions be virtuous; if we were made vicious we must be vicious; and there the matter ends.

[viii]

The world looks very big to us, and any one who dares to interfere with the nice adjustment of its affairs him we always crucify, lest he bring destruction upon us by overturning the elaborate mechanism of our social order.

In this lies our exculpation. If we crucified the Truth, we did it to save the world in which we lived.

Bearing this in mind, the reader is invited to here follow our story, which has been translated into the conditions of modern American life, and then to decide how far he can blame us for fulfilling the destiny which God ordained for us.

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## REJECTED OF MEN

## THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

WHEN John the Baptist began preaching none of us of the more intelligent classes believed him to be really a prophet forerunning the coming of the Messiah. Indeed, the better part of the world knew in the beginning nothing of his presence in its midst; nor until we began to be aware that great streams of ignorant people were pouring out of the cities and towns and descending to listen to his preaching and to receive his baptism, were we aware that such a man was in existence.

Then the public journals, those echoes of current thought and opinion, began to take the matter up, publishing longer and longer reports concerning him; commenting upon the growing excitement, the cause of which nobody seemed exactly to understand. People read what was printed and wondered what it all meant. [2]

Just what those poor people who flocked to the baptism of John expected to see or to hear—just what they expected to gain through his ministrations, it was impossible to say. If they had any real thought in the matter they did not tell to the world what it was they thought.

For those of the lower class do not talk freely to those of the upper class about their ideas. With their intellectual superiors they are reserved, suspicious, and sometimes sullen. To the trained thinker the untrained mind appears remote, and its reasonings obscure.

When, for instance, Dr. Caiaphas's assistant gardener came to that good clergyman in the middle of the week to ask him if he might be absent from work till the Monday following, and when the rector of the Church of the Advent asked the man if he were not going down to see the Baptist and why he went, he found his question confronted by just such logical obtuseness and inconsequence.

"Why, you see, sir," said the man, "I did promise Molly I'd take her and her sister down to be baptized—that is, if you can spare me, sir—and there ain't much doing just now."

"But suppose I can't spare you, Thomas?" [3]

"Oh, well, sir, it doesn't signify. I can stay, and Molly and her sister can go down themselves."

It was then that the rich, wise priest tried to get at the mind of the other man and failed.

"Why do you want to go down to the baptism, Thomas?" he said. "Don't you get enough of God's truth preached to you at home without having to go there to find it?"

"It's Molly wants to go more than me, sir."

"But I want you to tell me what you yourself think. Do you really believe that this man has any more power to forgive your sins than I have? Do you think that by baptizing you with a little water he can wash away in a few seconds all the sins you have committed for the thirty-six years of your life?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You don't know? Then, if you don't know, what is it you go for? I should think you would want to know all there is to know before you ran away from God's truth preached from His own holy word to hear what a madman in the wilderness has to say."

"It's more on Molly's account than mine, sir. The women do think a deal about them things, sir."

"But, I say, I want to know what you yourself think. You ask for three or four days of time to go away from your work, to hear this man preach. You must have some reason for doing so. Do you really believe the blasphemous assertions of this mad preacher that Almighty God, the Creator of the universe, is actually going to send His Messiah down into the midst of such a rabble as is gathered there?" [4]

"I don't need to go if you can't spare me, sir," said the under-gardener.

Then Dr. Caiaphas gave up the unequal contest. There was no reasoning with such inconsequence. It was like fighting the wind, and he did not attempt it any further.

"You may go if you choose, Thomas," said he.

"Thank you, sir," said Thomas.

It is probable that few who went to the baptism of John could assign a better reason. Dr. Caiaphas appeared to be right, and his gardener appeared to be entirely wrong. Men of to-day know that the Truth of John was true, and that the truth of Dr. Caiaphas was a mistake; but, to us, illuminated with the light of our superior intelligence, it appeared to be otherwise.

One of the journals of the day published a number of sun-pictures of the Baptist and of his disciples. Among these the world looked upon a picture of a baptism—the crowd gathered in a dense, motley mass upon the shore, the Baptist standing knee-deep in the water surrounded by penitents, upon the head of one of whom he was in the act of pouring water. Another such picture was a portrait of the Baptist himself. He was standing in full sunlight in front of a tent, and was surrounded by his immediate disciples. There was a background of the same motley crowd that [5]

characterized all the pictured groups. The central figure was the image of a singularly wild and curious figure—lean, haggard, unshaven. He was clad in loose trousers and shirt, over which he wore a rough blouse of some coarse, hairy material, strapped about his waist with a broad leather belt. His lean legs were bare, and on his feet he wore coarse, heavy brogans. His pale eyes looked out directly at you from under brows contracted in the glare of the sunlight. A tangled mop of hair was brushed back behind his ears, and a shaggy beard hung down upon his breast. One hand held a rough, crooked staff, and the other loosely grasped a shapeless hat. The pose, the expression of the face, the dress, all bespoke to the intelligent observer as clearly as the word itself could have done—madness—or else fanaticism.

The upper world looked upon this picture, commented upon it, even laughed at it; for there is something to the intelligent mind that is almost ludicrous in the irrational and superstitious religious rites of the ignorant and credulous lower world. [6]

The printed words accompanying the group of pictures declared that you had only to look upon the portrait of John the Baptist to form your own conclusions as to what was the inspiration of all the excitement then fermenting among the lower masses. They said that the sun-picture spoke for itself without the need of comment, and that the Baptist either was insane and should be placed under restraint, or else that he was an incendiary of the most dangerous character, and should be imprisoned as such according to the law.

It gave the writer an excellent opportunity to deliver a blow at the political affairs of the day. "Herod," he said, "was not our choice for subordinate governor, nor was he, we think, the choice of the better element of the community. He was placed in his position by a strange coalition of the classes and the masses, and he is now supported in power by just such a rabble as are at present gathered to hear this mad preacher's eloquence. It is very possible that Governor Herod is afraid to enforce the law against this man, for fear he should lose the support of that ignorant and vicious class which itself is the mainstay of his political power. But it is a pity that all the more conservative part of the community should be endangered by the unlicensed preaching of this madman, simply because Herod desires to succeed himself in his present position." [7]

Such words as these voiced the entire thought of the law-abiding scribes and pharisees. The logic appeared to us to be very true and unanswerable. It is only now, in later days, that the world has come to know that we were wrong, and the motley multitudes that surrounded John the Baptist were right. But what thoughtful man can reasonably condemn us for holding a position so rational as that which we maintained?

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## II HEROD THE TETRARCH

 [8]

IT is one of the paradoxes of divine operation that dishonest and unworthy men should so often be set in the positions of rulers of other men. Yet it is so. Integrity and honesty are not necessarily a passport to political preferment.

Everybody knew Herod's character. His moral delinquencies were public to the gaze of all men—the unsavory property of the entire community. The shame of his marriage with the divorced wife of his own brother stank in the nostrils of all the decent world. He was a man seemingly without any principle or aim in life except to gratify himself. Yet for years he had occupied high public position and was supported, not only by the small, dominant class who found him useful, but by the masses as well.

But, though the rulers and those in authority had set Herod up as their representative in power, they were not fond of him. So, when John the Baptist began to fulminate against him and his moral obliquities, and when the public journals began to publish these fulminations for general reading, Herod's political friends rather enjoyed the situation. They laughed at him, and even jested with him about it. They knew that he was powerless to punish the preacher, for he did not dare to alienate the lower class that so largely helped to uphold him in power. His political friends knew that he must submit to whatever attacks were made against him, and they enjoyed his helplessness and his probable sufferings. [9]

When he would drop into his club on his way home, he would perhaps be hailed with an inquiry as to whether he had seen the evening paper, and that there was lively reading in it. Another advised him to take the sheet home with him to his wife, and that she would be interested to see what was being said of her. A third opined the sauce would do instead of tobasco with her oysters. At these jocularities Herod would maybe laugh. Probably he did not much mind these attacks, nor the pseudo-witticisms with which he was favored, for he did not care a great deal about public opinion one way or the other.

But it was not so with the woman whom he called his wife. She writhed under the lash of the spoken words and the printed paragraphs with a feeling sometimes almost as of physical nausea. [10]

She was writhing now, but silently, over the evening paper which she had brought in from the library and which she was just then reading. The butler came in and lit the lamp, but she did not look up from her paper; she was too intently absorbed with the pain she was inflicting upon

herself to notice anything else.

Her daughter, Salome, sat at the window looking out into the dull twilight of the street. She sat with one foot on a hassock, her elbow upon her knee, and her chin resting upon the palm of her hand. She looked listless and bored as she sat staring out into the falling twilight. The two women were singularly alike, only that the dark, heavy beauty of the mother was merely brunette in the daughter; that the somewhat square face of the elder woman was oval in the younger; that the rouge of the woman's face was the dusky red of nature in the girl's cheeks.

The words Herodias was reading must have cut suddenly to a deeper nerve, for she drew a sharp breath that was almost articulate. Her white teeth clicked together. She made a sudden motion as though to crush the paper she held; then she went on reading again. The girl nodded and smiled recognition to some one passing along the gray twilight of the street. Then the smile slowly faded, and the listless look settled back upon her face again. [11]

There was a sound of footsteps crossing the hall, and Herod himself came into the room. He was a rather stout, thick-set man of about forty or forty-five. He wore a long mustache, the beard beneath being closely clipped and trimmed to a point. The cut of the beard and hair gave his countenance an air of quality that was belied by his puffy, mottled cheeks and the thick, red, sensual lips. Herodias looked up at him as he came within the circle of light. "Did you see this?" she said, hoarsely, holding the paper out towards him. She pointed to the column she had been reading, and her fingers trembled with the intensity of her self-repression. The paper rustled nervously as she held it out.

"See what?" said Herod. "Oh, that! Yes, I saw that down at the club. What do you read it for if you don't like it?"

"And do you mean to say you aren't going to do anything to this cursed Baptist? What are the laws good for, anyhow?"

Herod grinned. "They're good for nothing when an election's only six months off."

The woman tried to speak; she could not. "It's a damned shame," she cried out, at last, still in the same hoarse voice. [12]

Salome turned her head. "Oh, mamma," she said, "how awfully vulgar."

The mother glared at the daughter. She looked as though she were about to speak, but she only said, "Pshaw!"

There was a minute or two of silence. Herod stood with his hands in his pockets. "Was Corry King here, do you know?" he said, at last.

Herodias shook her head. Then Herod turned away and walked across the room towards the library. Just as he was about to quit the room, Herodias spoke again. "Did you get that box for the opera to-night?"

He stopped at the door and turned. "Yes, I did," he said.

"Did you leave orders for the carriage?"

"Yes; I ordered it for eight o'clock, sharp." Then he went on out of the room.

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### III

#### THE PRIESTS AND THE LEVITES

**M**R. THEODORE CAIAPHAS was rector of the Church of the Advent. It was said of that church that when the congregation were all at the sanctuary and seated in their places the building contained a representation of capital equivalent to a billion dollars of wealth. [13]

It is hardly necessary to describe the Church of the Advent, for nearly everybody knows of it; even those who do not live in the metropolis have seen pictures of it. It occupied, with the rectory, half a square of ground in one of the most valuable parts of the city. It was estimated that if the land on which it stood were covered all over with ten-dollar bills, an approximate value of the real estate would just about be represented. The church itself was an architectural triumph, within and without. It was built of white marble, carved elaborately and exquisitely; the four large windows cost it cannot be told how many thousands of dollars, and the interior decorations were all that art could make them. The church was connected with the rectory by a glazed cloister of exquisite proportions, and the rectory itself, retired well back from the street behind parti-colored beds of flowering plants, was in perfect keeping with the church. The great plate-glass windows looked out across the little lawn upon the busy street where the thunder of life was forever passing and repassing. [14]

One time the Church of the Advent was in the upper part of the town; then the flood of business had risen to it, and finally overwhelmed it and its surroundings. At the time of this story the church looked down upon a tumult of passing life and the bells clashed out their chimes almost unheard in the roar that rose up from the stony streets below. At first the ceaseless,

roaring thunder had been very disturbing to Dr. Caiaphas, but he became used to it so that he never noticed it, except to miss it in the stifled, leaden silence of the country during his vacation. The rectory was a very pleasant home, and almost any bright day one could see children playing on the lawn in front of the house (for Dr. Caiaphas had quite a large family), and occasionally the rector himself might have been seen pacing up and down the gravelled driveway-especially on a Saturday afternoon, when he was in the throes of composing his addresses for the morrow.

[15]

Dr. Caiaphas was a very notable man. He was a liberal and advanced reformer, not only in religious matters, but in political and social matters as well. Not only had he written a number of pamphlets attacking those lingering superstitions that had so long operated as a clog to check the church in its advance abreast of the progress of civilization, but he had, besides, written hundreds of open letters and papers and several magazine articles upon the social problems of the age-the labor question, the question of social vice, the pauper question, and other similar topics. His passion for attacking and reforming abuses led him even into politics. It was largely through his instrumentality that the committee had been appointed to investigate into the affairs of the police department, and great things had been looked for as the outcome.

When it is taken into consideration that besides all these wide outside works, his was one of the largest parishes in the metropolis, it may be seen that Dr. Caiaphas was an extremely busy man and an extremely useful man.

The income of Dr. Caiaphas as rector of the Church of the Advent was forty thousand dollars per annum; added to this was a beautiful home, rent free.

[16]

There was a time when the excess of wealth had been a very sharp thorn in the side of the doctor's conscience, but at the time of this story he had been rector of the Church of the Advent for nearly twenty years, and he had become reconciled to the burden of good-fortune that the Divine Wisdom had seen fit to lay upon him to bear. He lived soft and warm; he was fond of works of art and of beautiful things, and he was a great collector of rare and handsome books-of which he had a magnificent library. He raised his family with all the surroundings of luxury due to his and their position in the world; both of his sons had attended college and were then abroad-the younger finishing his education at a foreign university; the elder being an attaché to the embassy at the court of another foreign power.

It was a matter of conscience with Dr. Caiaphas thus to spend his money lavishly upon his children and himself, and he poured out his wealth without stint. He used to say, "I will not hoard what has been given me to-day for the sake of a possible to-morrow. I will trust to my Heavenly Father to supply my needs as they arise."

When Dr. Caiaphas had first been asked to assume the rectorship of the Church of the Advent, he had accepted, not without reluctance. At that time he had very high and very exalted ideas as to his mission in life, and it seemed to him that, should he accept this magnificent call, he would, in a certain sense, be in danger of sacrificing his high birthright in the kingdom of heaven for a mess-however rich-of very worldly pottage. So at first he had been inclined to refuse; then, in thinking the matter over, it occurred to him that maybe Providence had laid this chance in his path that he might take it up and so exercise his usefulness in the wider field of metropolitan life.

[17]

He sometimes wondered with misgivings whether his conscience had not tallied almost too patly with his inclination in the matter. Indeed, he would have been more than human had he not appreciated what a thing it was to be rector of the Church of the Advent. It is probable that if he had been asked to leave his church in the country, and its salary of five thousand dollars a year, and to take up an obscure church in the metropolis, say, at a salary of twenty-five hundred a year, he would not have done so, even though, in accepting it, he might have widened his field of usefulness ever so much. But, to change at once from the old Church of the Messiah to the foremost church of his denomination in the country-he would have been, indeed, more than human if he had not appreciated the significance of such an advance in his life.

[18]

In his former work Dr. Caiaphas had seen much of poverty in a provincial town, and it was with him as it was with other people in the smaller cities and communities-he did not know what it meant to be poor in a great city such as the metropolis. To be poor in a small city is altogether a different thing from the dreadful poverty of the great congested communities where rents are expensive and living dear. A man may be poor in a provincial town and yet have a comfortable home. Oftentimes his home becomes squalid and barren-it becomes bare and naked and stripped of comforts as he sinks lower and lower into the quag of poverty; but he still has room in which to move about and to live, and he still has the out-of-doors close at hand in which he may walk about and breathe the pure air. But in a great city, even those who are not really of the pauper class-even those who have work to do, and make what is called a comfortable living-live crowded together and congested in black and dismal tenement houses that fairly reek with the stench of humanity packed within their walls. This is a poverty from which there is no escape, and to which there is no out-of-doors except the noisy and dirty street with its ash-barrels, its garbage, and its refuse. This is a poverty whose recreation is to sit out upon the doorstep that leads into the dirty street or upon the fire-escape, or, in hot weather, maybe upon the roofs among the chimney-stacks and a net-work of electric wires. This is a poverty that breeds harlots and criminals as corruption breeds maggots.

[19]

For all this misery Dr. Caiaphas was in nowise to blame, but, nevertheless, when he first entered into the parish, coming, as he did, fresh from a wholesome provincial community, he felt that the condition was a crime to which he himself was somehow indirectly a party. He did not



see wherein the fault lay, nor yet just how he was responsible for it, but it was clear to him that it was cruelly unjust that he, who had never produced anything, who had never created anything, who spent his life in preaching to rich people who had no need for divine consolation, and who listened to his sermons for the sake of their splendid oratorical periods—interested rather in the novelty of his ideas than in their humanitarian import—it seemed to him to be cruelly unjust that he, doing such barren work as this, should enjoy forty thousand dollars a year and live so luxuriously while these poor men and women, who did actually create the real uses of the world, who were actually now adding to the wealth and the prosperity of mankind—should be packed together in greasy and stinking tenement houses like vermin in so many boxes.

[20]

Early in his life, as rector of the church, he had made one futile attempt to rectify this wrong to which he felt that he was himself helplessly party. “I cannot, gentlemen,” he said, concluding a speech to the vestry—“I cannot feel free to accept a fee of forty thousand dollars a year, besides my house, rent free, and to live in luxury under such circumstances. It is an injustice which I did not create, but in accepting such munificent rewards I make myself accessory to it. These men are equally human beings with myself, and betwixt them and myself, in the eyes of God, there is not one iota of fundamental difference. Not only have they the same desires as myself, but they, in the light of truth, are God’s children just as I am one of God’s children, and each and every one of them is the inheritor of a heavenly immortality equal to mine—a heavenly glory that shall, perhaps, exceed mine to come. Feeling this as strongly as I do, I cannot consent to be the instrument of such injustice and such inequality. I cannot consent to accept for the few trivial years of this life such great luxury and ease of living, simply for the pleasure it affords my bodily senses, while these other human beings have not even sufficient food to eat or sufficient clothes to wear. Therefore it is that I cannot accept any such fee as it is your pleasure to offer me.”

[21]

The chairman of the vestry was Mr. James Dorman-Webster, probably one of the richest men in the world. He smiled kindly as the minister concluded his address, and then he laughed. “I cannot see the force of your reasoning, doctor,” he said. “If you could strip yourself down to the barest necessities of life, and live upon a dollar and a half a day, I do not see in what way you would benefit these people whose poverty is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the result of their own improvidence. The truth is that you work as hard as the head of the nation, and I am sure you are as intelligent as he, and earn your money quite as well as he does. Why should you not have a salary equal to his, instead of less than his? The fact is, *labor given and wages received have no relation whatever with each other, but are merely arbitrary quantities.*” He thrust his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat as he spoke and drew out a pocket-book. Then he filled out a check and handed it to the doctor. It was for ten thousand dollars. “There, doctor,” he said, “take that and distribute it among your poor as you choose. When you find that you need more, appeal to your vestry, and if they ever refuse to give it to you, then it will be time to talk of giving up your own salary.”

[22]

It was pathetic—almost tragic—the inability of this well-meaning priest, of Levitical cast and Roman associations, to escape from under the weight of forty thousand dollars of yearly wealth that God had seen fit to lay upon his shoulders. There was no answer to be made to the practical logic of Mr. Dorman-Webster, and there was nothing to be gained by any sacrifice the rich priest could make. There was the check just donated, and there was the promise of as much more as he should ask for in reason. Dr. Caiaphas might just as well have walked down to the river and have thrown his salary into the water as to refuse to take it now. His poor would gain nothing by the refusal, and he would lose everything—even his influence over the needy of his parish—for poor people, though they resent riches, have no respect for poverty in the upper classes.

Such was Dr. Caiaphas. His was a mind of that logical, well-balanced sort to which anything like religious fanaticism or excess is, of all things, most repugnant. There was nothing so displeasing to him as religious hysteria. He was wont to say, “Does any man think that God Almighty is deaf that He needs to have prayers shouted into His ears?”

[23]

All the religious ferment attending the preaching of John the Baptist was not only distasteful to him—it was positively repulsive. It distressed him beyond measure to think that it was possible for one man like this John to so stir the nether depths of humanity that all the purity and lucidity of true faith should become turbid. It was incredible to the wise and even-minded priest that any man—be he never so poor, or ignorant, or credulous—could, in that age of light, listen to the blasphemous assertions of an insane fanatic, that God was really about to send a Son into the midst of such a turbulent and disorderly tumult. How was it possible for any human creature to conceive that the Messiah would appear in the midst of such a rabble as that gathered in the wilderness to a mad baptism? Of what use were the teachings of his twenty years of rational religion if, in a moment, his poor parishioners could so rush away from him and the pure and lucid truths of faith, trampling those truths beneath their feet like a herd of swine, in their rush to hear something that stirred their emotions and was new and startling? He had thought that the poor people in his parish were fond of him, and loved to listen to the words of wisdom he was commissioned to speak. Now he felt that they cared nothing for him, and that all the words he had spoken to them had fallen upon their minds as water falls upon the sand, leaving it as parched and barren as before.

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Then one day he sent out addresses to all the prominent clergymen of the different denominations of the city, inviting them to a conference at the rectory of the Church of the Advent to consider what was to be done to counteract the growing disorder.

Some few of those to whom these addresses were sent did not respond, but nearly all who



received invitations to the meeting were present. Dr. Caiaphas was a very notable, even a famous man, and the invitation was a compliment to every divine who received it.

Nearly all who were present were strangers to the place, and it was an interesting study of human nature to see the different ways in which the different men bore themselves. Those who were not strangers perhaps assumed an air of intimate acquaintance with their surroundings. One young man, for instance, a fashionable clergyman of the day, who had not been in the house a half-dozen times, stood with his back to the fire smoking a cigar with an air of perfect and authoritative ease. "What did you do with the little Rembrandt that used to hang yonder, doctor?" he called across the room. [25]

The doctor laughed. He understood the workings of the young clergyman's mind. "Oh, that hangs in the upper hall now," he said.

Others who were strangers to the place gazed about them, at the cases of beautifully bound books, at the walls covered with paintings and water-colors, some with a sort of half-furtive curiosity, others assuming a studied and obvious air of indifference to the richness and exquisite taste of everything, others evidently honestly impressed with the superabundance of beautiful things, one or two ill at ease—some few even overawed at the magnificence of their surroundings.

The meeting resulted in a rather rambling sort of talk; there were other things spoken of besides John the Baptist—mostly general topics of the same sort—discursive discussions of various heresies. The relation of the classes was talked about, and even politics. But still Dr. Caiaphas held the discussion pretty steadily to the topic in hand. Some who were present regarded the matter as serious enough; others were inclined to permit themselves a sort of clerical jocularly concerning it; he himself tried to throw into the talk the weight he felt it deserved. Maybe a series of addresses from the pulpit would be the better way of reaching the attention of the people, he said. Such a series of addresses might be delivered simultaneously in all the churches. "Oh, if it's a matter of preaching a sermon," said Mr. Munjoy, a minister of another denomination—"if it's a matter of preaching a sermon, why I'm right there. To tell you the honest truth"—here he whispered broadly—"I'm sometimes so close pushed for a theme to preach about that I'm only too glad to have one suggested to me." [26]

Some of those present laughed. Dr. Caiaphas smiled faintly. "I don't think that we are exactly in search of a theme to preach about," he said. "I take it we are rather called together here to consider some mutual effort in defence of God's truth."

Mr. Munjoy laughed and helped himself to another cigar.

"What impresses me," said Mr. Bold, a young clergyman with strong revolutionary tendencies, "is that we shall never be able to treat this subject as we should treat it unless we see with our own eyes what is being done at these baptisms, and hear with our own ears what the man has to say. I don't believe in sitting in a room and imagining how a thing might be, and then combating the notion. For instance, I was reading your sermon reported in the *Aurora* this morning," he said, addressing himself directly to Mr. Lovejoy, a mild-mannered, fashionable clergyman, "about the lost woman, you know. It impressed me you were talking about something you imagined rather than about something you had really seen. Now, did you ever happen to study intimately the life of a real harlot?" Mr. Lovejoy looked ineffably shocked, and a sudden silence fell upon all, while Mr. Bold, in spite of his self-assurance, felt uncomfortably that he had expressed himself unfortunately, and that he had not been understood. "What I mean," he said, "is that unless you really know something about what you attack from the pulpit, I fail to see how your attack is going to amount to anything. Now, I wonder how many of us have heard this man preach." [27]

"I'm sure I've not," said Mr. Munjoy. And there was not one of all of them who had thought it worth while to go to John the Baptist to hear what he really had to say.

"Then," said Mr. Bold, "how are you going to attack what he has to say if you don't know what he does say?"

"There's a good deal of truth in what our friend says," said Dr. Caiaphas, after a moment or two of thoughtful silence. [28]

"And how would you propose to approach the matter so as to deal with it knowledgeably?" asked Dr. Kimberly, a minister of still another denomination.

"I don't know," said Dr. Caiaphas. "I'm sure the conference is open to suggestions."

"How would it do to send down a committee of five to interview him, and to ask him what he has to say for himself?" said Mr. Munjoy, jocularly. And then there was a murmur of laughter.

"Really, though," said Mr. Bold, after the laugh had subsided, "I don't know that that is a half bad suggestion."

"Bad!" said Mr. Munjoy. "I should hope not. I hope you don't think that a minister of my denomination would suggest anything that was bad." And then there was another laugh.

The idea of the committee had been proposed in jest, but before the meeting closed it was considered seriously, and was finally adopted. There was still a general feeling of half-repressed jocularly about it all, but, nevertheless, the committee was duly appointed. Mr. Munjoy, as the proposer of the committee, was nominated for chairman, but he declined in a very witty and [29]

amusing speech, proposing Dr. Caiaphas in his stead. Dr. Caiaphas was not at all pleased with the sense of levity that pervaded the meeting. It seemed to him that the subject was very serious, and he replied to what Mr. Munjoy had said in a very serious manner. He wished, he said, that some younger man had been chosen. Without at all desiring to shift the burden from his own shoulders, he must say that he really felt that his time was so much taken up with the work of the investigation committee appointed to examine into the police department that it would be almost impossible for him to give to this matter that consideration which it seemed to him to deserve. Nevertheless, if it was the will of those present that he should act as chairman, he would so act to the best of his poor powers.

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#### IV

### WHAT WENT YE DOWN FOR TO SEE?

[30]

**I**T was a lovely, balmy day—that upon which our priests and Levites went down to the baptisms of John. It was yet early in March, but the day was as soft and as warm as a day in May.

When the clergymen descended from the train they found the platform crowded with those who had come over from the camp to meet arriving friends, and everywhere arose a confused and inarticulate hubbub of voices. The committee almost forced its way across the platform to where the hacks and carriages of all sorts and kinds stood drawn up in a row, and whence the voices of hackmen dominated loudly all the bustle and noise, adding their quota to the bewildering confusion. The crowd struggled and pushed, and through the ceaseless noise and hubbub there sounded the thin, keen wail of a crying baby.

Mr. Bold chose a 'bus, the committee filled it almost more than full, and it was driven off immediately, among the first to quit the station. A cloud of dust surrounded them as they rattled along the level road, leaving farther and farther behind them the still ceaseless tumult of the crowded platform, above which loomed the locomotive, smoking and hissing gigantically.

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The owner of the 'bus stood on the steps behind clinging to the door-frame. "Be you ministers?" said he.

"Yes," said one of the party.

"Come to the baptism?"

The minister laughed. "No, not exactly."

"But, talking of baptism," said Mr. Munjoy, "I wish very much we could find a basin of water and a cake of soap somewhere; it was very dusty coming down."

The hackman leaned to one side and spat into the dusty road that sped away behind. "Yes," he assented; "you see, we 'ain't had no rain now for above two weeks."

"Pretty bad look-out for salvation, I should say, if the dry weather holds," observed Mr. Munjoy.

Dr. Caiaphas sat quiet and impassive. The uncomfortable feeling had been growing upon him ever since he left home that he was upon a grotesque fool's errand.

The road over which they were now passing was heavy and sandy. The sun shone down upon it warmly, and, early as was the season, the fresh grass had begun to show itself in irregular patches of light and dark-green. The sky overhead was blue. In the sunshine it was warm, but those on the shady side of the coach drew their overcoats closer about them. Every now and then the hack would pass little groups or single figures, all plodding along in the direction of the camp. Sometimes there were larger groups of men and women and some children or half-grown girls. Some of the men carried their overcoats over one arm. One group which they passed consisted of three women, one man, and three children. One of the women—thin and frail-looking—carried a young baby, and the two other tired children dragged themselves along, holding each by a hand of another of the women. All these people were of the commoner sort. Some appeared to be working-men with their wives, others appeared not even to be laboring men, but of that great, underlying, nameless class that is still lower in the scale of social existence than the class of producers. Most of these people were evidently dressed in their best clothes, as though for a holiday.

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After riding for maybe a mile, the hack turned a bend in the road, and from the summit of a little sandy rise of ground the committee came within sudden sight of the camp.

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Every one of them was surprised at the extent of the encampment. As they looked down upon it, it stretched away like a great town of tents and huts. In some places the tents and frame sheds were clustered in a confused mass, in other places they were separated into streets and avenues. Upon the outskirts—the suburbs of this nondescript town—were everywhere clustering groups of carts and wagons and restless crowds of people which grew thicker and thicker in the camp, becoming here and there congested into restless, moving ganglia of humanity. These disconnected groups of people gathered most thickly along the banks of the stream, and far away in the distance was a greater crowd surrounding some central point of interest. The visitors

surmised that John the Baptist was the centre of that crowd. Beyond the stream were a few scattered huts, and beyond that a level, green marsh. An inlet from the sea made in part a broken, sandy headland. Beyond that, in the distance, was a wide, sparkling stretch of water with the far, blue line of the farther shore. Above all was the windy arch of sky looking down peacefully and calmly upon the clustered, restless masses of human beings below. There was an undefinable odor of salt in the air, and the wind came across from over the marsh, fresh and cool.

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The hack rattled down the road and into the camp in a cloud of dust. It was about noon and many of the people were eating their mid-day meal. Everywhere there were clusters of men and women, sitting in farm wagons or carts munching their food and talking among themselves.

The driver drove for some little distance into the camp, checking his horses every now and then and hallooing to the men and women in his road, who scattered right and left to make way for the rather headlong rate at which he drove. At last he stopped in front of a big frame shed with a rude sign above the doorway, informing the passers that there refreshment was to be had at a cheap and popular price. The shed was open at one end, and within you could see rows of benches and long deal tables. Here the committee got out, one by one, and stood looking about them.

Along the wide, street-like space there fronted a long, disjointed line of huts and tents of all sorts and kinds. The air was full of an indescribable odor as of raw boards and crushed grass. The street was full of a restless, passing stream of men and women and boys, and everywhere was the ceaseless buzz of talking, now and then dominated by the call of some one hallooing to a distant comrade.

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The visiting clergymen had no doubt whither to bend their steps. All the crowd seemed to drift and centre in one direction, and they knew that thither they would find him whom they sought. As they passed down along the front of the different tents and huts and shanties, they heard everywhere the clatter of dishes and smelt the odor of cooking. Here and there a hut bore a sign indicating that there lodging was to be had. At one place they passed by where a man, evidently stupefied with drink, lay in the sun by the side of a little frame hut with a canvas cover. A thin, bony woman was cooking a meal of food at a stove behind the hut, and the combined smell of the smoke and frying food filled the air. Two little children came around the side of the hut and stood looking at the committee as it passed.

The motley, restless crowd grew thicker and thicker as the committee approached the spot where they knew John must be found, and at last they had some difficulty in pushing their way through the congested groups. As they elbowed their way, the crowd would look at them and then, seeing they were ministers, would make way for them. Suddenly they came upon the Baptist, almost before they had expected to find him. He was eating a meal of indescribable food, sitting upon the ground, holding the plate upon his knees. He was, indeed, a shaggy, wild-looking figure, thin-faced, sallow, with filmy, restless eyes and a black, coarse mat of hair and beard. He wore the same dress of hairy cloth that the picture in the public journal had represented. The heavy brogans were wet and soaked with water, his legs, showing above the shoe-tops, were lean and hairy. A little cluster of his disciples, or attendants, surrounded him; some of them were eating their food, others, who had finished, were lying stretched upon the ground talking in an undertone. They were all rough, common-looking men, several of them apparently fishermen. Surrounding this group, and at a little distance, the people stood in a crowd looking intently at the Baptist. The committee also stood for a while looking at him; then Dr. Caiaphas came forward.

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As the priest approached, the Baptist looked towards him with vacant, lustreless eyes. The sun suddenly came out from behind a passing cloud and shone full upon his face, but he did not wink his eyes nor shade them from the glare.

"My friend," said the rector of the Church of the Advent, "my name is Theodore Caiaphas. I do not know whether you have heard of me or not, but I have heard of you. I am, as you see, an ordained priest. I and my friends"-here he indicated the others of the committee-"have come down to learn just what it is you preach, just what your opinions are, and just what you advocate. Will you tell me, first of all, who you are?"

[37]

John sat looking intently but vacantly at him. He did not speak for a little while. Then he said, in a sudden, loud voice, "I am not the Christ."

"So I understand," said Dr. Caiaphas. "But are you a prophet-such a one, for instance, as Elijah?"

"I am not," said the fanatic, still in the same loud voice.

"Ah! Then you are not even a prophet?" said Dr. Caiaphas.

"No."

"Who are you, then?" said Dr. Caiaphas; "and what are you? Tell us who you are, that we may give an answer to them that sent us." He tried not to feel the absurdity of the situation, but some of the other clergymen laughed.

John turned up his face and looked almost directly into the dazzling light of the sun above. He raised his lean arms, with his hands outspread and his fingers stretched wide open. "I am," he cried, in a loud voice, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way, as said

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Isaiah, the prophet.”

Again two or three of the committee laughed. The disciples of John looked sullenly at them, but the Baptist himself paid no attention to them.

“Then, let me understand,” said Dr. Caiaphas, speaking also in a loud voice so that all might hear—“then, let me understand just what it is you have to say for yourself. Let me hear just what is your claim, for it is for that reason that we have come hither. What I want to understand, and what all these poor people here should clearly understand, is this: If you are not the Christ—and you yourself say you are not—nor such a one as Elijah, nor one having authority to preach, as the saints of the Church had authority—if you are only a voice preaching in the wilderness, by what right do you, then, baptize and grant remission of sins? By what authority do you, then, forgive men their sins?”

John, still with eyes uplifted and with hands outspread, cried out: “I baptize with water, but in the midst of you there stands one whom you know not, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear.” [39] Other words he uttered, as uncomprehensible to the clergymen as these. He still held his arm upraised and his hand outspread for a little. Then he ended suddenly, and as suddenly let his hand fall from his knee, and sat looking about him as though to see what effect his words had upon those who heard them. One of the committee laid his hand upon Dr. Caiaphas’s arm. “Do you not see that it is useless to waste time here?” said he. “What good can come of it, doctor? It is plain to me that the man is mad. Any one with eyes to see and ears to hear may see and hear that for himself. Mr. Hicks tells us that the up-train will be due in twenty-five minutes. We have just comfortable time to make it. If we miss it, we’ll have to wait till five o’clock, and not get into town till after dark. I am sure that I, for one, have seen enough to convince me of the man’s insanity without listening any further to what he has to say.”

Dr. Caiaphas looked at his watch. “Well,” he said, reluctantly, “I suppose we might as well return. I would like to have heard him preach to the multitude, though, and to see how he baptizes them. However, I quite agree with you that he is not right in his mind, and I suppose it would be only a mere matter of curiosity to remain longer.” [40]

If Dr. Caiaphas had on his way down from New York feared that he was on a fool’s errand, he was, indeed, certain of it now. He did not say anything until the committee was on its way back to the station in the hack. Then he spoke.

“I am sorry, gentlemen, that I should have brought you all the way down here only for this. I am afraid”—with a smile—“that the committee did not get much satisfaction from the interview.”

Mr. Munjoy laughed. “I am sure,” he said, “that we are all very glad to have suffered a little inconvenience to have satisfied Dr. Caiaphas.”

The words were good-natured enough, but they made Dr. Caiaphas still more uncomfortable. “Indeed,” he said, “I am glad to be satisfied, but that was not exactly my object in bringing you all down here. I am sorry that you have taken a journey that is uncomfortable to yourselves only to satisfy me.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” said Mr. Munjoy, laughing. “This time to-morrow we’ll have ceased to think anything about the inconveniences of to-day. I am sure many of us have squandered a half-day ever so much more uselessly than this.”

Then there was nothing more said.

Thus I have endeavored to describe that incident as nearly as possible as it occurred. Since then a sentimental lustre has arisen to envelop it, and the world has come to accept it that those priests and Levites were blind in that they did not at once see the truth. But I think intelligent humanity will agree that it was impossible for the priests and Levites among us to accept the divine truth in such an astonishing guise as that which they then beheld. [41]

It is entirely true that God moves ever in ways incomprehensible to the finite mind. His wisdom is not according to our wisdom, nor His order according to our order. But it cannot be possible that He expects us, scribes and pharisees, whom He has endowed with intelligence and reason, to accept that which was so unintelligent and so unreasonable. If He endows us with reason, He cannot expect us to accept that which is unreasonable. Who is there of our class to-day who would not have revolted against the baptism of John when it was first instituted?

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## AN INTERLUDE

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**I**T is necessary here, and at another place, to introduce an interlude into the story. These interludes are designed as threads to connect the different parts of the narrative together. They are each a suggestion instead of a description; for even a description of things holy would too much shock the sense of propriety of us scribes and pharisees.

For the accepted religion of the civilized world has become so enveloped with wrappings of spiritual ideality that it is impossible to strip away those investments and to show the reality in all its nakedness. Such an exposure would too much violate our accepted religious ideas. It would

not do for any man to tell just how it was that Christ actually did appear in the midst of that motley multitude; nor would it do for any pharisee among us to listen to the story.

Either the truth would sound blasphemous, or else, if it were accepted and received, then we scribes and pharisees, priests and Levites of to-day would rise up and stone it and crucify it exactly as we did of old. [43]

Since those times we have grown accustomed to say that we believe in Christ—even though we do not really believe. Expressed belief and real belief are very different matters. What we think we believe in is not the living Christ as He was in the flesh, but a Christ we have created for ourselves—a white-robed, visionary figure that passes through the world of humanity like a spirit rather than like a man of flesh and blood.

For the story of Christ is surrounded by the narrative of such incredibly miraculous happenings that it is necessary for us to create such a spiritual image, or else we cannot believe those narratives at all. It is with us now as it was in those ages past—we cannot bear to have the spiritual image of truth blasphemed by the living fact. In our souls we disbelieve that which seems to us to be unbelievable. We endeavor to stimulate faith, first by saying that we believe, and then by creating for ourselves an imaginary image of Christ who might have performed the miracles if He had really lived.

Nearly all intelligent and thoughtful men really do believe in the existence of an infinitely intelligent and infinitely powerful deity.

For a man has but to gaze about him and he beholds, with the eyes of his flesh, infinity itself—infinity of what is great; infinity of what is minute; infinity of time; infinity of space. [44]

These are actual entities, for we know that there never was and never can be a time in which there was no created thing—not even vacuum—and we know that there can be no limit to space in which everything—even space itself—ceases to exist. The very material universe exists infinitely, and we behold with the eyes of the flesh. We do not comprehend it, yet we know that it really is.

In the hollow vault of night we behold countless myriads of huge and flaming suns, scattered like dust through the sky, or sparkling in points of radiance, and we know that that created stellar system extends, without limit, into the emptiness of limitless space. We know that each incredibly gigantic sun—flaming with light and heat—follows a perfect and well-assigned orbit. We know that about each of these glorious suns there must revolve scores of planets, like this earth upon which we stand.

Seeing this fact with our eyes, it is not possible for the reason to suppose that all this well-ordered and perfect system of enormous stellar and planetary system was created, is governed, is sustained by blind and chaotic chance. Chance never built even so much as a brick wall. How could it, then, create a living sun whose heat and light give life to the planets that revolve about it? [45]

There must be a Creator for these things—a Creator infinitely potent, infinitely intelligent—or else those things could not have been created.

On the other hand, man looks about him upon the earth, and there he beholds an equally and infinitely perfect creation. For every one of the myriad blades of grass, and every one of the myriad leaves of the trees, and every one of the myriad flowers of the field, is, in itself, as tremendously perfect in its every minutest particular as is the greatest sun that flames in the empty heavens. Not only does it live in a minute and orderly sequence of progressive existence, but it possesses an infinitely vital power of procreation, so that each tiny seed, under proper circumstances, has the power of filling the entire universe with its progeny.

Every bird, beast, and fish is not only exactly fitted into its surroundings—not only is each perfect even unto every hair, feather, and scale—not only is each endowed with a vitality that enables it upon an instant to adapt itself to the circumstances of its existence; but each in itself is endowed with the same potentiality of indefinitely procreating its kind with equal bodily perfection. [46]

These things can neither be created nor sustained excepting by an intelligent Creator who makes and sustains them; for it is impossible for any reasoning man to suppose that vacuity and death has created that which is a fact and is alive—that nothingness can have created that which is not only perfect in itself, but which is endowed with such infinite potentiality.

And at the apex of all creation stands man himself, so nicely and perfectly adjusted to the conditions that surround him that it takes only a few degrees in the variation of so small a thing as the temperature of the air to destroy him or to sustain his life. And each man possesses not only volition, but thought and reason to such particularity that each tiny idea may be continued to infinity; or, when applied to the things of nature, may evolve a physical phenomenon that can affect or transform the entire economy of the world in which he lives.

Whence comes this perfect and intelligent life? Man does not cause himself to think, nor does he cause himself to live. He may shape and direct his thoughts, but intelligence comes to him without his own volition. He receives these things, but he does not cause either the one or the other to be created. [47]

That which causes life and intelligence to exist and to inflow into man is and must be infinite

vitality and infinite intelligence—an omniscient Creator—or else these things must spring from nothing.

Thus any man who thinks and reasons within himself must perceive that there actually is and does exist a divine and infinite Creator.

But that which we scribes and pharisees, priests and Levites, cannot really accept is the fact that this infinite Creator—this tremendous God, who sustains the universe and who flings blazing suns and planets by the handful through the heavens—that this omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Divinity should actually have become finitely incarnate upon this earth. It is still more impossible for us to believe with our reason that the humble wife of a common carpenter should have given Him birth as a little, whimpering, helpless babe among the cattle of a stable in Palestine.

Our caste has been compelled by the force of circumstances to accept this as a dogma, but we cannot believe it in our hearts. Consequently we build for ourselves an ideal Christ who is so different from the actual Christ that, were the real Christ to appear to-day, we would crucify Him exactly as we did nineteen hundred years ago. [48]

It is, indeed, the crowning truth of the ages that Jehovah did enter finitely into the flesh of a man; that He was miraculously conceived; that He was born in a stable in Bethlehem, and that His mother was the wife of a journeyman carpenter, who had a carpenter-shop in Nazareth. But that truth is not for us; consequently we either become sadducees and deny the resurrection of the soul, or else we are pharisees who, with a helpless hypocrisy, try to cause ourselves, by some *hocus-pocus* of inverted reasoning, to believe that which we do not believe.

We do not really believe that the actual laws of nature were ever so preposterously violated as the Scriptures tell us. No rational pharisee ever really believed that water, at a touch, can be actually transmuted into wine; or that dead and gangrenous flesh ever was, at a touch, actually transformed into healthy tissues; or that eyes organically imperfect ever were, at a touch, made to receive the light like healthy orbs.

Either we falsify ourselves by saying that we believe these things, or else we benumb our reasoning so as not to think about them at all. Many of us would fain expurgate those miraculous narratives from the divine word, retaining only such spiritual and intangible ideas as are believable because they have no foundation in fact. Others of us give up the task as hopeless, and declare frankly that we do not know whether they are true or not, but that we are willing to give them the benefit of the doubt. [49]

These things of divine truth are so preposterous to the common sense that only the ignorant can believe them. Wherefore the Scriptures are given into the hands of the ignorant for preservation, lest we, intelligent pharisees, should alter and amend them to fit our own ideas—in the which case they would inevitably perish.

For it is to be remembered that, while the divine Scriptures have lasted in their entirety through the ages, nearly every system of human philosophy—whether physical or metaphysical—has perished after a generation or two, to give place to another system. So would the Scriptures perish if it were left to us to amend them so as to fit the rational and intelligent science of the age.

We were born to crucify the truth; it is our mission in life, and we must not be blamed when we fulfil our destiny.

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Shortly after that visit of the priests and Levites to the baptisms of John, the promised Messiah suddenly appeared in the midst of the motley crowd gathered to hear the truth. [50]

A poor woman, the mother of two ordinary fishermen, thus described the divine miracle that thereupon happened. She told it somewhat thus: “I saw it. There was a great many people around; some saw it and some did not see it. I can’t tell just how it was, but it was after He went down into the water with John. There was a light as if it was sunshine up this way; then something came. It looked like a dove—they all said it was a dove. It looked like it came down upon Him. I don’t know how long it lasted—I saw it for a little and then it was gone. He was standing in the water along with John; then He came out close to where I stood. The folk were calling out ‘Hallelujah!’ all about us. They were crying ‘Hallelujah! Hallelujah!’ They crowded so they pushed me into the water. I felt as though I were going crazy, and I, too, kept calling out ‘Hallelujah! Hallelujah!’”

Even in the recounting of such a reality it sounds shocking. How shocking, then, must it have been to those of us who were living when it really happened.

But with this, the mission of John came to an end. The crowds that had gathered about him departed hither and thither, and the earth was left bare and desolate where the growing things of the spring-time had been trampled into the dry and dusty soil by the treading of many feet—where the pure waters of the streams had been defiled by human contact. [51]

## THE BEGINNING OF THE WORKS

WITH the dispersion of the great crowd of poor ignorants who had gathered about John the Baptist, we thought that the agitation was ended.

We were mistaken.

For a time nothing more was heard of the Christ whom John had baptized. Then, suddenly, there came rumors, first from one side and then from another; fugitive words telling of a renewed excitement that had begun to ferment obscurely in that same nether class that had followed John to his baptism. Gradually these rumors became more and more dominant, and every day more people heard of and became interested in what was said. The interest was not very great with us, but it was sufficient to keep alive the observation of the daily papers.

The Messiah who had been baptized by John had reappeared, and many people of the poorer classes were gathering about Him in numbers to hear His teachings and to receive His word. These poor people asserted that He performed many miracles; that He could heal the sick and diseased by merely touching them with His hand; that He caused the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and the blind to see. It was said that many miraculous cures had already been performed by Him. [53]

It happened at this time that a party of men of the literary and artistic world had chartered a vessel and had fitted it up as a floating studio, adorning it with antique furniture, rugs, hangings, and bric-à-brac.

It was a very merry party—a party of sadducees who strenuously believed in no resurrection. There was Archibald Redfern, the writer-artist-man-about-town; Corry King, assistant editor and business manager of the *Aurora*; Marcey, the architect; Chillingham Norcott, the artist; Allington, of the publishing-house of Richard White & Co.; Dr. Ames, Pinwell, and others. During the cruise, Norcott, Pinwell, and Redfern had enriched the panels of the cabin with marines and landscapes and decorative pieces until the interior looked almost like a picture-gallery. Everything was as luxurious as possible. They had engaged Pierre Blanc to go with them and to cook for them, and they paid him six hundred dollars for the three or four weeks of the cruise. When it is said that Dr. Ames himself selected the wines and liquors, nothing more need be said concerning the provisioning of the expedition. [54]

The cruise had been a complete success, and now they were about returning to the metropolis again. They had run short of ice, and had put in at a small coast town for a fresh supply.

Redfern, who had arrogated to himself the position of head-steward, had gone ashore in the boat with the steward *de facto*. There he heard strange and wonderful reports of miracles that were being performed in the neighborhood.

As the boat, returning from the shore, touched the side of the schooner, Redfern came scrambling aboard, and almost immediately his loud, brassy voice was heard from end to end of the vessel, telling of wonders performed and of miracles wrought.

Some of the party were mildly gambling at poker under the awning, waiting Redfern's return with the ice. Corry King lay stretched out upon a couch in his shirt-sleeves reading a magazine, a tall glass of brandy-and-soda at his elbow. Norcott was sketching listlessly; the others were talking together. They all looked up at the sound of Redfern's loud voice. There was nothing funny in what he said, but they all laughed. [55]

"And you have returned cured of body and sound of soul, I suppose," said Ames.

"It isn't of myself I'm thinking," said Redfern, in his strident, insistent voice, a voice that almost stunned the hearer if he were near by and not used to it. "It's not of myself I'm thinking. I'm thinking of you. I tell you, boys, this is the chance of your life. I'm going to take you all ashore this afternoon. Your souls have run down during this cruise, and what you want is to get a good brace of salvation before you get back home again."

They all went ashore in the afternoon. The town appeared to be singularly deserted. A few guests hung about the third-class summer hotel porch, sitting uncomfortably on the hard, wooden chairs in the shade. An occasional inhabitant appeared here and there on the hot, sandy stretch of street, but everywhere there was a feeling of dull and silent depletion. The party inquired at the hotel office and found that He whom they sought was then supposed to be at a certain place about six miles below the town where there was a high and rocky hill. They found that they could obtain a conveyance, and, after a good deal of jocular chaffing with the fat and grinning hackman, the vehicle was ordered, and a team of four horses. It was a dusty, rattletrap affair, and the party piled in with much noisy confusion, struggling for seats, and sitting in one another's laps. The hotel guests sat looking on with a sort of outside interest and amusement. Then the hack drove away with a volley of cheers and a chorus of mimic coach-horns. [56]

"Look here, boys," called out Corry King, "what I want to know is whether Redfern's taking us down here for our sakes or for his own? Either he has got to take this thing seriously or else we have."

"It's all for your sake, my boy! For your sake!" cried out Redfern's brazen, dominant voice. "I



made up my mind last night when I saw the way you bucked up against Marcy's luck in that last jack-pot that you needed some sort of salvation to pull you through till we get you home again."

It was three o'clock before they approached their destination. As they drew near they found that everywhere vehicles of all sorts were standing along the road, the horses hitched to the fence at the road-sides. They could see from a distance as they approached that the hill was covered with a restless, swaying mass of people, and then they saw that the crowd was moving voluminously all in one direction-away from the crest. [57]

"I'm afraid you're too late to hear Him, gentlemen," said the driver, and he urged the horses forward with greater speed.

It was true; they were just too late to hear that sermon which voiced the sublimest code of ethics the world has ever heard-sublime, but, in our opinion, impracticable.

Presently they were met, almost suddenly, by the broken, ragged outskirts of the moving crowd that was beginning to pour away from the hill. They had not, until then, any idea how great was the agitation centring around this strange being.

Then, almost in a moment, the crowd became so dense that the hack could make no further progress. "I reckon we'll have to pull out of the way," said the driver.

"All right," said Redfern; "pull away."

And now the crowd was so thick about them that it was with some difficulty that the driver could edge his horses over to the side of the road. And every instant the mass of men and women grew more and more dense. "Look out where you're going! Look out there!" cried a chorus of voices, as the crowd melted and dissolved before the horses, closing again around the hack. And now the road was suddenly filling with a great press of people moving all in one direction; the air was made dense and darkened with clouds of dust. Then the party in the hack saw approaching along the road the nucleus of this denser crowd which so centred about a single point. "Yonder He is," cried the driver, standing up and pointing with his whip. "That's Him, there." [58]

The men were all standing up in the hack.

"Where?" said Redfern.

"That's Him-that tall man," said the driver.

The crowd were surging all about them, pushing against the wheels of the hack. The air was full of the tumult of many voices. The horses shrank to one side as the moving mass eddied around them. Then there came a little group of rough men, apparently fishermen. In the midst of them was a tall man. His face was wet with sweat, and drops of sweat ran down His cheeks. He gazed straight before Him and seemed oblivious to everything about Him. The men in the hack all knew that that must be He, and they stood up looking at Him.

Then they saw a miracle.

Suddenly, almost alongside them, there was a commotion and an outcry of voices. The crowd parted, and as those in the hack looked down, they saw a man struggling out of it and panting and gasping. It was a dreadful sight. He was covered over with hideous, scrofulous sores. No wonder the crowd parted to make way for him. Through his panting he was shouting, hoarsely, "Make me clean! Make me clean!" The crowd surged and swayed with an echoing outcry of voices, and for a moment the man was shut out from the sight of those sadducees. Then they could see that the diseased man was kneeling in the road. [59]

"I will," said a loud, clear voice that dominated the disturbance. "Be clean!" They could see that He upon whom they were looking had reached out His hand. They could not see what He did, but He appeared to touch the kneeling man. Instantly there was a great shout, and the crowd surged and swept and heaved more tumultuously than ever. They could not see what had happened.

"My God!" cried out the driver, "did you see that?"

"See what?" said Corry King, who stood next him. In spite of himself he felt thrilled with a sympathetic excitement.

"Didn't you see it? He cured him."

"Cured him?" said King. "Who? Where is he?"

"Now-don't you see him? There he is." [60]

Had they really beheld a miracle? No; they had not. Archibald Redfern burst out laughing. "Didn't you see it, King?" he jeered. "Where are your eyes?"

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That evening it was said that He would heal the sick who would come to Him. The boat party, interested in what they had already heard, went ashore again after dark. The town that had seemed to be dead and empty when they were there before, was now full of people. There were

crowds everywhere. The night was hot and oppressive. The sadducees followed whither the crowd seemed to move, the press growing ever thicker and thicker, until, by-and-by, they reached a street densely packed with the throng.

It was a dark and narrow street in the suburbs. It was packed full of people, and it was only after much difficulty they were able to reach a point of vantage—a broad flight of wooden steps that led up to the door of a frame church. Thence they could see over the heads of the mob of men and women who filled the street beyond. They could see that the people were bringing the sick through the crowd. Near them was a man carrying a little child in his arms. Its poor little legs were twisted into a steel frame. A woman followed close behind the man. The child lay with its head upon the man's shoulder and appeared to be crying, though it was too dark to see clearly. The man moved, step by step, forward, and presently was swallowed into the dark mass of humanity beyond. In the distance was a doorway in which stood a figure of a man, black against the dull light of the lamp behind. There appeared to be a number of other figures crowded in the passageway behind Him. People were looking out of the windows of the neighboring houses. They could not see from the church-steps where they stood what He was doing, but He was constantly moving and stooping forward. The tumult and din were dreadful. It appeared a pandemonium of wild, unmeaning excitement. As in the afternoon, it was an excitement that was contagious. "Do you suppose He really is curing them?" said Norcott, and again Archibald Redfern burst out laughing.

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"Why, of course He is," said he.

He had seen no miracle and could see none. How was it possible for a sadducee, who believed in no resurrection, to see a miracle? The wisest sadducee that ever lived, had he seen a miracle, would not have believed it. Had the Almighty blotted out the sun and the moon and written the sign of His Truth in letters of fire all across the blackened canopy of the heavens, Redfern or Corry King would not have believed—they would have misdoubted their own eyesight.

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After they had satisfied their curiosity, the party went back to the boat and played poker until nearly two o'clock in the morning.

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## VI

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### THE YOUNG MAN WITH GREAT POSSESSIONS

DR. AND MRS. CAIAPHAS were spending the latter part of the summer at the sea-side with their son-in-law, Mr. Henry Herbert Gilderman.

Mrs. Gilderman was Dr. and Mrs. Caiaphas's daughter Florence—their eldest girl, and perhaps the best-beloved by the doctor of all the children. She had been married now a little over a year, during nearly all of which time she and her husband had lived abroad.

Gilderman was one of the richest men in the world. His grandfather had laid the foundation of that great Gilderman estate of the present generation, and his father had built well upon the foundation that the first Gilderman had laid. Gilderman had been born into all this great wealth—so great that, perhaps, no man could realize how vast it was. To be born into such a fortune is almost as to be born into royalty. It shuts the inheritor into a shell of circumstances from which there is no escape. Such a man as Gilderman must live his life after a certain routine and in a certain way from which there is no escape. There was no privacy in his life, for all the world looked on and saw what he did. His business of life was to spend money and to enjoy himself. For that purpose, and for that purpose alone, he was born into the world. He had a house in the metropolis, another at the nation's capital, and still another where the Romans of his class spent the torrid weather of summer. Each of these was a palace, and each was filled with gems of art and rare pieces of china, plate, tapestries, and bric-à-brac that his agents had collected for him from all parts of the world. He had given a hundred and sixty thousand dollars for a single painting, and after it was hung he had, perhaps, hardly looked at it. When he travelled he had a valet to look after him, and to foresee and to fulfil his wishes. He hardly did anything for himself—not even to order a cab or to purchase a railroad-ticket. Other attendants looked after the heaps of luggage which he took with him when he travelled. He had his *avant-courier* to prepare soft places for him in which to lodge, and others remained behind to close the places which he left. Now that he was married, his wife—who had fallen very pliantly into her new life, as women do—must also have a maid to accompany her wherever she went. They would almost fill the private car in which they nearly always travelled if they had any distance to go, especially if they travelled upon any of the railroads which Gilderman controlled. There was no escape from this routine. Even when Gilderman would seek to change the monotonous smoothness of his existence with a taste of something rougher—say of the mountains—it was only a pretended roughness covering over the same perpetual smoothness and softness of life. His log-hut in the wilderness was a palace masquerading as a hut of logs. Everything was really soft and warm; the furniture was an artificial reproduction of something rough; the floors were spread with skins of wild beasts that cost three or four or five hundred dollars apiece; there was an open fireplace that was designed and built by Marcy, the architect, and a picture of this pretence of roughness was published in the voluminous Sunday issue of some daily paper for all the world to behold.

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Such were the surroundings of Henry Herbert Gilderman. Into these circumstances the

mysterious paradox of divine wisdom had placed a selfhood, eager, alertly intelligent, receptive, warm, affectionate. A nature which, perhaps, lacked the gritty strenuousness in which a character grows strong and fibrous and hard, but a nature soft, rich, and lovable—a nature into which the seeds of truth fell easily and struck quick roots and thrust forth a rapid growth. The garden of his soul was rather luxuriant than well tilled, but it was fruitful and beautiful.

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As said before, the business of Gilderman's life was its enjoyments—and the spending of money; the dream of his life was of religious faith, of social reform, of an equitable readjustment of the classes. He read intermittently of advanced socialistic and theological literature. In these readings he would soon grow tired, presently find himself becoming dull and drowsy; but each time he read a few seeds would fall scatteringly in the soft, warm loam of his soul, and would there spring up into the quick, rank growth of which he was very proud.

He loved nothing better than to talk to some intimate friend of his dreams and of his religious and socialistic views. He would talk on such an occasion until his cheeks glowed and his breath came hot and thick. He would, sometimes, afterwards wonder dimly whether he had not been a little foolish—whether he had not talked too much and said too much nonsense. But he enjoyed the intensity of the excitement while it lasted.

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His friends loved him.

He was, unless crossed in his desires, kind to every one whom he met; but he never forgot that he was Henry Herbert Gilderman and the grandson of James Quincy Gilderman.

Gilderman was singularly attracted by the popular interest that centred about John the Baptist, and now about the Christ who taught and healed the poor. He used to talk about these things to his father-in-law when he could get Dr. Caiaphas to discuss the matter. The subject was one not very pleasant to the rector of the Church of the Advent, and he was not often willing to discuss it.

When September arrived, Mrs. Caiaphas did not immediately return to town. Mrs. Gilderman was not at that time feeling at all well, and her mother continued with her for a while. Dr. Caiaphas, however, used to go down on a Saturday morning—generally in Gilderman's yacht—preach on Sunday, attend to his more pressing parish work on Monday and possibly on Tuesday, and then return directly to his summer home again.

One day Gilderman went down to the metropolis with his father-in-law, having business in town with his manager. They started late in the afternoon, and took their dinner aboard the yacht, which they had to themselves. They sat smoking on the deck after dinner, each in a great rattan chair. The day had been very hot, and they enjoyed to the full the swift motion and the chill of the night air. It was a beautiful night, soft and mild—the sky dusted over with a myriad stars. The yacht sped forward, with a ceaseless rushing of the water alongside. The cigar-points alternately glowed and paled as they smoked. Dr. Caiaphas buttoned up his coat close to his chin. Every now and then the voice of the sailors forward broke the stillness of the night, or the clinking of dishes and tumblers sounded loud as the steward put away the glass and the china in the saloon.

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There was a distant light over across the dark water. It led Gilderman's thoughts to the subject which had occupied them much of late.

"By-the-way," he said, "has it never occurred to you, sir, to question whether, after all, the Messiah whom the people are proclaiming over yonder is not really the Divine Truth incarnated?"

"No," said Dr. Caiaphas, "it has not. And, to tell you the truth, Henry, I would a great deal rather not discuss that phase of the question."

"Why not?"

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"Well, because it is unpleasant to me—because it is distressful to me." Gilderman was silent, and, by-and-by, Dr. Caiaphas voluntarily continued: "The Divine Word leads us to understand that God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. It is revolting to me to even listen to the supposition that the God of Heaven could have a human son—a carpenter by trade—and that the mother should be the wife of a common carpenter."

"I think I enter perfectly into your feelings," said Gilderman, after another little space of silence; "but—I don't want to force the conversation upon you, you understand, sir—but I must say that it seems to me that you think only of God's acting according to your own ideas of fitness. I do not believe that He ever acts according to man's ideas, and maybe He may not have done so in this instance. How do you know, sir, that we may not be mistaken? And, if we are mistaken, what a great wrong are we doing!"

"In that case," said Dr. Caiaphas, "and, if I am mistaken, speaking for myself, I see nothing for it but to suffer for my own short-sightedness. Every man must exercise his own judgment, and if his judgment is wrong he must suffer for it. I cannot believe that this poor journeyman carpenter is the son of the Almighty God whom I worship. If I am mistaken, I must suffer for it, for I cannot change my mind. And I am so sure in my disbelief," he added, as though to close the discussion, "that I am willing to stand my chances upon it at the day of judgment, even if that day were tomorrow."

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After that, Gilderman did not say anything more. But in the few words he had said he had begun almost to convince himself that the miracles of which the world was beginning to talk were

really worthy of attention.

The next morning, after an eleven-o'clock breakfast aboard the yacht, Gilderman had himself driven down to his office. After the freshness of the open air at the sea-side, the city felt like a steaming oven. Gilderman sat leaning back in the brougham smoking and looking out upon the hot bustle of the street. The ceaselessly streaming crowds on the sidewalk hurried and jostled and pushed, paying no attention to the heat or to their fellow-men or to heaven or to hell, or to anything but the business they were just then so intent upon—each man a little life in himself shut out from all the other little lives around him.

A bulletin was posted on a board in front of a newspaper-office—a square of brownish paper covered with ink-drawn characters. Half a dozen men stood looking at it, but the stream of humanity flowed by, neither thinking of nor caring for the words posted above their heads. [71]

In large letters it proclaimed that John the Baptist had been executed the night before.

It brought a singular shock to Gilderman, who was still impressed by the recollection of the brief talk that he had had with his father-in-law. He said to himself, as he sat leaning back in the carriage, "It's a confounded shame!"

He thought about it intermittently all the way down to the office and until the brougham stopped at the sidewalk and he got out.

The office was on the first floor of an imposing brown-stone building. Over the great, glazed doors were carved in relief the words:

"GILDERMAN BUILDING."

On both sides of the plate-glass windows that looked out into the busy street were gilt letters:

"OFFICE OF THE GILDERMAN ESTATE."

Now the windows were open, and through them he could see the clerks busy over the books. They looked warm, and wore linen or madras jackets. Mr. Wright, the manager, was standing with the cashier looking over a book. They neither of them saw him. [72]

"You may come for me at three o'clock," Gilderman said to the man, who stood holding open the door of the brougham. And then he turned and went up the steps and through the swinging-door. The electric-fans were whirring, and the air felt cool after the hot street outside.

He went directly through to the manager's room beyond. Those whom he passed turned and looked after him; he was used to having men look after him in that way. He felt that the fact of his presence became almost instantly known throughout the entire office. There was a silent, indescribable movement among the clerks. He saw the cashier speak to Mr. Wright, the manager, who looked up sharply.

Gilderman went directly into his private office. He laid his hat on the table among the newspapers. There was a brass electric-fan on the mantel, and he turned the switch and started it moving, standing before the refreshing coolness. As he did so the other door opened and Mr. Wright came in. The manager bowed and Gilderman acknowledged his presence with a nod. He did not move away from the cooling breezes of the fan. [73]

"I am sorry to have called you away from the sea in such weather as this, Mr. Gilderman," said the manager.

"I'm sorry to come, Wright. It seems to me we've had nothing but hot weather ever since February."

"How's Mrs. Gilderman?" asked the manager.

"Not very well," said Gilderman, briefly. "I suppose you wanted me about those copper-mines?"

"Yes, sir; the transfers will have to be signed this week. I've made arrangements with Mr. Pengrist and Walton, of Walton & Boone, to be here. Shall I send word to Mr. Pengrist now?"

"You might as well," said Mr. Gilderman. As Mr. Wright touched the electric-bell he remembered the bulletin he had just seen posted at the newspaper office. "By-the-way," said he, "I saw it posted on the bulletin-board as I came down that John the Baptist had been executed."

"Yes; so I was told awhile ago," said Mr. Wright. "I think it's a pity that there should have been any dilly-dallying about it. Herod might as well have acted sharply in the first instance. He has gained nothing by all this delay." [74]

"I don't think the Baptist ought to have been executed at all," said Gilderman, briefly.

Mr. Wright smiled, and then looked quickly sober. He had for the moment forgotten Gilderman's radical and socialistic proclivities. He thought that they were very foolish, but he was too practical a man and had too much good sense to argue the point.

The messenger-boy appeared at the open door. "Go down to Pengrist & Ball's," said Mr. Wright, "and tell Mr. Pengrist that Mr. Gilderman is here."

"Yes, sir," said the boy and disappeared.

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## VII AMONG THE ROMANS

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GILDERMAN had made an appointment by note to dine that evening at the "Romans" with his friend Stirling West. His father-in-law had asked him to dine at the rectory, but he had declined. The truth was, that he was hungering for a taste of that sort of masculine society which he could only find at the club.

The "Romans" was a pseudonym for the International Club. Why it was so called can better be understood than explained. The International Club, though large, was really one of the most select clubs in the metropolis. Its membership was almost entirely composed of plutocrats. With these was a sprinkling intermixture of the politicratic class. The chief ruler of the nation was an honorary member; Governor Pilate was a member, and so were others among the rulers of the nation. But almost the entire body of the club was composed of plutocrats—such men as Mr. Dorman-Webster among the patriarchs, and Gilderman among the juniors.

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The club was always pretty full at this time of the year. Wives and families were yet out of town, and the men came here to dine. Gilderman went early and secured a table by the open window, and sat there reading while he waited for his friend to come. The breeze came in at the open windows every now and then, swaying and bellying the gaudy awning outside. The stony street below looked hot and empty in the sloping light of the sinking sun. Every now and then Gilderman looked around from his paper—the room was beginning to fill. There was a distinct air of informality about everything. Many of the men wore tweed suits.

At last, Stirling West sauntered into the room and dropped into his place. "How d'e do, old man?" said he. "Beastly hot, isn't it? How did you leave the madam?"

"Not very well—her mother's with her."

"So I heard. By-the-way, I see his reverence is at the rectory."

"Yes; he came down last night in the *Nautilus*. Have a cocktail?"

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The dinner was over and they were sitting in the café. Gilderman had been talking to his friend concerning his religious views. He had been led into that current of talk from discussing the execution of John the Baptist.

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"By Jove! old man," said Stirling West, "I wish I had your enthusiasm—I do, indeed. I believe you really believe in all that sort of stuff you're talking to me about."

The air about them was blue with tobacco smoke. Their coffee-cups at their elbows were empty, except for a black remainder at the bottom; the saucers half full of the scattered cigar-ashes that had been tilted into them.

Gilderman recognized that his talk was out of place, but he still continued. "Why do you call it stuff, Stirling? It's only stuff to you because you don't believe in it. The future life in another world is as real to me as—as going out of this café into the smoking-room yonder. What is life without such a belief as that? If you regard this life as all that there is for a man to live, then the world is a pit of misery worse than hell, and God is a jesting devil juggling with the misery and the pangs of mankind whom He created for His own amusement. Just look at it, Stirling, in the light of reason. Here we are with more than we want, trying to tickle our stomachs into an appetite by all this made-up stuff we've been eating. Go only just around the corner yonder and you'll find men and women living like maggots."

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"Oh yes; I know all about that sort of socialistic rot," put in Stirling West. "But how the deuce am I to help it, old man? I didn't put 'em there, and I can't go nosing around in their beastly tenements. What's the use of thinking and worrying about it, anyhow? What's the use of stirring up all that sort of a row about a thing a man can't help?"

"But, don't you see," cried Gilderman, enthusiastically, stretching out his hand across the table and opening it tensely, "if this life's only the first step in a man's existence, how beautifully all the inequality and the injustice of the world is made equal and orderly in view of the world to come. We are all passing through a little state of probation. What does it matter if a man is rich or poor for these few short years of life?"

"By Jove! it matters a deuced deal, I can tell you," said Stirling West. "Look here, Gildy, you don't know, and nobody knows, that he has a life to live after he's dead."

"Yes, I do," said Gilderman; "I know it as well as I know that I'm alive now." But even as he spoke he knew that there were moments when he doubted it.

"No; you don't know it. You believe it, but you don't know it. Well, old man, a bird in the hand's

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worth two in the bush, any day. My life's a bird in the hand—it's a lark, you know—and I'm going to get all the fun out of it there is in it. I'm dead sure I'm alive now, and I'm not sure of what is to come after I'm dead. You may bet your life I'm not going to throw away my present chances for something I don't know about."

Gilderman paused for a little while. "Oh, well," he said, presently, "it doesn't matter. If God don't want you to see the truth, you can't see it, and no man can make you see it. He has His own divine way of regenerating every man. I believe—you don't believe; I see—you don't see. It is neither to my credit nor to your discredit. It is simply that we're made as we are." A sudden chill of doubt came over him even as he spoke. Such a chill of doubt often struck across his spirit even when he was in the very heat of his enthusiasm. And then again it occurred to him how absurd and out of place it was for him to be discussing such things in the café of the International Club, in the midst of the smoking, the empty coffee-cups, and the humming undertone of masculine talking.

Stirling West sat smoking in meditative silence for a while. By-and-by he suddenly spoke again. "By-the-way," he said, "have you seen Olivia Carrington yet?" [80]

Olivia Carrington was a notable concert-hall dancer who had just been imported into the country. Gilderman had thought that his companion had been meditating upon what they had been saying. The sudden change of topic made him feel still more the absurdity of his late enthusiasm. "No, I haven't seen her," he said.

"By Jove, she's a daisy! What do you say to go around to the Westminster and see her this evening?"

"I don't know. All right, I'll go with you."

They pushed back their chairs and arose. Gilderman realized very thoroughly what an egregious fool he had been.

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They went out into the smoking-room. A group of men were clustered at the great, wide window that looked out upon the street below. Some of the men were standing, some were sitting. Among them was Pontius Pilate. He looked up at Gilderman as he drew near. He was a large, rather fat, smooth-faced man. His skin was colorless and sallow. He had a high, bald forehead, closely cropped gray hair, a hooked nose, and keen, gray eyes deep set under straight, hard brows. His face was square, and his mouth was set in a singular impassivity of expression. His whole face wore the same air of impassive calm—it was like a mask that covered the life within. He looked rather than spoke recognition as Gilderman approached. [81]

Gilderman drew near. The man who was talking was one Latimer-Moire. He had just returned from an automobile expedition, during which he had come into touch with the marvellous works that were afterwards to stir the whole world into a religious belief. He was telling the others how the divine miracles of Christ appeared to a young Roman who, like himself, looked down upon them from the pinnacle of his earthly station.

"... And, by Jove! I tell you what it is," he said, "you fellows have no idea of all the crazy hurrah those poor devils are kicking up down there. I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it. You can't even get a decent meal anywhere for the crowds of people everywhere who eat up everything. You can't go anywhere but you hear of the Man and His miracles. It wasn't till we got to that place, though, that we struck the worst of it all. The town was full of people—a beastly crowd.

"Well, nothing would do Tommy Ryan but he must see one of those miracles they're all talking about. So we put up at the hotel, and got some one to show us where He was to be found. Tommy's man went along with us, and it was a good thing we took him, for when we got near the house, there was the street all packed and jammed with the crowd. It seemed there was a delegation of preachers and elders or something, who had come to interview Him and get Him to do something. Tommy was all for seeing what they were at. So his man, and another fellow he tipped, pushed a way for us through the crowd, and we managed to get into the house. We contrived to edge our way along the entry until we came to a room where He and the ministers were. The place was packed so that we could hardly see anything. Hot? Well, rather! And so close that we could hardly draw a breath. As for the smell—you could cut it with a knife—I thought of all kinds of things you might catch and be sick. [82]

"The ministers and their people were as dead in earnest as though their lives depended upon it. What they wanted was for Him to show them a miracle. As for Him, He just sat there and never made a motion. 'Show us a sign,' says one of the ministers. 'If you are, indeed, the Christ, show us a sign.' 'A wicked and adulterous generation,' said He, 'ask for a sign, but there shall be no sign given them but the sign of the prophet Jonah.'" [83]

"What did He mean by that?" said young Palliser.

Everybody laughed, and even Governor Pilate smiled.

"But what in the deuce did He mean?" insisted Palliser.

"Mean?" said Latimer-Moire. "How should I know what He meant?"

"What did He look like?" asked Gilderman.

"Look like? Oh, I don't know; just like any other man. Well, after we had come out of the place, we saw some of His people outside—His mother and His brothers. His brothers had come to look after Him. I felt deucedly sorry for 'em—decent, respectable-looking people enough."

"By-the-way," said Sprague, "did you read about His feeding all those people?"

"Oh yes," said Latimer-Moire; "they were all talking about it down there."

"Hullo, Stirling," said a young man who had just that moment joined the group. "How about Olivia Carrington? Are you going to see her to-night?"

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West laughed. "Yes," he said, "I'm going to take Gildy to see her."

"You see, Gilderman," said the young fellow, "Stirling's dead gone on the girl. He goes to the Westminster Gardens every night, and takes her out for a spin along the drive every afternoon."

Gilderman looked at West, who again laughed.

"They say you're having Norcott paint her portrait," said Le Roy Barron.

"No, I'm not," said West. "Norcott's doing it off his own bat, for a picture to send to the Academy or somewhere, I believe."

"By-the-way," said Barron, "I see poor old Herod's let them execute John."

"Yes," said West, "we may all thank Salome for that. Tommy Ryan was telling me all about it this morning. It seems that there was something going on down at Herod's place last night, and Ryan was asked. It was a pretty wild sort of affair. After supper, the girl danced for them on the table in the supper-room, *à la* Carrington. I guess they were all pretty lively—anyhow Herod promised he'd give her whatever she'd ask him. And what does that woman, her mother, do but put her up to asking to have poor John the Baptist put out of the way. Herod would have backed out if he could, but the women held him to his promise."

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"By-the-way, Gildy," said Latimer-Moire, "you're sort of on the religious lay; what do you think of all this row?"

Governor Pilate turned and looked briefly at Gilderman.

The question was so sudden that Gilderman did not know what to say. "I don't know that I'm especially on the 'religious lay,' as you call it," he said, after a moment's pause; "but I suppose that every man must believe more or less in something or other."

As he spoke he felt that his words were rather an excuse for his convictions than a proclamation of them.

"You see, governor," said Latimer-Moire, "Gilderman still clings to the old theological superstitions of the past ages—heaven and God and a resurrection of the soul and all that sort of thing. He's a good fellow, is Gildy, but he don't seem to be able to emancipate himself from the shackles of tradition that his grandfather left behind him. Why, Gildy, my boy, nobody believes in anything nowadays."

"Don't they?" said Gilderman. "I think they do. If they don't believe in heaven and God and the resurrection of the soul, as you phrase it, they must believe in the world, the devil, and themselves."

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"You are wrong, Mr. Gilderman," said Governor Pilate, calmly, "so far as I am concerned. I don't believe in anything—not even in myself. I know I like a good dinner and a good glass of wine and a pretty woman, but I don't believe in them. As for all this about Christ, to tell you the truth, I have not followed it very closely, for it doesn't interest me particularly. I have heard a good deal said about it now and then—such as you young men have been talking just now—but I have read nothing of it in the newspapers. I find life too short to read everything that's printed nowadays. If one undertakes to read everything, one reads nothing. I try to pick out what is absolutely needful to me and to leave the rest. I find all I need in the report of current politics and the stock markets."

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Olivia Carrington was acting in the play called "Le Chevalier d'Amour." The great scene that had made such a hit was where she, as the Marquise, dances upon the top of the table in the inn yard, seducing the jailers from their duty while the scamp of a chevalier escapes. Gilderman sat watching the woman in her gyrations amid a cloud of gauzy draperies. He recognized the pleasure he felt in the seductive spectacle as an evil pleasure, rooted in a nether stratum of masculine brutality, but, nevertheless, he yielded himself to it.

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As the girl came forward in answer to the loud applause and bowed her acknowledgment to the house, she shot a glance like a flash at the box where Gilderman and his friend sat. "Isn't she a daisy, Gildy?" said Stirling West enthusiastically, as he continued to clap his hands together.



“Come on around back of the scenes and I’ll introduce you.”

It was thus that the life of the Romans just touched the divine agony of that other life lived by the poor carpenter who was Jehovah-God in the flesh; it was thus that their two lives just touched but did not commingle.

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## VIII

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### ONE OF THEM NAMED CAIAPHAS BEING HIGH-PRIEST THAT SAME YEAR

**D**URING the winter it became more and more certain that Bishop Godkin was dying, and that Dr. Caiaphas would be chosen his successor.

The poor bishop had been sick for nearly a year past. Then the cause of his illness was found to be an internal malignant disease.

At first, even after the nature of the trouble had been diagnosed, he had battled against his mortal sickness, now feeling better and now again more ill, and for a long time his family had hoped against failing hope that it might not be what the physicians had decided it to be. Then, at last, towards the end, came the time when it became no longer possible to disguise the inevitable fact. Bishop Godkin must die—the end was certain and was very near, and nothing, not all the skill of modern surgery, could save him. It was dreadful for Mrs. Godkin and the two Misses Godkin—both elderly spinsters—and they fell, for a time, prostrate under the blow that the attendant physicians had to administer. Then they somewhat rallied again from that prostration, and, after a while, again began now and then to hope, for there were times when there would be a respite in the ghastly sickness.

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Meantime the work upon the unfinished temple was being pushed forward with a renewed vigor after the freezing cold of the winter. Stone by stone, bit by bit, it grew towards its slow completion. It seemed to those poor women, in these dark days of their trouble, to be peculiarly tragic to look out of the broad, clear windows of the bishop’s house, across the open piazza-like square, and to see everything over there at the towering structure so busy and full of life; to hear the ceaseless clink-clicking of hammer and chisel, and now and then the creaking of block-and-tackle; to see always the restless moving of the workmen among the blocks of marble, and the débris scattered about under the sheds in front of the south nave—to see all this and then to think of the muffled stillness of the sick-room over yonder, where, maybe, the physician sat listening patiently to the sick man as he maundered on about his discomforts.

Everybody believed that Dr. Caiaphas would be the next bishop—that is, everybody except Dr. Caiaphas himself. He desired the honor so much that he did not dare let himself believe—hardly to let himself hope. He used to go every day or two to visit the dying man. It was always a distressing task to him, but he resolutely set himself to do it as cheerfully as possible. He used to dread it very much; the sight of the unpreventable squalor of a sick-room, even as comfortable as this, was very revolting to him—the smell of the medicines and the sight of the basins and towels, the half-drawn curtains, the silent, shadow-like movements of the trained nurse, and always the sick man himself—the centre of all this attention—sitting propped among the pillows in a great arm-chair by the table. There were generally flowers in the tall tumbler on the table; they only made everything seem still more ghastly with their insistence of something sweet and pretty where nothing could be sweet and pretty.

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Dr. Caiaphas used to return from such visits with an ever-haunting recollection of that pinched, haggard, eager face that had once been so rosy; of the bent, lean figure that had once been so plump—its helpless hands and its legs wrapped up in blankets—the lean brows already gray with the shadow of approaching death; all these made still more terrible by the attempted comforts of the sick-room.

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At such times, after his return home, Dr. Caiaphas would look around at his beautiful books, his little gems of art, his engravings, his Eastern rugs, his soft, delectable surroundings, and wonder what was the good of them all except to cover over the chasm of death so that for a time he might not see it. That chasm of death! What was there within it? Was there really another and a better life, or only the blackness of oblivion? In a few days now the poor old man who was dying over at the cathedral yonder would have solved the enigma—a few days and he would either be alive again or else he would know nothing at all. Dr. Caiaphas wondered why he had yesterday bought, at so extravagant a price, the Aldine Virgil in its original pigskin binding. How poor and foolish and petty was the joy of ownership of such a thing when a man must die in the end!

Then, one morning while Dr. Caiaphas was busy writing at his book, *The Great Religion of the World*, the serving-man brought him a note. He tore it open and hastily read it. “Dear Dr. Caiaphas,” it said, “come as soon as you can to the bishop’s house. The bishop is sinking rapidly.” It was signed by Dr. Willington.

"Where are you going, Theodore?" said Mrs. Caiaphas, as she met the doctor hurrying down the stairs.

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"My dear, the poor bishop is dying," he said, solemnly.

"Oh, Theodore!" she cried. The first thought that flashed through her mind was of the relation of this coming event to herself—that maybe, at last, her husband was upon the eve of becoming the head of the Church. She put the thought away from her as quickly as she could. "Oh, Theodore!" she cried again.

"Yes, my dear," he said. And then he kissed her and left her.

The bishop was, indeed, dying. There was no mistaking the signs—the broken, irregular, strident breathing; the pale, filmy eyes, the pinched nose, and the cavernous mouth. Dr. Willington and Dr. Clarkson were both present. Dr. Clarkson sat by the bedside, his finger-tips resting lightly upon the lean wrist of the unconscious hand that lay limp upon the coverlet. The trained nurse stood on the other side of the bed, her hands folded and a look as of patient waiting upon her smooth, gentle face. Her cap and her apron added to that look of patient gentleness.

Mr. Bonteen, the rector of the temple, and Mr. Goodman, his assistant, were both present in the room. Mrs. Godkin and her two daughters had been up nearly all night and were not then present. Dr. Willington had just now sent them down to a broken, scrappy breakfast.

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Dr. Caiaphas stood looking down into the face of the dying man. He gazed solemnly and silently. In a little while he also would look like that and be as that—then he turned away. Mr. Bonteen arose and shook hands silently with him. There had been a long lull in the quick, harsh breathing; suddenly it began again. The door opened and Mrs. Godkin came into the room. Dr. Caiaphas arose; she gave him her hand. She pressed her handkerchief to her eyes, and her body was shaken with sobs. He pressed the helpless hand he held. "The Lord," said he, "will temper the wind to the shorn lamb." And then it flashed upon him that he was quoting secular and not sacred words. He looked around but no one else seemed to notice the fact.

About noon Mr. Thomas and Mr. Algernon Godkin, the bishop's two brothers, arrived, and then Dr. Caiaphas went home to lunch. Almost never had he realized the littleness of man's life as now. He could not enjoy the salmi of capon—hardly could he enjoy the Madeira.

At half-past two o'clock Bishop Godkin passed away.

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Dr. Caiaphas was elected his successor. The day that he was chosen was, perhaps, one of the happiest of his life. He went straight to his wife; he seemed to be walking upon air. He found her in her own room, reading a magazine. He took her face between his hands and looked into her eyes. "Mary," he said, "will you wish me joy?"

"Oh, Theodore," she cried, rising and letting the magazine fall to the floor, "have you got it?"

He nodded his head.

She flung her arms around his neck and drew him close to her. It was almost exactly as it had been when, twenty-one years ago, he had told her he had been invited to the living of the Church of the Advent. There were tears in her eyes now as there had been then. They were both of them very happy.

It was arranged that no immediate change as to residence was to be made. Mrs. Godkin and her two daughters were to continue to live at the bishop's house until the coming May, so that, in the mean time, they might have an opportunity of finding another house to suit them. Mrs. Godkin's brother-in-law wanted her to remove to the northern metropolis, but she was too closely identified with her present home and too deeply inrooted in its society to be willing to transplant her life into other and newer ground.

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The newly elected high-priest suggested Dr. Dayton, of the neighboring city, as a fitting one to succeed himself as rector of the Church of the Advent.

"Since we cannot any longer," said Mr. Dorman-Webster, "have Dr. Caiaphas, under whom we have grown up into spiritual manhood through all these years, and whom we love so dearly"—and he reached across the table as he spoke and clasped the new bishop's hand—"I, for one, advise that we shall do the next best thing, and take the man whom he shall nominate."

Bishop Caiaphas wrung Mr. Dorman-Webster's hand in silence—he could not trust himself to speak.

So Dr. Dayton was invited to come over and take the rectorship of the Church of the Advent.

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## IX

### THE MAN BLIND FROM BIRTH

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IT seemed to Bishop Caiaphas that the new rector of the Church of the Advent was disposed to take on himself almost over-zealously the office of a new broom, and to sweep out the corners of the parish so cleanly and so thoroughly that even many of the little pet negligences of his own were likely to be cleared away with other things that could be better spared.

There was, for instance, a poor family in the parish named Kettle. It consisted of a father, a mother, and a blind son. The father, Joseph Kettle, had been a cobbler by trade, but he had become almost completely crippled by rheumatism. The wife, Martha Kettle, Bishop Caiaphas had every reason to think, was a very industrious, worthy, honest woman. She was a particular pensioner of Mrs. Caiaphas's, who used to give the poor woman her cast-off dresses. In these dresses Martha always looked the perfection of neatness and respectability, and Mrs. Caiaphas felt the pleasantness of doing a worthy charity in giving away her cast-off garments to one who looked so well in them. Martha Kettle used to do the greater part of the washing and the finer laundry work for the rectory, and, altogether, the Kettles were quite a part of the family dependants. [97]

The only apparent blot upon the otherwise fair surface of respectability of the Kettle family was the son of this worthy pair, one Tom Kettle, who had been blind from his birth. He was thoroughly bad.

Why the children of apparently respectable poor people so often degenerate into that class of the poor who are not respectable is one of the mysteries of that Providence that so arranges these factors of its divine paradox. The sons of rich people oftentimes fall away from grace, but they are rarely allowed to be altogether lost, no matter how dissipated they may become. The sons of poor people, when they fall away from grace, do generally go altogether to the bad.

Tom Kettle was just such a degeneration from the poor respectability of his parents. He was one of that kind with whom you feel you can do nothing to help them—that they have nothing you can take hold of. They do not seem to have any real affection for you, or any feeling for the kindnesses you do them; they not only do not seem to feel any gratitude, but they do not seem to feel any responsiveness to personal kindness; they do not seem to understand any of the usual requirements of duty or obedience or common honesty. They accept all you do for them with a certain half-sullen acquiescence, but they make no return by becoming better—they do not even attempt to improve themselves. Such a one was Tom Kettle. Bishop Caiaphas had known him for all the twenty odd years that he had been rector of the Church of the Advent, but in all that time he did not feel that he had found anything of Tom Kettle's nature that he could grasp. He used to confess, almost with despair, "I cannot understand him." [98]

When Dr. Caiaphas had first come into the parish the boy was about eight or ten years old. He was a rather fine-looking little fellow at that time, and his mother always kept him well dressed. Dr. Caiaphas was at once very much interested in him, for the misfortune into which the boy had been born appealed very strongly to his sympathies. He managed to get him entered into the public asylum for the blind, there to be educated.

Dr. Caiaphas did not know then, as he afterwards discovered, that Tom was an essentially dishonest boy, mischievous, a liar, and very profane. He saw that he was wilful, but then he felt that much must be forgiven to one who was so afflicted. Tom Kettle did not refuse to go to the asylum, but within two weeks he had run away. Dr. Caiaphas was very angry, for he had been at much trouble to get him entered at the institution. He scolded, and Tom listened sullenly. "I ain't a-goin' back again," said he; "the bread was sour twict, and they don't give you but one help of butter." [99]

Then Tom's mother began pleading for him, and the upshot of it was that he was not returned to the asylum—and the authorities were very willing that he should not be again sent to them.

Perhaps, if Tom Kettle had had his eyesight he would have been a professional thief; as it was, he had become a professional beggar. He was away from home more than half the time, and no one knew how he was living or what he was doing. His mother used to cry over his transgressions.

Such as this was the man blind from his birth who sat begging by the road-side when Christ passed by.

Christ opened his eyes, for the divine mercy draws no distinction between the righteous and the sinner—unless it be to pity the sinner. [100]

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One day Dr. Dayton almost burst in upon Bishop Caiaphas as he sat in his study.

"Bishop," he said, "do you know a fellow named Tom Kettle?"

The bishop leaned back in his well-worn, leather chair almost with a sigh. He felt that the new broom was about to begin sweeping again. "Tom Kettle, the blind man?" he asked.

"Blind?" said Dr. Dayton. "Are you sure he ever was blind?"

"Why, yes," said the bishop. "I am as morally sure of it as I can be of anything."

"To be morally sure and actually sure are two very different things," said Dr. Dayton. "What do you really know of this man and his family?"

Dr. Dayton often catechised Bishop Caiaphas in this way, and the bishop did not like it. It did not seem right that he should be so questioned and cross-questioned by the man whom he himself had installed in the vacant pulpit of the Church of the Advent; but he answered very patiently. "I am afraid that Tom Kettle is a sad black sheep. As for his parents, I have always found them good, decent, respectable people. We—Mrs. Caiaphas and I—have known them almost ever since we have come here."

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"Have you often given clothes to them?" pursued Dr. Dayton, remorselessly.

The bishop winced uncomfortably. He fingered the papers on his desk. "I believe," he said, "now and then Mrs. Caiaphas has given clothes to Martha Kettle."

Dr. Dayton laughed. "I am sure she has," he said. "As for Mrs. Kettle, she is, indeed, a very thrifty woman. Perhaps you do not know, bishop, that for some time past she has been habitually selling the clothes that Mrs. Caiaphas has given to her. She sells them to the poorer neighbors in the house in which she lives. She cleans them and mends them, and then sells them."

Bishop Caiaphas could not believe this. "Oh, doctor," he said, "surely you are mistaken in this. I have known Martha Kettle intimately for years, and I cannot believe she would do such a thing."

Dr. Dayton laughed again. "My dear friend," he said, laying his hand on the bishop's shoulder, "the fact is that your warmly affectionate nature lays you peculiarly open to the attacks of designing people. Only yesterday this woman sold a black dress that Mrs. Caiaphas had given her to a poor sewing-woman on the flat above. A great many little things make me think that these Kettles are more sly than simple. The poor people in the parish have seen that they were—if I may so phrase it—pets of yours and of Mrs. Caiaphas's, and many things that you might have known have been kept from you because they were afraid to tell."

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Poor Bishop Caiaphas felt that the new broom had swept out a corner that was especially dear to him. Added to this was that singular bitterness that one feels in finding that one's impulses of charity and generosity have been imposed upon. He tried to excuse Martha Kettle, but he felt that if what Dr. Dayton said were true, Martha could never be the same to him again. "Well," he said, after a pause, "I don't quite see the heinousness of this offence. The clothes were given to her, and she could do as she chose with them. I had rather she had worn them herself, but, after they were given to her, I don't see that I could dictate what she should do with them."

"Just so," said Dr. Dayton; "but, if you will forgive me, I think it would have been wiser not to have given her so much. However, that is only a little matter—a straw that may show the drift of the wind. What I chiefly came to you about was concerning this man Tom Kettle. I have only spoken of this other little thing because I have questioned in my own mind whether this family that you have helped so liberally, and who have deceived you so entirely in small things, may not have deceived you in great things. This is why I asked you if you were sure that Tom Kettle was really blind. Day before yesterday he met this Healer that the poor people are making such a hubbub about. He came back with his eyesight as sharp as is mine at this very minute. He claims that he was miraculously cured. Is it not possible that these people have been deceiving you all this time, and that the man never was blind? I don't know how you yourself feel about all this business, bishop," he continued, "but to me such trifling with things sacred is very revolting."

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"Very," said Bishop Caiaphas. Then he sat in thoughtful silence for a while. "This is very dreadful to me, Dayton," he said, at last—"very dreadful, indeed. I cannot even yet believe that the parents of this man are really as deceitful as you suspect them to be. I think they erred in turning my charity into a matter of sordid gain, but I do not think they could have deceived me in such a thing as Tom's blindness. I confess, however, that you have sadly shaken my confidence in them."

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"You do not believe this man's story, do you? You don't believe that Tom Kettle has been miraculously cured?"

"I cannot believe it—of course, I cannot believe it."

"Then what other alternative is there but to believe that these people have been deceiving you all these years? Tom Kettle himself is a thorough-going rogue. He is doing a great mischief now, for I find the poor people throughout the parish are actually inclined to listen to his story. I find they are talking a great deal about it, and it is my opinion that if some immediate means are not taken to deal very drastically with this case that is so palpably thrust upon us, we shall have still more of these poor, misguided people flocking away from the Church to follow after Christ."

The bishop still sat thoughtfully. "What would you recommend?" he said, after a while.

"Well, if you ask my advice, I should recommend that you appoint a committee to examine into this man's story; and if we find—as I am sure we shall find—that he is playing a trick upon the community, that he—and, if need be, his parents—be dismissed from the communion of the Church."

"Oh, Dayton," said the bishop, "could you do such a thing as that? Could you come between a man and his God?"

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"No," said Dr. Dayton, "but I would thrust myself between a rotten sheep and my wholesome

flock, that may else become contaminated, even if, in doing so, that one sheep should be sacrificed."

Again the bishop sat for a while in moody silence. He was turning a lead-pencil around and around between his fingers. "Very well," he said, at last, "I shall appoint a committee, as you recommend. How would day after to-morrow do for them to meet?"

"At what time?"

"Well, say nine o'clock in the evening, here at the rectory."

"Very well; that will suit me."

After the visitor had gone, the bishop went straight to his wife and told her what he had heard about Martha Kettle.

"I don't believe it," said Mrs. Caiaphas, promptly.

"I am afraid it is true," said the bishop.

"If it is," said Mrs. Caiaphas, "I will never give her another stitch as long as I live."

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The evening that the committee was to meet at the rectory, Gilderman and his wife dined with the bishop and Mrs. Caiaphas. After the dinner Gilderman was to go up to the club. A reception was to be given to Secretary Titus, and he was one of the committee appointed to receive the guest of the club. [106]

When Gilderman had married Dr. Caiaphas's daughter it had provoked no small degree of talk in the particular social set to which he belonged. It was regarded as a distinct *mésalliance* upon his part, and his aunt, Mrs. de Monteserrat, had been so offended that she had refused to attend the wedding, and had not even yet fully taken him with his wife into her favor again.

Dr. Caiaphas maintained a very philosophical attitude concerning his daughter's exalted marriage. "I believe Henry is a good, kind man," he had been heard to declare, "or else I would not have trusted so precious a gift as my dear daughter into his keeping."

Nevertheless, in his heart of hearts he was enormously elated at her great good-fortune; for a family alliance of an ecclesiastic of even so high a position as Dr. Caiaphas enjoyed, with a young Roman of such an exalted altitude as Gilderman, was a matter to bring great glory not only upon the young wife herself, but upon her entire family. It meant that the ægis of his power and wealth and influence was to be extended over all the other sons and daughters—it made possible opportunities of the highest advancement for the young men, and possible alliances of the same social magnitude for the girls. [107]

Dr. Caiaphas was very paternal towards his son-in-law, and the young man was very filial towards his wife's father. Nevertheless, when Gilderman came occasionally with his wife to the rectory—to dine, perhaps, with the family—it was as though he descended, bringing her with him, from an exalted altitude to a plane of a lower atmosphere.

He was very dutiful, very kind, very docile, but there was, nevertheless, a certain air of remoteness about him, and neither he nor they forgot that he was Henry Herbert Gilderman, the grandson of James Quincy Gilderman.

Upon this occasion Gilderman sat with the family in the library for a while after dinner.

Already the house was beginning to assume that cluttered appearance that foreshadows the actual time for moving.

"It is dreadful," said Mrs. Gilderman, "to think of leaving the dear old home. I cannot remember any but this. Horace"—Horace was Mrs. Gilderman's brother and the bishop's eldest son—"Horace himself was only eight years old when papa and mamma moved here." [108]

"By-the-way," said Gilderman, "when do you expect Horace?"

"I don't know," said Mrs. Caiaphas. "We hoped that he would be here some time during the latter part of the month, but I doubt now if he will be on until May. He says these fishery negotiations are keeping them all very busy just now."

Gilderman laughed. "I dare say," he said, "that the government might dispense with Horace for a few weeks if he would make a special point of it."

"I don't know," said Mrs. Caiaphas; "he writes that he's very busy."

The two younger daughters, Ella and Frances—slim, angular girls—the one of twelve, the other of fourteen, were sitting under the light of the table-lamp reading. Ella, the elder of the two, kept her finger-tips corked tightly in her ears to shut out the conversation while she read. The others sat by the fire, Mrs. Caiaphas shading her face from the blaze with a folded newspaper. The bishop appeared to be very preoccupied. Every now and then Mrs. Caiaphas glanced towards him from behind the newspaper. "Don't worry so much about those Kettles, Theodore," said she.

He looked up, almost with a start. Then he laughed. "Why, I don't think that I was worrying about the Kettles," he said. "I was thinking about raising money to finish that central light of the great chancel window at the cathedral. Mrs. Hapgood had promised fifty thousand dollars towards it before she died, but she left no provision for it in her will, and her heirs do not seem willing to carry out her intentions."

"How much will it cost to finish it?" said Gilderman.

"Well," said the bishop, "according to the plan of White & Wall it will cost between sixty and eighty thousand dollars."

"Whew!" whistled Gilderman. Then presently he asked: "Couldn't it be done for less than that?"

"It might," said the bishop; "but White & Wall's design is very beautiful."

"It ought to be," said Gilderman. "Look here, sir; why don't you get a lot of your friends together—Dorman-Webster and the rest of those old fellows—and put it to them? I dare say you could raise it in that way."

"Well, you see," said the bishop, "they've all contributed so liberally lately that I don't like to press them too far." Then he turned to Gilderman. "You, for instance—how much would you be willing to contribute?" he said.

Gilderman laughed. He, too, had given a good deal of money to the church of late, and he did not want to give any more just now. "Oh, I don't know," he said. "I wouldn't mind giving you two or three thousand."

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The bishop smiled. "That wouldn't go far," he said, "and I rather fancy that others may feel as you do." He looked up at the clock. "Will the study be ready for the committee, my dear?" he asked.

"Yes," said Mrs. Caiaphas. "I told John to have it cleared as soon as we were through dinner."

The committee began arriving a few minutes after the hour. The first arrival was Dr. Dayton. He came directly into the library, almost with the air of ownership. Indeed, the house was really his now, and the bishop was only there on sufferance until the late bishop's family should vacate at the temple quadrangle house. After the first few words of greeting, he and the bishop presently began talking about the matter in hand. Gilderman sat listening to them.

"But these poor people believe these things," said Gilderman, cutting in at one point of the conversation.

"If they believe they must be taught to disbelieve," said Dr. Dayton. "All this insane and irrational enthusiasm of religion," he continued, "is very revolting to me." He stood before the fire as he spoke, his legs a little apart and his hands clasped behind his back. "Surely," he continued, "as we are images of God we must know that God is the perfection of rationality. What pleasure, then, can such senseless irrationality be to Him? That which delights God is the offering of common-sense."

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So spoke Dr. Dayton very positively, as though he knew exactly what God liked and what He did not like.

Presently others of the committee began to come, and then the bishop and Dr. Dayton went into the dining-room.

Gilderman sat for a while listening to the intermittent talk between mother and daughter. The time was drawing very near when Mrs. Gilderman should be confined, and Gilderman was at times almost startled at the directness of the talk between the two. "I wonder if they would object," he said, after a while, "if I went into the dining-room? I would like very much to hear this examination of Tom Kettle."

"Why, no, Henry," said Mrs. Caiaphas. "I am sure they wouldn't object at all."

Gilderman hesitated for a moment or two; then he got up and sauntered out of the room.

When he came into the dining-room, he found the company all seated around the table, and Tom Kettle standing before them. He was a rather short, thick-set man, with a heavy, sullen, if not lowering countenance. His eyes were small and set far apart, his cheek-bones wide, and his face short, giving him somewhat the look of a male cat. He winked and blinked in the light, as though his eyes were still weak and his sight tender.

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Joseph and Martha Kettle sat in the farther part of the room, close against the wall. Mrs. Caiaphas had given Martha Kettle a "talking-to," and they were both subdued, almost frightened. Bishop Caiaphas was conducting the examination. He had evidently just asked Tom Kettle how it was he had received his sight. "He put clay on my eyes," said Tom, briefly, almost sullenly. "Then I went and washed as He told me, and now I can see."

"How long had you been blind before this happened to you?" asked Dr. Dayton.

"Why," said Kettle, "that you know as well as I do. I always was blind—I never did see."

"And do you mean to say," said Dr. Dayton, "that Christ cured you by simply rubbing dirt on

your eyes?"

"Yes, sir," said the man.

"And you think it was a miracle?"

[113]

"You see it's a miracle," said the man. "I couldn't see before, and now I do see."

"That is not possible," said Dr. Dayton. "A man who consorts, as this Man does, with sinners and harlots and outcasts of all kinds could not do such a thing. Such as He could have no power from God, and so He could not cure you as you say He did."

Perhaps all of the committee thought that Dr. Dayton was taking too much on himself in the conduct of the examination. He was a newcomer among them, and it was not becoming that he should arrogate to himself the conduct of the meeting, even though the case did come within the jurisdiction of his own parish.

Mr. Goodman, Mr. Bonteen's assistant at the temple, was one of the committee. He was a man of very broad and liberal opinions—too broad and liberal most people thought. "Stop a bit, doctor," he said, "let us be fair. The fact that Christ's associates are of such a sort does not proclaim Him Himself to be abandoned. If He had really been sent from God to regenerate mankind He would naturally begin with those people who underlie society, would He not?"

"I don't know about that," said Dr. Dayton, crossly. "My own observation teaches me that a man cannot be good with evil associates. You know yourself what the Divine Word says—'With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward.'" [114]

"That is very true," said Mr. Goodman, "but, after all, this question of good and evil is entirely relative. What these people see as being evil we do not see as being evil; what they see as being good we do not. Do you not think it is a matter for serious question?"

"It is a matter of common-sense," said Dr. Dayton, almost brusquely.

Mr. Goodman smiled and shrugged his shoulders, but his cheeks grew a little flushed. The other members of the committee felt very uncomfortable.

"What do you say of this Man that cured you?" said Bishop Caiaphas.

"I say he's a prophet," said the man.

Dr. Dayton laughed. "I think it's much more likely that you're a rogue, my friend. The age of miracles is past and done. In this day of light we do not see miracles, nor does God operate in any other way than according to His divine law of order and of common-sense. When a man who is blind receives his sight, he does it through an orderly change of his body, that is just as perfect and just as slow and according to divine order as the creation of light itself is according to divine order. Health and disease must always be according to order, and cannot be in any other way." [115]

The man looked steadily at Dr. Dayton as he was speaking. "I don't know just what you mean," he said, "but if you mean that I wasn't blind before, I only know that I was blind. Here are my father and mother—you can ask them."

The man and his wife were sitting at the far end of the room, as close to the wall as possible, and side by side. Seeing the eyes of the committee fixed upon them, the father slowly arose, holding his cane somewhat tremulously in his hand. He had a weak face and a retreating chin and a twitching movement about the jaw.

"Is this man your son?" said Dr. Hopkinson, of St. David's Church.

"Yes, sir, he be," said the man. The woman also had risen and stood close to her husband, but a little behind him.

"Are you sure he has been blind for all these years?"

"Yes, sir," said the father, "I am sure of that. You see, he couldn't pretend to be blind all these years and me and his mother not know it."

"Do you know how it is that he is now able to see?" [116]

The man wiped a tremulous hand across his mouth; the fingers were knotted and twisted with rheumatism. He looked hesitatingly around upon the circle of eyes fixed upon him. "I don't know, gentlemen," he said, "about it at all. I know the man's our son, gentlemen, and I know he was born blind. But how he comes to see now, and who it was that opened his eyes, I don't know nothing about. He is of age, gentlemen all; ask him. He will speak for hisself."

It was very plain that the man was afraid of the committee.

Dr. Dayton turned to Tom Kettle. "My friend," he said, "give to God the glory and the praise for this wonderful thing that has happened to you. As for this Man—we all know He is a sinner."

Tom Kettle listened sullenly. "I don't know about that," he said, "whether He is a sinner or not. One thing I do know: I was blind before, and now I see."

"Come," said another minister—a Mr. Parker—"come, my friend, tell us truly what the Man did to you."



The man turned his face towards the last speaker, winking quiveringly as the bright light fell upon his eyes. "I've told you," he said, with a sudden burst of irritation—"I've told you before what the Man did to me. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to go and be His disciples?"

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"You forget yourself, my fine fellow," said Dr. Dayton, "and you forget where you are. We are the disciples of God. As for this Fellow—who is He?"

The man looked impudently into Dr. Dayton's face. "Why," said he, "here is a strange thing. You do not know where this Man comes from, and yet He opened my eyes, and just because He did that you say He's a sinner. Did you ever hear of any other man opening the eyes of a man born blind? How could this Man do it if He wasn't from God?"

"You were born in sin and you live in sin," said Dr. Dayton; "do you, then, mean to teach us—ministers of God?"

"Come, come, Tom, that'll do," said the bishop; "don't say anything more. It doesn't do any good."

Gilderman stood looking on at all this scene. It seemed to him that Dr. Dayton was very disagreeable, and he disliked him exceedingly. Just then a servant came in and whispered to Gilderman, from Mrs. Gilderman, that the carriage was waiting. "All right," said Gilderman, "tell her I'll be there immediately."

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He was curious to see the result of the meeting. He lingered for a few moments, but the members of the committee were talking together. Tom Kettle still stood sullenly at the head of the table. Gilderman was very curious to hear from the man's own lips just what had happened to him, but there were no more questions asked, and he did not have an opportunity to speak to him.

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When Gilderman came out to the carriage with his wife the Kettles had just quitted the rectory. They were walking up the drive to the street and they did not at first know that Mr. and Mrs. Gilderman were so near. Tom Kettle was talking in a loud, violent voice, and his parents were trying in vain to silence him. "I don't care a damn," he was saying; "I don't care if they do turn me out of the Church—what do I care?"

"Hush, hush, Tom!" said the mother; "don't talk so loud; they'll hear you."

"I don't care if they do hear me," said he. "They ain't done nothing for me. He made me see. I know that, and they can't make me say nothing else. They may go to hell! I know what He did to me."

"Hush, hush, Tom!" they could hear Mrs. Kettle saying. "There's Mr. Gilderman."

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"Isn't it dreadful!" said Mrs. Gilderman. She and Gilderman were standing under the *porte-cochère*.

"Yes—yes; I suppose it is," said Gilderman. Then he suddenly called out: "Here, Tom; come here a minute. I want to speak to you."

Although Tom Kettle had said that he did not care for any of them, he had ceased his loud, violent talking. He did not come at Gilderman's bidding. "If you want to speak to me," he said, "you can come to me—I'm not coming to you."

"Very well," said Gilderman, "I will come." He went down the steps and along the driveway to where the three figures stood in the gloom beyond the verge of light of the electric lantern. They made no attempt to escape, but it seemed to him that they shrank at the approach of his powerful presence.

"It ain't our fault, Mr. Gilderman," said Martha Kettle, almost crying. "He will talk, and I can't stop him."

"No, you can't," said Tom Kettle, sullenly but defiantly.

"That's all right, Martha," said Gilderman. "Look here, Tom; I want you to tell me all the truth about this. What did Christ do to you?"

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The man looked stubborn and lowering. "You heard me tell 'em in yonder, didn't you?" said he. "Why do you ask me again?"

"Because I want to know. How did He do it? What did He do to you?"

Tom Kettle looked at him suspiciously for a little space. Then a sudden impulse seemed to seize him to tell the story. "All right; I'll tell you," he said. "I was sitting alongside the road, and I heard Him coming. I knew He was somewheres about, and I knew it was Him as soon as I heard Him coming."

"How did you know it?"

"I don't know—I just knew it. The people were all saying, 'Here He is' and 'There He goes.' I just thought maybe He can cure me of my blindness. I called out to Him, 'Have mercy on me!' They

told me to be still, but I wouldn't. I just kept on calling, 'Have mercy on me!'"

"What did you do that for?"

"I don't know. Well, He stopped by-and-by and He says, 'What do you want me to do to you?' I says, 'Open my eyes.'"

"What did He do then?"

"He talked with the people for a while. I don't remember what He said; then, after a little bit, I felt Him rub something on my eyes that felt like wet dirt. Then He said to me, 'Go wash yourself.' There was a stream of water running there, and a bank down from the road. I went down the bank and across a bit of field. I kneeled down by the water. One of my hands was in the water—it was that cold it cut like a knife. Then I washed my face. I thought I had gone crazy." [121]

"Could you see then?"

"I could, indeed, Mr. Gilderman—so help me God, I could! I didn't know what had happened to me at first. It just seemed as though my eyes was all broke up into pieces, and they moved about as I moved. I got up and ran away, and as I did so all these pieces seemed to move about. I thought I'd gone crazy."

"Come, Henry!" called Mrs. Gilderman.

"In a moment, dear. Where was this?"

"Over yonder."

"What are you going to do now?"

"I don't know. I'm going to find Him if I can."

"Who? The Man who healed you?"

"Yes."

Gilderman had been feeling in his vest pocket. "Here, Tom," he said, "take this."

Kettle shrank back. "I don't want your money," he said, resentfully, and then he turned away. [122]

Gilderman, as he went back to the carriage, wondered passively why Tom Kettle did not take the money. He felt that he could not just understand the workings of the man's soul.

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## X

### A VOICE FROM THE DEAD

THE De Witts were cousins of the Gildermans. Nearly all the great metropolitan plutocratic families were either allied or connected with one another, and the De Witts and the Gildermans were doubly connected by marriage in the generation of Gilderman's father. [123]

The De Witts had been building a country-house some little distance out of the city and not far from the water. The architects and builders and landscape gardeners had been at work upon it for over a year. It was now about completed, and it was the intention of the family to open the house in May. It was not even yet quite furnished, but it was so nearly so that it was practically inhabitable. The stables had been filled, and a corps of servants had been sent down under Mrs. Lukens the housekeeper and Dolan the head-groom. Halliday, the gardener, already had the green-houses and the palm-house looking as though they had been in operation for twenty years. The grounds, under the direction of Mr. Blumenthal, had been laid out in a rather elaborate imitation of a foreign park. He had planted clumps of oak-trees nearly full-grown, which he had transplanted at an enormous cost of money and labor. The arrangement of the clumps of rhododendrons and other flowering shrubs was, indeed, a work of art. The great park, together with the paddock and the kitchen-garden, occupied nearly a mile square of ground that had become very valuable as suburban property. The estate included several acres of ground in the northwestern suburb of the neighboring town. [124]

There was very delightful society in the neighborhood: the Lacey, the Morgans and the Ap-Johns all had country-houses in the immediate neighborhood.

The De Witts were going down to Brookfield for a last look at the house before its completion. They had asked Gilderman to go along. He was not especially interested in the new house; indeed, he had become rather bored by all the talk and discussion concerning it in the De Witt household for a year past. He had at first declined to go, and then had accepted, having nothing else that morning especially to interest or to occupy him. The party who went down consisted of Tom De Witt and his mother and two sisters and Sam Tilghman. Tilghman was engaged to be married to Bertha De Witt, the younger daughter. [125]

Nearly all the trains stopped at Brookfield Junction, so that one had practically the choice of any time to reach there. It was this accessibility to the metropolis that made the place so valuable

for suburban-residence purposes. The party went down on the eleven o'clock express. De Witt had engaged the whole forward section of the parlor-car, and they were entirely secluded from all the rest of the train. They saw nobody at all but themselves, excepting the negro porter; for the conductor collected the tickets of the party from De Witt's man outside.

Almost as soon as they were safely ensconced in their compartment, Tom De Witt frankly took out a newspaper from his overcoat pocket and began to skim through it. He glanced up from it as the train began moving out of the station, and then instantly resumed his perusal. It took twenty minutes or more to run down to Brookfield, and De Witt read his paper nearly all the while. The rest of the party talked together in a dropping, intermittent sort of a fashion. The De Witt girls had a bored, tired expression that was habitual with them, and which was due, perhaps, to the heavy droop of their eyelids and the slight parting of their lips. They looked very much alike, and were both handsome after a certain fashion. [126]

The train made no stop short of Brookfield Junction. As it whirled swiftly and tumultuously past the several stations nearer and nearer to Brookfield, Gilderman, looking out of the broad plate-glass windows, could see that the platforms were nearly all more or less crowded with people.

"I wonder what all the people are waiting for?" he said, at last. "Do you suppose it has anything to do with that Man they are making such a stir about?"

"I suppose so," said Tilghman.

"Isn't it dreadful?" said Clara De Witt. "There's Brookfield, such a nice, quiet place, and now it is all full of these dreadful crowds who come just to see the Man and to hear Him preach. I think it's perfectly dreadful. It ought to be stopped; indeed, it ought."

"How the deuce would you stop it, Clara?" said De Witt, looking around the edge of his newspaper. "The people have a right to go where they please, so long as they behave themselves."

"I don't care," said Miss De Witt. "If I were in Pilate's place I wouldn't let these wretched people come crowding after that Man the way they do. It's dreadful; that's what it is." [127]

Sam Tilghman burst out laughing. "Well, Clara," he said, "we'll put you up for nomination next time. If we only had you now in the place of poor old Herod, you'd make things hum, and no mistake, and you'd be ever so much more proper."

Gilderman listened to the silly, vapid words as though they were removed from him. He was thinking about the Man himself. How very interesting it would be if he could really see Him and hear Him speak. If he chose to go to see Him he might perhaps behold one of those miraculous cures, and could know for himself whether they were real or whether they were false.

"Hullo, Henry!" said Tom De Witt, suddenly. "Here's an editorial about that blind man you were telling us about the other day—that fellow they turned out of the Church."

"What does it say?" said Gilderman.

De Witt did not offer the paper to Gilderman. He ran his eye down the editorial. "It doesn't seem to be very complimentary to the bishop," he said. "The editor fellow seems to think it was no fault of the fellow's own that he was cured, and that they oughtn't to have turned him out of the Church just because he got his eyesight back again."

"That wasn't the reason," said Gilderman.

"It's a deuced pretty state of affairs, anyhow," said Tilghman, "if the bishop isn't fit to decide who's fit to belong to the Church and who's not fit. If the bishop isn't able to decide, who is able to decide? Ain't that so, Gildy?" [128]

"I don't know," said Gilderman.

They were coming nearer and nearer to Brookfield. The scattered frame houses, some of them pretentiously villa-like, grew more and more frequent. Here and there were newly projected streets sliced out across the fields.

"You get the first view of the house just beyond here," said Mrs. De Witt.

Gilderman leaned forward to look out of the window in the direction she had indicated. The train was passing through a railroad cut through the side of a little hill. As it swept rapidly out from the cut Gilderman saw the distant slope of the hill, scattered over with clumps of trees and bushes. In a thicker cluster of trees at the top of the rise he could see the white gables and the long façade of the house, with a glimpse of the conservatories behind it. As he stooped forward, looking, a thicker cluster of frame houses arose and shut out the view.

The engine whistled hoarsely. Tom De Witt was folding up his newspaper. The train began to slacken its speed and there was a general bustle of preparation. De Witt's man came in the car and held his top-coat for him while he slipped into it. Then he helped Gilderman and then Sam Tilghman. As Gilderman settled himself into his overcoat and took out his gloves, he could see through the window the quick-passing glimpse of streets and thicker and thicker cluster of houses. Now there would be an open field-like lot and then more houses. There were everywhere groups of people. They looked up at the train as it rushed past with a gradually decreasing speed. There was a shrieking of the brakes and a shuddering of the train as it rapidly approached the [129]

station.

"This is Brookfield," said the negro porter, as he flung open the door with a crash.

With a final shudder and strain, the train stopped in front of a somewhat elaborately artistic station, the platform of which was filled with a restless throng of people.

"Oh, what a horrid crowd!" said Bertha De Witt.

"I suppose it's got something to do with that Man we hear so much about," said Miss De Witt.

"You can't help that," said Tom De Witt. "They have a right to go where they please, and to crowd as they choose, and so you must just put up with it."

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The colored porter placed a carpet-covered step for them, and helped the ladies officiously down to the platform. He touched his hat and bowed elaborately as Gilderman gave him a dollar. The crowd stared at them as the party descended from the coach. De Witt's man made a way for them through the throng, and they followed after him across the platform and through the station and out upon another covered platform beyond.

"Fetch up the traps as quick as you can, Simpkins," said Tom De Witt.

"Yes, sir," said the man, tipping his hat.

There were a number of hacks and wagons and 'busses occupying the space in front of the platform. De Witt's landau and dog-cart stood on the other side of the station in front of a greenstone building that seemed to be a drug-store and grocery-store combined. De Witt's man bustled about urging the drivers of the hacks and 'busses to move them out of the way to make room by the side of the platform. The De Witt party stood in a little group crowded close together. They talked with one another in low tones, and the people stood about staring remotely at them. Mrs. De Witt put up her lorgnette to her eyes and stared back sweepingly at the crowd. Presently the landau drew up to the platform with a jingle and clinking of polished chains and bits, a pawing of hoofs, and a switching of cropped tails. The footman, with breeches so tight to his legs that they fairly seemed to crack, jumped down and opened the door.

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"You'll go over with the ladies, Sam," said Tom De Witt to Tilghman. "I'll drive Gilderman myself in the dog-cart."

"All right," said Tilghman, and he stepped briskly in after Bertha De Witt. The door closed with a crash, the footman jumped up in his place, and the coach swung out of the way with another jingle of chains to make room for the dog-cart.

They were all perfectly oblivious of the surrounding crowd, who stood looking on.

The groom stood at the horse's head while Gilderman stepped into the cart. De Witt followed him; he swung the horse's head around, and the groom ran and scrambled up behind into the cart as it rattled away. The train had begun to draw off from the station. The horse pulled strongly at the reins, and De Witt drew him in with a flush of red in his thin cheeks. Gilderman looked back at the station. It appeared flat and low from the distance, its platform crowded with people. As the train moved more and more swiftly, the horse began prancing. "Whoa!" said De Witt. He gave the animal a sharp cut with the whip that made it spring with a jerk. Then they rattled away briskly and steadily.

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From the suburbs you could just catch a glimpse of the ell of the house. It was surrounded by trees, which were intended in the summertime to shut out the view of the town entirely. The house looked out upon the open country and across the low hills towards the wide water.

"That's the Ap-Johns' place," said De Witt, pointing with his whip. Gilderman could see a brown villa in the extreme distance.

Then they rattled down the hill and through the great park gates. Two large linden-trees, which Mr. Blumenthal had had transplanted, stood on either side of the great gateway and shaded the two gate-houses. There was a transplanted hedge and a bit of an old wall with carved stone copings. Mr. Blumenthal had made the gate and the surroundings look as though they had been standing for a hundred and fifty years.

"How do you like it?" said De Witt.

"Stunning!" said Gilderman.

Tilghman and the ladies were just getting out of the landau as the dog-cart rattled up to the portico of the main front. Gilderman jumped out and stood looking about him. The view was beautiful. He had not seen it since the summer before. He was surprised at the change. When he had last been there he had looked out upon a rather garish, sloping meadow open to the sky. There had been a great deal of lumber scattered about, and the earth was trampled naked and bare. There had been a mortar-bed, and beyond, down the slope, there had been a fence and a field, shaggy with long, rusty, feathery grass. Now everything was trim and neat. A long gravel roadway circled in a great sweep around a wide spread of lawn, framed in by clumps and clusters of trees and rhododendron bushes. You got a glimpse of the stream at the bottom of the slope and a fringe of willows; beyond that a strip of lawnlike paddock, another hill, and then, far away, a thread of the broad stretch of water.

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The trees were bare of leaves as yet, but Gilderman could see that it would all be very beautiful in the later spring and summer. They stood for a while enjoying the view. Then they all went into the house. Marcy, who was the architect, met them in the hall. With fine tact, he had not intruded his presence upon them until now. He was a soft, refined, gentle-spoken man, with a delicate, sensitive, almost effeminate face. His hair was parted in the middle, and his beard trimmed to a point. "Well, Mr. De Witt," he said, "I hope you are satisfied with the final result."

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"Yes, indeed, Marcy," said De Witt.

"You have done admirably, Mr. Marcy," said Mrs. De Witt, in her stateliest manner. Mr. Marcy smiled indefinitely, with another flash of his white teeth under his brown mustache.

"This hall is stunning," said Gilderman, looking about him.

Marcy turned towards him. "I'm glad you like it, Mr. Gilderman," he said. "It'll be very much improved when the paintings are hung. I think the stairway and the landing above is rather a happy inspiration, if I may say so."

"Stunning!" said Tilghman.

"Where did you get those chairs, De Witt?" said Gilderman.

"Inkerman picked them up for me at the Conti sale. They came from the Pinazi Palace, you know. Good, ain't they?" and De Witt passed his hand over the tapestried upholstery almost affectionately.

Just then the housekeeper appeared and dropped a courtesy as she came in at the library doorway.

"Oh, Mrs. Lukens," said Mrs. De Witt, "I wish you'd have luncheon promptly at one o'clock. Mr. Gilderman wants to go back to town on the half-past two o'clock train."

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"Yes, ma'am," said Mrs. Lukens, dropping another courtesy, and again Mr. Marcy smiled with a flash of his beautiful white teeth.

"I'd like to begin by taking you up-stairs, Mr. De Witt," he said.

"Very well," said De Witt. And then the whole party moved across the hall to begin the inspection of the house.

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Gilderman rode back to the station behind the same smart horse, and with the same groom that had brought him over. The groom drove the horse very much faster than Tom De Witt had done. As they spun along the level stretch of road, Gilderman put up his hand, holding his hat against the wind, the smoke from his cigar blowing back in his eyes.

The groom checked the horse to a walk as they ascended the steep hill beyond which lay the town. "By-the-way, John," said Gilderman, suddenly, "there seems to be a good deal of interest hereabouts about that Man they're talking so much of just now."

The groom glanced quickly, almost suspiciously, at Gilderman, and then back at the horse again. "Yes, sir," he said. "They do be running after Him a lot, one way and another, about here."

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"What do you think about Him yourself, John?" said Gilderman, curiously.

The man was plainly disinclined to talk. "I don't know, sir," he said. "I don't know that I think anything at all about Him. It ain't no concern of mine, sir."

"Then you don't believe in Him?" said Gilderman. "I'd really like to know."

Again the man glanced swiftly at Gilderman. "I don't know, sir," he said. And then, after a pause, somewhat cautiously: "He have done some mighty strange things, sir."

"What do you mean?" said Gilderman, forbearing to look at him.

"Oh, I don't know; but He have been doing some strange things, sir. There was a man down here a week ago last Sunday as was blind. He just rubbed some dirt over his eyes, and they do say it cured him."

Gilderman did not say anything as to his knowledge of Tom Kettle.

Presently the groom continued: "There was a man down here was a great friend of His'n. He died last Tuesday, and they say he wouldn't have died if He had been here. But He was away and the man died kind of sudden like. He had been sick, but nobody knowed he was that sick. They do say the Man could bring him back to life if He chose. I don't believe in it myself, sir; but that's what they do say. They've got the dead man in a vault over at the cemetery, and they won't bury him till the Other has seen him."

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"Oh, then He isn't hereabouts?" said Gilderman.

"He was here," said the man; "but He went away last Sunday. They say He's going down to the city some day soon, and He's making His plans for it. He was to come back here by noon to-day."

"Oh, then that's why all those crowds were waiting at the stations, I suppose," said Gilderman.

"Yes, sir," said the groom. "They was waiting to see Him."

"Who was the man who died?" said Gilderman, after a little pause.

"Why, sir, to tell you the honest truth," said the groom, "I've often seen him, but I don't know much about him. He lived down in yon part of the village"—pointing with his whip—"with his two sisters. One of the women appears to be good enough, and nobody says anything against her, but the other—well, sir, she's been a pretty bad lot, and that's the truth. They tell me they used to do all they could to keep her to home, but she wouldn't stay. She's at home now, but she was down in the city nigh all last winter. Her brother didn't try to make her stay at home, and he couldn't make her stay if he tried—she's just a bad lot, and that's all there is of it. They do say she's different now, but you know what that amounts to with that kind."

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Gilderman laughed. The man, now that he was started, was disposed to be loquacious. The groom shot a quick look at him. They had already reached the top of the hill. The declivity upon the side stretched away down to the town, and in the extreme distance Gilderman could see the low, flat roof of the station. He looked at his watch; it was twenty-seven minutes past two.

"I'll get you there in good time, sir," said the groom. Then he chirruped to the horse. The animal gathered itself up with a start and then sped away down the road past the scattered houses and the embryo streets staked out across the open fields.

"Did you ever see the Man yourself, John?" said Gilderman, suddenly.

"Yes, sir," said the groom. "Me and Jackson was down in the town last Wednesday night a week ago. He was teaching there in front of an old frame church."

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"What sort of looking man is He?" said Gilderman; and John, the groom, answered almost exactly as Latimer-Moire had done one time before.

"Oh, I don't know; He just looks like any other man."

Then they were at the platform of the railroad station. Gilderman jumped out of the cart. He drew a dollar out of his pocket and gave it to the man. "Thankee, sir," said the groom, touching his hat with the finger that held the whip. He waited a little while till Gilderman had walked away across the platform, then he turned the horse and drove away.

There were a few scattered people waiting for the train, which was late. The day, which had been so clear in the morning, had become overcast and threatening. The wind had become cold and raw. Gilderman turned up the collar of his overcoat as he walked up and down the platform.

Suddenly it entered his mind that he would stay over another train. He might never again have such an opportunity of seeing this Man whom nearly all the nether world now believed to be divine. He would have made up his mind to stay only for the latent shame of changing his plans for such an object. But, after all, if he choose to indulge his curiosity no one need know. Finally he concluded if there was another train by a quarter-past three he would stay; if not he would go back home as he had intended. He would let that decide the question. He went up to the ticket-office. "What time is the next train for New York?" he asked.

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"Three-twenty-two," said the clerk, without looking up.

Three-twenty-two! Well, that decided it; he would go back to the city. As he came out upon the platform he heard the thunder of the approaching train. Then it appeared, coming around the curve. The brass-work on the huge engine twinkled as it came rushing forward. There was a screaming of the brakes as the train drew shudderingly up to the platform. Then there was an instant bustle of people getting aboard. Gilderman walked forward along the platform to the parlor-car. "Chair in the parlor-car, sir?" said the conductor, and he nodded his head.

The conductor preceded him into the car and swung around a revolving seat for him. At that moment the train began to move. Gilderman was yet standing close to the door. As the train began moving an instant determination came over him to stop over, after all. It overmastered him—why he could not tell. He turned quickly to open the door. It stuck, and he had some difficulty in pulling it open. The train was moving more and more swiftly. A brakeman was standing on the platform.

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"Look out, sir!" he cried, as he saw Gilderman preparing to jump.

Then Gilderman leaped out upon the platform. He did not know how fast the train was going until his feet touched the earth. It nearly flung him prostrate. He regained his balance with a tripping run. The train swept along the curve and the platform seemed strangely deserted. Then Gilderman felt very foolish and wished that he had not acted upon his impulse.

He stood considering for a while, then he walked down along the open platform to the station. He did not at all know what he should do, now that he had stayed. In the morning, when he had come up from New York, there had been a great sign of stir and interest; now everything seemed unusually quiet. The few people in the neighborhood of the station seemed almost oblivious of anything but their own affairs. How foolish had he been to miss his train. A man came to the door of the men's waiting-room and stood looking at him. Gilderman passed by without speaking to him—then he suddenly turned back and asked the man whether He whom he sought was in the

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town.

"Yes, sir, He is," said the man. "He came an hour or more ago."

"Where is He now?" said Gilderman.

"Well, sir," said the man, "I don't just know. He went down in the lower part of the town, there, with a great crowd of people."

"Which way did He go?"

"Over yonder," said the man, pointing across the railroad tracks.

Gilderman stood for a moment considering. Should he stay where he was? It looked very like rain—he hesitated—then again came that strange propulsion forward, urging him to pursue the undertaking. He crossed the five or six broad lines of railroad track. He walked down the road and over the bridge. There was a steep embankment on the other side of the bridge, and the stream went winding down the level, open lot or field below. Gilderman wondered whether this was the place where Tom Kettle had received his sight. He walked on for perhaps a quarter of a mile without seeing any sign of a crowd. At last he came to a sort of tobacco-shop that was half a dwelling-house. He hesitated for a moment or two and then went up the two dirty steps and pushed open the door. It stuck for a moment, and then suddenly gave way with a loud jangling of a bell over his head. The bell continued a persistent tink-tinking for some time. The place was full of a heavy, musty smell that was not altogether of tobacco. A woman emerged somewhere from an inner room. Gilderman felt very foolish. Then he asked her if she had seen anything of the Man whom he sought. He marvelled at the freak of fancy that seemed to thrust him forward upon his strange quest. It seemed to him that he was suddenly becoming translated into a different sphere of life from any that he had ever known before. [143]

The woman stared at him for a moment or two without answering. She had a frowsy head of hair and a shapeless figure, and was clad in a calico dress. She told him that a crowd had gone over towards the cemetery; that the town had been full of people all the morning, and that they all appeared to have gone over after the Man.

"How far is the cemetery from here?" asked Gilderman.

"About a mile, I reckon."

"A mile?"

"Yes."

Gilderman lingered for a moment. Then he said, "Thank you," and he opened the door with the same momentary resistance that finally gave way to a repeated clamorous jangling of the bell. Again he suddenly realized that he was entering a strange life, such as he had never before beheld. He stood for a while uncertainly in the street. What should he do next? He was conscious that the woman was looking at him from the store window, and he realized how strange and remote he must appear in these unusual surroundings. He could not go a mile to the cemetery and back again in time for his train. A negro came driving a farm wagon down the road towards the station. Gilderman called to the man, who drew in the horses with a "Whoh!" [144]

"Look here, my man," said Gilderman, "I want to go out to the cemetery, and I want to get back again in time for the three-twenty-two train. I will give you five dollars if you will drive me there and back." The negro made no reply, but he drew up to the sidewalk with alacrity.

Gilderman could see the cemetery from a distance as he approached it. It was a bleak, cheerless place, and it looked still more bleak and cheerless under the damp, gray sky above. It was surrounded by a high, white paling fence, and there was a wide gateway with high wooden gate-posts, painted white. Through the palings Gilderman could see that the cemetery was half filled with a dark crowd of people. A straggling crowd still lingered about the other gateway. There was a ceaseless hum of many voices. Gilderman thought he heard a voice speaking with loud tones in the distance. "This will do," he said. "Let me out here, and wait till I come back." As the negro drew up the farm wagon to the road-side, Gilderman leaped out over the wheel. He hurried to the gate of the cemetery, almost running. After he had entered he saw that the crowd had gathered together beyond a stretch of dead, brown grass, and between him and them were a number of poor, cheap-looking gravestones and wooden head-boards and two or three newly made graves. The place looked squalid and poor. The crowd had grown suddenly silent, as though listening or waiting. Gilderman walked around the outskirts of the throng, and then, finding an open place, he pushed his way into it. He felt a strange eerie excitement taking entire possession of him. In pushing his way he pressed against the shoulder of a woman. She wore a plaid shawl, and Gilderman noticed that indescribable, musty, human smell that seems to belong to the clothes of poor people. [145]

"Good Lord, don't shove so!" said the woman. She moved to one side, and Gilderman edged his way past her. The press grew more and more dense the farther he penetrated into it, and now and then he could not move. By-and-by he could see before him at some little distance that the crowd surrounded a cavelike vault, and then that the keeper of the cemetery was opening the door. [146]

Gilderman had almost come to the very centre of the crowd. He could see the vault very



clearly. He wondered, dimly, whether he would be able to make the three-twenty-two train, and he wished he had asked what time was the next train. He pushed a little more forward, and then he could see the faces of those who fronted the vault. Two of them were women, their eyes red and swollen with crying. Some of those who stood near them were evidently friends of the family. One of these, a woman, was crying sympathetically, wiping her eyes with the corner of her shawl. They were all poor people. One of the two women had that indefinable look that belongs to a woman of ill repute. She was handsome, after a certain fashion, but she had that hard expression about the mouth which there is no mistaking. Now her face was wet and softened with her crying.

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They stood just behind and over against a man whom Gilderman at once singled out as Him whom he had come to see. Gilderman looked at His face. Tears were trickling unnoticed down the cheeks; the lips were moving as though the Man were speaking to himself. But though He was weeping, Gilderman knew that it was not because of sorrow for the dead man that He wept.

"Open the door!" cried a loud, clear voice.

Gilderman heard one of the women say: "He has been dead four days and he stinks."

The Other turned His face slowly towards her, and Gilderman heard Him say to her: "Did I not tell you that if you would believe you should see the glory of God?"

The cemetery-keeper had opened the door. Gilderman was watching tensely and curiously. He wondered what the Other was going to do. He supposed that some singular funeral ceremony was about to take place.

The Man raised His face and looked up into the gray and cheerless sky. He began speaking in a loud, distinct voice, but just what He said Gilderman could not understand. Presently He ceased speaking, and then followed a perfectly dead and breathless hush. Then, suddenly, in a loud, piercing voice, He cried out, "Lazarus, come forth!"

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Again there was a pause—a pause for a single moment. Those near to Him stood breathless and motionless. Suddenly there was the sound of something falling with a loud clatter inside the black depths of the vault. The cemetery-keeper, who stood near the door, sprang backward with a shriek. Then a man suddenly appeared at the mouth of the vault. He stood for a moment at the door of the pit, craning his neck and peering around with a strange, bewildered look. His white, lean face was bound about with a cloth, his eyes were somewhat dazed and bewildered. He plucked at the cloth about his face, and then he came up out of the vault. All about where Gilderman stood there was a tumult of shrieks and cries—a violent commotion swept the crowd like a whirlwind. Gilderman hardly heard it. He saw everything dizzily, as though it were not real. What did it all mean; was he really seeing a dreadful miracle performed; were all those people real? Suddenly he felt some one clutch him and fall, struggling, against him. He looked down. A woman had fallen in a fit at his feet. Gilderman awoke to himself with a shock and began to struggle violently backward through the crowd. He hardly knew what he was doing. He elbowed his way, struggling and trampling, and striving to get out of the press. He did not know himself; he was as another man. He knew in his soul that he had, indeed, seen a miracle—a dreadful, an astounding miracle! He was in a state of blind terror-terror of what was to happen next. Presently he found himself out of the thick of the crowd. He ran away across the graves. The crowd behind him was crying and screaming. Gilderman found that he was running towards the entrance gateway. Then he was out of the place. He seemed to breathe more freely. The negro with the cart was still waiting for him.

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"What's the matter over there?" he said. "What have they been doing?" Gilderman did not reply. He sprang into the wagon. "Anything happened over there?" the man asked once more. Then he added: "Why, you're as white as a sheet."

"Can you make the three-twenty-two train?" cried Gilderman.

"I don't know. What time is it now?" said the man.

Gilderman looked at his watch, which he held in a shaking and trembling hand. "It's a quarter-past three," he said. Had it been only three-quarters of an hour since he had leaped from the moving train to the platform?

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"I don't know whether I can ketch her now, unless she's late," the man was saying, but it sounded to Gilderman as though his voice came from a great distance away.

The train was already at the station when the farm wagon rattled up to it. As Gilderman stepped aboard of it, it began moving. He took the first vacant seat that offered; it was in the smoking-car. There was an all-pervading smell of stale tobacco smoke, and the floor under the seat was foul with the sprinkling of tobacco ashes. He sat down in the seat, pulled up his overcoat collar, and drew the brim of his hat over his eyes; then, folding his arms, he gave himself up to thinking.

He did not know what he thought, and he did not direct his mind at all. He thought about what he had seen, but the most trivial things that surrounded him crept into the chinks of his broken and shattered intelligence. He looked at the plush cover on the seat directly in front of him—the ply was worn off in the pleats where it was gathered at the button, and he thought trivially about it; at the same time he saw the bleak and naked cemetery, with its white paling fence, almost as though with his very eyes. There was a man just in front of him smoking a pipe and reading a

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comic paper printed in colors. There was a garish caricature of Cæsar on the front page. The man was looking steadily at it, evidently ruminating upon its import. Gilderman, staring over his shoulder, tried to see the legend below, but the paper was too far away from him to decipher it. At the same time he thought of that man as he had come up peering out of the vault; he could see him with the eyes of his soul exactly as he looked. He saw the face almost as vividly as though it really stood before him—a thin, lean face, the unshaven beard beneath the chin. The man looked as if he had just climbed out of his coffin; there was something horribly grotesque about the black clothes and the starched shirt, so exactly like the clothes an undertaker would have put upon a dead body. The man in the seat ahead turned over the paper; there was a comic picture of a church sociable upon the other page. Gilderman looked at it, but at the same time he thought of the face of the Man who had raised the dead; there was something dreadful about that, too. Why were the tears running down the cheeks, and why was He muttering and groaning to Himself?

The cloudy day was rapidly approaching dusk and they were nearing the tunnels. The brakeman came in and lit the lamp. Gilderman watched him as he stood straddling between the seats like a colossus. He turned back the chimney of the brass lamp and then lit it with the match which he held deftly between his fingers. Gilderman watched him light the next lamp with the same match. There was something ghastly, when he came to think of it, about that Man living with the dead man and his sisters. Was it possible that He could live amid such squalid, evil surroundings, and yet be divine? Why had He cried and groaned and muttered? What did it mean? What was He suffering? He did not seem to have been sorrowing at the death of the other. Had that one really been dead, or was it all a trick? Then they rushed into the tunnel with a roar and a sudden obliteration of the outside light.

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Gilderman could not tell his wife where he had been. He was very silent and distraught all the evening. His brain tingled, and he felt that he had endured a terrible, nervous shock. He wished he had not gone to the cemetery. He knew he would not be able to sleep that night, and he did not sleep. He got up and rang the bell, and when his man came he told him to bring him a bottle of soda and some whiskey. He sat up and tried to read the paper and forget what he had seen. He was very tired of it, and wished he could obliterate it from his mind, if only for a little while. Then he went to bed again, and about three o'clock in the morning began to drop off into a broken sleep. But as he would fall asleep he would see that figure again, standing craning its neck against the black background of the vault, and then he would awaken once more with a start only to drop off again and to awaken with another start. His nerves thrilled and his muscles twitched at every sound. He wondered if he were going mad. He realized that he would go mad if he gave way to his religious vagaries. Well, he would have done with such things now and forever; henceforth he would lead a natural, wholesome life as other men of his kind lived; he would give up these monstrous speculations into unrealities—speculations that had led him into such a dreadful experience as that of the afternoon.

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## XI NOTHING BUT LEAVES

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GILDERMAN awoke in the morning suddenly and keenly wide-awake. The sleep, such as it had been, was of that sort that cuts sharply and distinctly across the thread of life, and for a few moments he could not join the severed skeins of thought that he held in his hand to those which had gone before. There had been something uncomfortable. What was it? Then instantly the broken ends were joined and recollection came like a flash. Oh yes; that was it!

He lay in bed inertly thinking about it. A feeling of stronger and stronger distaste grew up every instant within him, but he made no effort to detach his mind from its thought. By-and-by he found that he hated it; that he was deathly tired of it all; but still he let his thoughts dwell upon it. How unnatural, how unwholesome it had all been, how revolting to all that was sweet and lucid. Again he realized that if he tampered too much with these things he would unhinge his mind. Yesterday he had almost believed that he had seen a miracle; now, in the calmer, saner morning light of a new day, he recognized how impossible it was. It could have been nothing but a hideous trick, devised to deceive those poor, ignorant, superstitious wretches who followed that strange Man and believed in Him. No; it could not have been all a trick, either, for the grief of those two women had been a real grief and not a simulated agony. What had it been? Maybe that other man had had a cataleptic fit. Ach! how ugly it all was—how poor, how squalid. That woman who had fallen against him in a fit—he could conjure up an almost visible picture of how she had looked as she lay struggling upon the ground. She wore coarse yarn stockings, and one of her shoes was burst out at the side. He writhed upon his bed. Ach! he was sick, sick of it. He wished he could think of something pleasanter. He tried to force his mind to think of the great and coming hope of his life. In a little while now he would be a father, and he tried to forecast the joys of his coming paternity. But when he made the attempt he found he could not detach his mind from that other thing.

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He got up and rang for his man, who came almost instantly at his call. But even as he dressed he found his mind groping back into the recollections of yesterday.

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When he went down-stairs he found that Mrs. Gilderman had not yet come down to breakfast. He picked up the paper, but he did not read it, but went to the window and stood looking out into the street. The sky was still cloudy and gray, and there was a drizzling rain falling. The day seemed to be singularly in keeping with his mood and the strong distaste of life that lay upon him. How wretchedly he had slept the night before—that must be what ailed him now, to make him feel so depressed. It must be lack of sleep. He remembered how he had heard the clock strike four. He was just dropping off into a doze, and he had awakened almost as with a shock at the tinkling, silver stroke of the bell in the next room. He must have fallen asleep soon after that. What was so incomprehensible in the affair of yesterday was the expression of that face looking up to the sky with the tears running down the cheeks. Why did He weep? Oh, if he could only forget it all! He was sick of it—sick almost to a physical repulsion. If he went on thinking about this thing he would certainly go crazy. Again he vowed that he would give up this morbid tampering with and brooding upon religious things; it was not wholesome, and the time would surely come when his mind could no longer stand it. Why did not Florence come down to breakfast? Almost as in answer to the thought he heard the rustle of her dress, and, turning around, he found that she had come into the dining-room. “Why did you not go on with your breakfast, Henry?” she said; “why did you wait?”

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“Oh, I don’t know,” he said. “I wasn’t hungry.”

“What’s the matter? Aren’t you feeling well?” She looked briefly at him as she sat at her place smoothing back the folds of her morning-gown.

“Oh yes,” he said, “I’m all right. No, I don’t feel very well. How are you this morning, Florence?”

“Oh, I feel very well, indeed.”

She held up her face as he passed behind her, and he bent over and kissed it. Then a sudden feeling of straining pity for her coming motherhood seized him. He hesitated for a moment, and then he took her face in both his hands and, raising it, kissed it again. She laughed and blushed a little. “What is it, Henry?” she said.

“Nothing,” he answered, and then he went around to his place.

The waiter offered him a dish of fruit, but he shook his head. “Fetch me a cup of coffee,” he said.

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“Aren’t you going to eat anything?” said Mrs. Gilderman as the man poured out a black stream of coffee into a cup.

“No; I’m not hungry.”

“What’s the matter with you?”

“Nothing; only I didn’t sleep very well. Maybe I’ll eat something by-and-by down at the club.”

He had almost finished his cup of coffee, and had just opened the paper, when the man came in to say that Mr. Furgeson was down-stairs and wanted to know if he could see Mr. Gilderman. Furgeson was one of Gilderman’s agents, and he had gone down the day before to the Lenning sale to buy a famous hunter and two road-horses.

“Furgeson?” said Gilderman. Then he remembered that he had commissioned him to buy the roan mare. “Oh yes,” he said. “Show him into the study and tell him I’ll be down directly.” Furgeson must have bought Lady Maybell at the sale, then. As Gilderman recollected the beautiful horse and thought that she was now his own, he felt a distinct and positive ray of pleasure shoot athwart the gloomy mood of his mind. Lady Maybell was something worth having, at any rate—something that would bring a wholesome pleasure to him.

“What does Furgeson come to see you about, Henry?” asked Mrs. Gilderman.

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“Well, I intended it for a surprise,” said Gilderman, “but I may as well tell you now. He went down to the sale at Mountain Brook Farm yesterday. I sent him down to buy Lady Maybell. There was a pair of road-horses, too, I thought would do for the Graystone stable.”

“Lady Maybell!” cried out Mrs. Gilderman. “Oh, I’m so glad you’ve bought Lady Maybell, Henry.”

Gilderman laughed. “Don’t be in too much of a hurry, my dear. Maybe Furgeson hasn’t bought the horse, after all.” He felt sure in his own mind, however, that his agent had bought the horse, and it made him very happy to think of it. He clung to the sense of pleasure all the more closely because he recognized that it made him forget that other thing. It was something pleasant, and he let himself take pleasure in it. He finished his cup of coffee and then went down into the study. Furgeson was sitting by the table, silently and patiently awaiting his coming. He arose as Gilderman came in, and stood holding his hat in his hand.

“Well, Furgeson,” said Gilderman, “I suppose you bought Lady Maybell yesterday. Where is she? At the stable?”

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“Why-no, sir,” said Furgeson, “I didn’t buy her.”

Gilderman stood, suddenly struck motionless. Not buy the horse! What did the man mean?

Why had he not bought the horse? Had there been no sale? Then the dreadful thought grew slowly into his mind. Was it possible that Lady Maybell was not to be his, after all—that he had missed obtaining what he wanted? “What!” he cried out, “you didn’t buy the horse as I told you to do? Why didn’t you buy her?”

“Why, you see, Mr. Gilderman,” said Furgeson, “Dawson—that’s Mr. Dorman-Webster’s man—was there. He ran the price up against me until six thousand dollars was bid. The horse ain’t worth the half of that, and I was afraid to go any more.”

Gilderman still stood motionless. The sudden and utter disappointment had fallen on him like a blow, and had struck down and shattered asunder all the gladness that had come to him. Was he, then, not to have Lady Maybell, after all? Was, then, this pleasure to be taken away from him? It seemed to him, almost as with an agony, that he never wanted anything so badly as he wanted that horse. There was a feeling within him that was almost like despair. What had possessed Furgeson that he had not done what he had been bidden to do? A sudden fury of anger flamed up within Gilderman. “Do you mean to tell me,” he cried, “that you didn’t buy that horse when I especially told you to buy her?” He found that his throat was choking, and as soon as he began to speak the violent rush of rage seemed to sweep him away. “Why, confound you!” he cried out, “what do you mean by coming and coolly telling me such a thing as that? What do you suppose I sent you down to Mountain Brook for?”

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“I didn’t know what to do, Mr. Gilderman,” said the man. “The horse wasn’t worth the half of six thousand dollars, and I was afraid to bid any more. If I’d paid that for her and you hadn’t been satisfied—”

“Confound you!” burst out Gilderman, cutting him short. He was so furious that he hardly knew what he was saying, and he stuttered as he spoke. “Confound you! I didn’t send you down there to ap-appraise the horse, did I? I sent you down there to buy the horse, not to put a price on her. It was none of your confounded business if I chose to pay a hundred thousand dollars for her—your business was to buy her, as I told you to do.” He stood glaring at the man, his bosom panting. Furgeson stood perfectly silent, looking down into his hat. “The trouble with you is, Furgeson,” he cried out, harshly, “you’ve got too confounded much Scotch caution to suit me.” He wanted to say something savage, but that was all that came into his mind. It seemed to him to be very inadequate. “You can’t be my agent,” he said, “if you don’t do as I tell you. You’d better go now.”

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“I bought the two roadsters at a bargain, sir,” said Furgeson.

“Damn the roadsters! I didn’t care anything about them.” Gilderman went straight back to the breakfast-room. What should he do; he could not bear to lose that horse. He tried to comfort himself by thinking that he owned a half-dozen horses finer and more valuable than Lady Maybell; but he found no comfort in the thought. He wanted Lady Maybell; she would have exactly suited Florence next fall, and he could not bear to have her so snatched away from him. Would Dorman-Webster sell her? Suppose he should go to him and tell him that Florence wanted the horse. Dorman-Webster was very fond of Florence; maybe he would let him have Lady Maybell for her sake. All this he thought as he walked to the dining-room. “What do you think, Florence?” he burst out, as soon as he came into the room. “That fool of a Furgeson did not buy Lady Maybell, after all.”

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“Oh, Henry!” cried Mrs. Gilderman.

“Dorman-Webster’s man was there and bid against Furgeson, and Furgeson funked when the other fellow ran the price up to six thousand, and let the chance of getting her go.”

“Six thousand dollars! Lady Maybell wasn’t worth that much; was she, Henry?”

“Perhaps not; but it was the horse I wanted, and not the money.”

“It’s too bad,” said Mrs. Gilderman. “Mr. Furgeson ought to have done as you told him.”

“Of course he ought,” said Gilderman. “Confounded, stupid Scotchman!” But he felt a distinct feeling of comfort in Mrs. Gilderman’s sympathy.

“Maybe Mr. Dorman-Webster will be willing to sell her to you,” said Mrs. Gilderman.

“I don’t believe he will,” said Gilderman. Nevertheless, a sudden ray of hope came into his mind. “I’ll tell you what; I’ll ask him and see what he says,” he added. He looked at his watch. “Let me see; there’s a business meeting or something down at the International this morning. Maybe, if I go around there now, I’ll catch him before he goes down-town.”

He did find Mr. Dorman-Webster at the club. One of the club servants was just in the act of helping the old gentleman on with his overcoat. Gilderman plunged directly into the business upon which he had come. “My dear boy,” said Mr. Dorman-Webster, settling himself into his overcoat and straightening the collar, “I can’t sell you the horse. The fact is, Edith—(Edith was his youngest daughter)—Edith fell in love with the horse last summer. No matter how high your man had bid, I was bound to have the animal.”

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“I’ll give you seven thousand dollars for her,” said Gilderman, making a last effort.

Mr. Dorman-Webster shook his head, smiling. “Can’t do it,” he said. And then, almost in Gilderman’s own words that morning: “It isn’t the money I want; I want the horse.”

Then he went away, leaving Gilderman full of a bitter disappointment that seemed to blacken all his life. He had not hoped for much, but now he hoped for nothing. He was not to have the horse, after all, and his heart fell away with despair. Why, oh, why had not Furgeson bought her in?

He went up into the reading-room and sat himself down in a chair and picked up a paper. As he did so, Latimer-Moire came into the room. "Hello, Gildy!" he called out. "You're in for it, my boy!"

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"In for it! In for what?" said Gilderman. "What do you mean?" He had a dreadful feeling that something else was going to happen amiss to him. Then he recollected what it must be—the yacht-race. It came to him like a flash. Yesterday was the day of the yacht-race. In the things that had happened to him he had forgotten about it. Had that also gone wrong? It could not be.

"Why, didn't you hear?" said Latimer-Moire. "The cablegram came half an hour ago, and it's posted up on the bulletin-board. *La Normandie* beat the *Syrinx* one minute twenty seconds, time allowance."

Was it then true? Gilderman's heavy heart fell away like a plummet to a still lower depth. It was not the loss of the money he had bet Ryan, but the argument they had had before all those fellows. They had all been against him, and he had been very angry and excited. He had been very positive that the *Syrinx* would win. What a bitter shame to be proved to have been in the wrong, after all. How could he bear to acknowledge to all those fellows that he had been in the wrong? But even yet he could not accept such defeat. "I don't believe it," he said. "There's a mistake. Why, just look at the *Syrinx's* time against the *Petrel*, and the *La Normandie's* time against the *Majestic*."

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Latimer-Moire burst out laughing. "What's the use of arguing now, Gildy?" he said. "Facts are facts, and the fact in this case is that Tommy Ryan and the rest of us were right and that you were wrong. Come, Gildy, knuckle under and eat your humble-pie like a man."

"I'll not knuckle under till I have to," said Gilderman, savagely. "I believe there is some mistake in the cablegram, and I'll keep on believing it till I have proof to the contrary."

Again Latimer-Moire burst out laughing. "By Jove! Gildy, I didn't believe the loss of a five-thousand-dollar bet would hit you in such a sore spot."

Gilderman was so angry at being misunderstood that he did not know what to do. He shut his teeth closely. He wanted to say something savage, but he could think of nothing to say. He got up and flung down the paper, and, without another word, went into the smoking-room beyond. There were three or four men gathered at the farther window sitting looking out into the street and talking together. There was no one at the window nearest him, and he pulled up a chair and sat down, resting his feet on the window-sill and pulling his hat down over his eyes. Then he gave himself up utterly to the black gloom of the mood that lay upon him. What was there in life that was worth the living? Nothing-nothing. Everything went wrong, and there was not a single thing to give pleasure to him. How miserably depressed and gloomy he felt. What could he do to escape it? Such moods as this had come upon him before, but it seemed to him that they had never before been as black as this. It must be the wretched night he had passed that made him so depressed.

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He tried to fix his mind upon some higher and nobler thought-something to lift his spirit out of its depths. He almost prayed as he sat there, feeling about in the gloomy mood for some standing place whereon to rest. But he could find nothing whereon to rest. He could not lift himself into any ray of brightness out of the vapors that beset him. Why the mischief had not Furgeson bought Lady Maybell yesterday; then he would not have been suffering as he was now suffering. And the yacht-race—confound it!—if he only hadn't been led into that argument it would not have been so hard to bear.

Suddenly some one tapped him with a cane from behind upon the top of the hat. He turned his head sharply and saw that it was Palliser. "Hey-o, Gildy!" he said, "*La Normandie's* beat *Syrinx*. Did you see?"

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Again that blind and sudden anger flamed up in Gilderman's heart. "Well, what if she did?" said he, almost savagely. "Is that any reason for you to come around, like a fool, knocking me over the head with your cane?" He took off his hat as he spoke, smoothed the nap with his coat-sleeve, and then put it back very carefully upon his head.

Palliser stood staring at him. "By Jove! Gildy," he said, almost blankly; and then he asked, "Feeling rusty this morning?"

"Rusty!" said Gilderman. "No, I'm not rusty, but I don't like a fellow to come knocking my hat over my eyes with his walking-stick."

Palliser did not reply. He moved awkwardly over to the window and stood there for a while looking out into the street. Somehow the young fellow did not like to go away directly as though acknowledging that he was snubbed. For a while there was silence, except for a sudden burst of laughter from the men at the farther window. "By-the-way, Gildy," said Palliser, as though suddenly recollecting something, "I was down at the Mountain Brook sale yesterday. Dorman-Webster's man kind of knocked your man out, didn't he, eh?"

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Gilderman aroused himself almost violently. Why couldn't the man let him alone. "See here,

Palliser," he said, "I don't want to be rude, but I ain't feeling well, and I wish you'd let me alone. I've got a headache, and don't feel well."

"Bilious?" inquired Palliser.

"Oh, I don't know. I just want to be let alone—that's all."

"Oh, all right. I'll let you alone," said Palliser, and then he moved away and joined the group at the farther window, and presently Gilderman heard his high tenor voice sounding through the distant talk.

Again Gilderman sat by himself, feeling very miserable. He was ashamed of himself for being so angry, and yet he could not repent it. What should he do? He did not want to go home at this hour of the day; it would be very dull and stupid. And yet if he stayed any longer at the club all the men would be presently coming in, and he knew perfectly well that each would have something in turn to say either about the yacht-race or the Mountain Brook sale. He could not bear it. Where could he go to escape?

Then suddenly, for some unaccountable reason, the thought of the face of Him whom he had seen the day before flashed upon his mind. Was there any truth at all in what was said about Him? Maybe that Man could help him. Why not go and find Him and speak to Him? A dull, latent acknowledgment of the absurdity of the sudden notion that had seized him lay inertly beneath the thought, but the thought itself had somehow seized upon him very closely, just as it had seized upon him the day before. Why not go and find this strange Man and talk with Him? Anyhow, it would be something to do to distract him from thinking about his disappointments, and he would escape the annoyance of meeting the men as they came into the club. Maybe to-morrow, after he had had a good night's sleep, he could better bear meeting and answering them. Just now this other thing would give him something to do.

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He aroused himself and jerked back his chair. He looked at his watch and saw that it was half-past twelve. Then he went up into the dining-room and ordered himself a breakfast. As he sat looking up, passively, at Norcott's great picture of the nude Venus surrounded by a flock of naked, fluttering Cupids, he again inertly made up his mind that he would go down to Brookfield by the two-twenty train. "Anyhow," he repeated to himself, "it will give me something to do." Then the waiter came, bringing the cocktail that he had ordered.

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## XII

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### THE ONE THING WE LACK

GILDERMAN, when he left the club, found that he was in that peculiar psychological state that comes upon one now and then—a state in which one feels that one has not altogether determined to do a certain thing and yet finds one's self in the very act of doing it. As it had been the day before, so now he found himself possessed by a strange impulsion that drove him forward as though not of his own volition. He walked briskly down towards the depot, but it did not seem to him that he even yet had made up his mind to embark upon the undertaking. Even when he found himself in the depot looking up at the time-clocks, and saw that the next train left in ten minutes—even when he had bought his ticket, it did not seem to him that he had actually determined to do what he was about to do. Such times of almost involuntary progression towards some object comes now and then to every man. It is as though there was some inner will-force that subjected the outer actions, urging them forward to carry the intention through to its conclusion. Gilderman's mind did not actually resist the impulse that led him to go down to Brookfield. He yielded himself to going, but, at the same time, he did not yield a full and complete concurrence to that inner motive that impelled him to go. The cause of inspiration, though he did not know it, was very profound. It seemed to him that he simply allowed himself to drift as circumstances directed.

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When he reached the end of his journey, he found on inquiring at the station that He whom he sought was no longer there, but that He had gone down towards the city that morning. The station-master, who had a little leisure between the trains, told him that he could get a conveyance at the Walton House. There was, he said, a very good livery-stable connected with the hotel. He walked down to the end of the platform with Gilderman and pointed out to him the direction he was to take, and then he stood for a while looking after the young Roman as he walked away across the bridge and down the road.

It was the same direction which Gilderman had taken the day before. Everything seemed strangely familiar to him. There was the bridge and the stream below it, and the open field and the distant row of frame houses. As he passed the tobacco-shop, the woman with whom he had spoken yesterday was standing in the doorway. She looked hard at him as he passed, and Gilderman felt a certain awkward consciousness that she recognized him.

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Just beyond the tobacco-shop he turned up a side street towards the hotel. He remembered now having seen it the day before. There were men standing on the rather ramshackle porch in front of the hotel, and they, too, stared hard at Gilderman as he went by. Again, as upon the day before, Gilderman recognized how distinctly out of place he was and how curious the hotel

loungers must be regarding him. He was glad when he found himself in the open stable-yard out of their sight.

A man, evidently the innkeeper—a short, stocky, gray-haired man—was standing watching one of the boys bathe the leg of an evidently lame horse. He looked up as Gilderman approached, but he did not move to meet him. Gilderman walked directly up to him and told him what he wanted.

A team? Oh yes, he could have a team. He sized Gilderman up without at all knowing who he really was. Of course he would want something toppy. Then he called to a colored man to go tell Bob to put the little gray to the dog-cart. He held an unlighted cigar between his lips, and he rolled it every now and then from one side of his mouth to the other, looking rather curiously at Gilderman. "I suppose you're a newspaper reporter?" he said, after giving Gilderman's person a sweeping look. [174]

"No," said Gilderman, "I'm not." He volunteered nothing further, and there was that in his brief denial that did not encourage further question. Every now and then the innkeeper looked curiously at him, but he ventured no further inquiry. There was an indescribable remoteness about the young Roman that repelled, without effort and without offence, any approach at familiarity.

Then they brought the gray horse out of the stable and began to hitch it to the dog-cart. It was, indeed, a neat, toppy little animal, and Gilderman looked upon it with pleasure. The innkeeper went over to see that all was right, pulling here and there at a strap or buckle, and Gilderman, taking out his cigar-case, lit a cigar. The gray sky was beginning to break up into patches of blue, and suddenly the sun shone out and down upon his back. It was very warm. Then the driver jumped to his seat and wheeled the team out into the stable-yard, and Gilderman mounted lightly to the place beside him. [175]

As the horse trotted briskly away down the road Gilderman saw, on a distant hill, a far-away view of the cemetery where he had been the day before. How strange that he should see it so soon again. It looked empty and deserted now. Then presently they had left it behind and were out into the open country. They drove for somewhat over two miles without seeing any sign of Him whom Gilderman sought. There they reached a little rise of ground just outside of a village, and, looking down the stretch of road, they could see that a crowd was gathered about a big stuccoed building, which Gilderman recognized as an inn.

"That's Him down yonder," said the driver, breaking the long silence. The dog-cart was rattling briskly down the incline road, and suddenly Gilderman found that his heart was beating very quickly. He wondered, passively, why it beat so, and why he should feel so strange a qualm of nervousness. He was not accustomed to such emotions, and there seemed to be no reason for it now.

The driver drew up sharply in front of the inn, and close to the crowd gathered in front of it. The building was a square, ugly, yellow thing, streaked and blotched with the beating of the weather. Here and there the stucco had broken away, showing the bricks beneath. A large sign ran along the whole front of the building. It, too, was weather-beaten, the letters partly obliterated. [176]

The crowd gathered and centred about the corner of the building, where there was a platform, and beyond it a stable-yard and some open sheds. Almost instantly Gilderman had seen the face of Him whom he sought. It was raised a little above the heads of the crowd, for He was sitting resting on the corner of the open platform that ran along the length of the hotel front. He was surrounded by His immediate disciples. The crowd stood about Him, partly in the road, partly upon the open porch. Some women and two or three men, apparently belonging to the house, were leaning out of the windows above looking down and talking together. There was a ceaseless buzz of talk—a ceaseless restlessness pervading the crowd. The central figure appeared to be altogether unconscious of it. He must by this time have grown used to being surrounded by such numbers of people. He seemed to be entirely oblivious of everything, and sat perfectly motionless, gazing remotely and abstractedly over the heads of the people. His pale eyes appeared blank and unseeing. His dress and shoes looked dusty and travel-worn. Suddenly a light came into his eyes, and He turned directly towards Gilderman. It seemed to Gilderman almost as though the face smiled—it looked recognition. He and the young man of great possessions remained looking at each other for a little space. Then Gilderman did not know whether the Man had or had not spoken, but he felt distinctly that he had been summoned as though by a spoken word. He advanced, hardly knowing what he was doing, and the crowd, seeing that he wished to speak, made way for him. He pushed forward and almost instantly found himself face to face with the Other. The profound and solemn eyes were gazing calmly and steadily at him. Gilderman had no hesitation as to what he desired to say. The gloomy feeling of the morning, his disappointment and distresses, came very keenly back into his mind as he stood there. The mundane circumstances of his life—his ever-present sense of power and of place—melted for the moment like wax before the flames. The young Roman stood before the poor carpenter as an entity before the Supreme. "Tell me," he said, "what shall I do to earn eternal life?" [177]

"If you would enter into life," said the Voice, "keep the Commandments." [178]

"Which Commandments shall I keep?" asked the young man.

"You know the Commandments," said the Other. "Thou shalt do no murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and thy

mother. Love thy neighbor as thyself."

Gilderman thought for a moment. He felt a sudden flash of joy and satisfaction. Why had he not thought of it before. Yes, that was true, that was the way to be happy—to keep the Commandments—to consider the happiness of others, and not to desire all for himself. How simple it was. It seemed to him as though he had always known it. If he could only do that, then, indeed, he would be always happy, and life would, indeed, be worth living. Then the current of his thoughts suddenly changed their course. But was it true? After all, he had kept the Commandments—he recognized that he had; and yet he was not happy. He did not do violence to any man. He did not commit social vice. He did not defraud any man. He was not prone to gossip of people and to say ill of them behind their backs. He had been a good son to his father and mother, and he had been good to his wife's father and mother. It seemed to him that he loved his neighbor as himself—that he did not try to get the better of any man, nor seek to defraud any man. Yes, he had obeyed all these things, and yet, in spite of that, he was not happy. He was not happy at this moment. Then he said to the Man: "I have kept all these Commandments from my youth up. What else is there I lack?"

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He knew that there was something that he lacked, but he could not tell what it was. The Other was still looking steadily at him. "If you would be perfect," He said, "go and sell all that you have and give it to the poor, and then you shall have treasures in heaven. Then come and follow Me."

Some of the people began laughing. Gilderman knew that they were laughing at him, but he did not care. He stood perfectly still, with his mind turned inward. *What the Man had said was true.* He saw it all, as in a light of surpassing brightness. He was unhappy, not because of the things he lacked, but because he had so much. He saw it all as clear as day. It is the lack of things that produces happiness, not superabundance. A rich man, such as he, could never be happy. If he would be really happy, he must give up all. But could he give up all? Alas! he could give up nothing. God had laid the weight of a great abundance upon him, and he could not lay it aside. He could not give up that which he possessed, even for the sake of heavenly happiness and peace. He felt a feeling of great despair, and he wondered why he should feel it. Even yet, though he stood face to face with the Son of Man, he did not know that it was the divine truth searching the remoter recesses of his soul.

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He turned slowly and sorrowfully away. As he made his way back through the crowd he heard the Voice saying to those who stood about: "I tell you this for truth, that it is impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. I say this to you, that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

One of the men then said to Him: "Who, then, can be saved?"

The Man did not answer immediately. He looked slowly around upon the little group about Him. "With man," He said, "it is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

One of the disciples, a short, heavily built man of middle age, with a bald crown and grizzled beard and hair, said to Him: "We have forsaken all and have followed You. What are we to have for that?"

Then the Voice said: "I tell you the truth when I say, that you who have followed Me into the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging all the people of the world. For every one that leaves home, or brothers or sisters, or mother or father, or child or lands for My sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

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Gilderman heard the clearly spoken words very distinctly. It is probable no man understood what was meant unless it were himself. He, having just beheld the inner parts of his own soul, saw, as it were, a scintilla of the light—but only a scintilla. Who is there, uninspired by the Son of Man Himself, who can understand the purport of that divine saying—so profound—an abyss of divine wisdom?

God have mercy on us all! In these dreadful words lies the secret of heaven and of earth and of all that is and of all that is to come, and yet not one of us dares to open the gates of heavenly happiness. The world seems so near and that other supreme good so very remote. Gilderman saw something of the meaning of those divine words; it was only a glimpse of the truth, but again it filled his soul with despair. Once more he wondered dimly whether he felt that sudden quail of depression because he had slept so ill the night before.

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What would he have thought if he had known that while he was thus seeking vainly after his own happiness—yes, at that very moment—his wife at home was wrestling with the pangs of straining agony.

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IT was in the waning afternoon that Gilderman let himself into the house. He looked about him. The hall servant was not there, and Gilderman began stripping off his own overcoat. He felt an unusual irritation that the man should at this time be neglecting his duties. He wondered where his wife was; the house appeared to be strangely silent. There was a lot of letters lying upon the tray on the hall table. Why had the man left them there instead of taking them up to the study? He gathered up the packet and began shifting the letters over. There were two from the capital and one from the Western metropolis. There was one from Rome—that must be from Kitty Van Tassle.

Suddenly Mrs. Caiaphas came out from the dining-room. Gilderman had not expected to see her. Then instantly he saw that she had been crying. Her eyes were red and her face was tremulous. "Oh, Henry," she cried out, "where have you been? We have been sending everywhere for you." She came quickly forward as she spoke and caught him by the hands, holding them strenuously, almost convulsively. [184]

Gilderman stood as though turned to stone; the silence of the house had become suddenly leaden. His wife! What had happened? He stood still, holding the packet of letters unthinkingly in his hand. "What is it, mother?" he said, forcing himself to speak.

"Oh, Henry," said Mrs. Caiaphas, "do you know that you are a father? It is a little son. But poor, poor Florence. It was terrible!"

"And she?" said Gilderman. He dared hardly whisper the words.

"She is well. She has been asking for you all the while."

Gilderman's heart leaped with a sudden poignant relief that was almost an agony. The time had come—had passed, and all was well; but to think that he should have been away at such a time! His mind flew back to what he had seen and done that day, and now he suddenly saw, as in a clear light, how mad had been the folly that had led him away from home at such a time and for such a purpose. Again he told himself that he would certainly go crazy if he tampered any more with such monstrous things, and once more he registered a vow that he would never again make such a fool of himself. Oh, what a fool he had been! He had crossed the hallway with Mrs. Caiaphas and they were going up the stairs together. "Where have you been, Henry?" she said. [185]

"Oh, I was called out of town unexpectedly," he replied.

Dr. Willington was drinking a glass of Maderia in the anteroom at the head of the stairs. There was a crumbled biscuit upon a plate on the table. The doctor turned to Gilderman with a beaming face. He reached out his hand, and Gilderman took it and pressed it almost convulsively. As he was about to loosen his hand he caught it again and pressed it, almost clinging to it. The doctor laughed.

"May I see her?" said Gilderman.

Again Dr. Willington laughed. "Not just yet," he said; "the nurse is with her now. You may see her presently."

Gilderman heard a sharp, piping wail somewhere in the distance. It was the voice of a newborn child. Mrs. Caiaphas had left him, going into the room beyond with the doctor, and he was left alone. He looked down and saw that he still held the packet of letters, and then again he ran them over. The Roman letter was for his wife. As he stood there he heard the bishop's voice down in the hall. At the same moment Mrs. Caiaphas came out of the room again. She was followed by the nurse. "You may go in now, Henry, and see her," she said. The white-capped, white-aproned nurse stood at the door. She was strange to Gilderman, but she smiled pleasantly at him, and he bowed to her as he entered. [186]

The room, partly darkened, was singularly quiet, singularly in order. It had a look as though no one was there. Then Gilderman saw his wife. The coverlet was spread smoothly over her, and her arms were lying passively upon it, the hands still and inert. Her eyes were turned towards him and she was smiling. There was a bundle lying on the bed beside her and a murmur came from it. Gilderman walked silently across the room. He knelt down beside the bed and took her hand in his and kissed it. Then he leaned over and kissed the soft lips. The assistant nurse, who had been standing silently with folded hands beside the window, passed noiselessly out of the room.

"We have been sending everywhere for you," the invalid said, in a low, weak voice. "I wanted you—oh, so much, but now I am glad you were not here." [187]

Gilderman did not reply; again his mind flew back to what he had seen that afternoon and the day before, but now it did not cling to it but left it instantly. This was the only reality, this was his life—the other was not. He was still kneeling beside the bed holding her hand.

Mrs. Gilderman reached out the other hand and softly raised the silk wrapping of the bundle beside her. Gilderman saw the strange, congested, shapeless little face, but it did not arouse any distinct emotion in him.

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The next morning Gilderman awakened very early, but with a sweet and tepid sense of

renewed nervous vitality. Even before he was awake he felt the keen straining of a great delight and joy, and almost instantly he realized what it was. Everything seemed illuminated with the light of that joy. He lay in bed motionless, listening to the distant sounds of the noises of the street—not moving, but just living. The day was very bright and the sun was already shining aslant in at the windows of the dressing-room beyond. A son; his very own. His bosom filled full of joy as he lay there sunk in its delight. Then he began to think about it. He seemed to look down through a long perspective of years to come in which the child grew to boyhood, the boy to manhood, and into all the glory of life and wealth and happiness. He saw him at college—a fine, dashing fellow, a popular hero. Then it suddenly came to him to wonder—what if the child grew up differently from that—a poor, puny lad, for instance—or, worse, if he grew up vicious or unruly? And then there was the possibility of death—always the looming possibility of death. He tore his mind away from these vague discomforts and drifted back again into the illumination of that first awakening joy. Suddenly the thought of the Man whom he had seen the day before intruded itself into his balmy meditations. He thrust it quickly away from him and it was gone, leaving only a shadowy spot of lingering darkness; once more the joy was there. His wife had admired that necklace down at Brock's. He would go down that morning and get it. He would have that big ruby added to it as a pendant; the colors would be beautiful. It was a magnificent set of stones, and it would make a fine family piece to be handed down to future generations. He laid a plan that he would put the necklace into a bon-bon box. He would give it to Florence and she would say, "But, my dear boy, I can't eat bon-bons." Then she would open the box and find the necklace. What a beautiful morning it was out-of-doors. It seemed to him that he had never felt so happy in all his life. He raised himself upon his elbow and pushed aside the curtains and looked at the clock. It was not yet eight o'clock, but he felt that he could not sleep any more. He was restless to get up and enter into this new joy of his life, and most of all he wanted to go down to Brock's and buy that necklace.

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He arose without ringing for his man and began dressing himself. He did not know where the man kept his clothes. He opened one drawer after another, finding his garments piece by piece. It seemed very droll that he should not know where his own clothes were. He laughed; he was very elated; he was very foolish. He did not even know where his bath-towels were. As soon as he was dressed he went across to his wife's room. He stood there at the door for a long time. There was no sound. While he stood there the adjoining door of the dressing-room opened and the nurse came out swiftly and silently. She smiled at him.

"How is Mrs. Gilderman?" he said, whispering.

"She's asleep," whispered the nurse, in answer.

Then he went down-stairs into the library. Everything was unprepared for his coming. The morning newspapers lay in a pile upon the table. He gathered them up and went out into his study, and there settled himself comfortably in his great leather chair by the window that looked out across the street to the leafless vistas of the park beyond. How happy he was! Then he opened the papers and tried to read, and recognized delightfully that he could not detach himself from the joy that possessed him. He was unable to follow the printed words.

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Suddenly his man came into the room. He started when he saw Gilderman. "I didn't know you were up yet, Mr. Gilderman," he said. "You didn't ring for me."

Gilderman burst out laughing. "No," he said, "it was very early, and it wasn't worth while. I couldn't sleep, and so I just got up."

"Is there anything that I can do, if you please, sir?"

"Nothing, except to fetch me a cup of coffee," said Gilderman. "I'll not get shaved now until I dress again after breakfast."

The man lingered for an instant to arrange something on the table and then went out of the room.

Gilderman ate his breakfast alone. As soon as he had finished he went up-stairs again. The door of his wife's room was open, and the nurse came to tell him that he might come in. Her morning toilet was over; her face looked singularly sweet and pure and cool lying in the half shade of the pillow. She welcomed him with a smile. As Gilderman came up to the bedside, she softly opened the cover that hid the child's face. Gilderman bent over and looked at it. Again he wondered that he should be no more sensible to the fact of paternity. The joy was there, but it did not seem to attach itself to its object. He kissed his wife, and then sat down in a chair beside the bed. She held his hand. The only piece of jewelry he wore was a plain gold ring upon his little finger. She had a habit of turning this ring around and around upon the finger, and she did so now. "Where were you yesterday, Henry?" she said, after a while. "Oh, I did so long for you. I kept calling for you all the time. Afterwards I was glad you weren't here. But where were you? They sent everywhere for you—to the club and up to the riding-school, and they even telegraphed out to De Witt's."

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Gilderman leaned very tenderly over her. His heart filled at the soft touch of her hand upon his. Then he suddenly determined to tell her all.

"I went out to Brookfield," he said. And then, without giving himself time to draw back from his determination, he continued: "The fact is, Florence, I didn't want to trouble you about it lately, and so I didn't say anything about it, but—er—the fact is, I have become extremely interested in the

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doings of that Man whom people are talking so much about, and I went to Brookfield to see Him."

"Oh, Henry!" exclaimed Mrs. Gilderman.

"Yes. I dare say you think it is foolish. I think it was foolish myself now; but I was led into it all. Day before yesterday I was down at Brookfield with the De Witts, you know. Well, while I was there I was curious to see Him. I saw Him do something; I could not get away from it, and I kept thinking about it all the time."

"Was that what made you so strange and absent?"

"Yes."

"What was it you saw?"

Then he told her about the raising of Lazarus from the dead. She listened in silence. After he was done she lay still and silent for a moment or two. "Oh, Henry," she said, "how perfectly horrid! Isn't it dreadful! I don't see how you could bear to see it. I don't see why He's allowed to do such things. You don't really think He did bring a dead man back to life, do you?"

Gilderman was silent for a moment or two. "No," he said, "of course I couldn't believe such a thing as that. But I can't understand it at all. There were things about it I can't fathom at all. It was very terrible. I don't see how it could have been a trick."

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"But you don't believe any man could bring another man back to life after he had been dead four days, do you?"

Gilderman did not reply. He did not know what to reply. "No," said he, helplessly, "I don't."

"And did you see Him yesterday?" she said.

"Yes, I did."

"And did He do anything more?"

"No; I only spoke to Him and He spoke to me."

"What did He speak to you about?"

Again Gilderman thought. It all seemed to him now very foolish and very remote. He felt ashamed to tell her. He laughed. "I dare say you'll think me awfully ridiculous, Florence," he said. "Well, I'll tell you all about it." And so he did.

She listened to him without saying a word until he ended. Then she pressed his hand. "Dear Henry," she said, smiling faintly, "you are so enthusiastic and so impulsive. And then you're so given to thinking about such things as this. But you oughtn't to let yourself be so led away." And then, after a moment of silent thinking, she said: "Of course you don't believe any such thing as that, do you? You don't believe that a man ought really to give away everything he has?"

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"Why, no," said Gilderman, "I don't think that. Indeed, I know a man shouldn't give away everything that belongs to him." And then he added: "For the matter of that, I couldn't give away everything I have, even if I wanted to do so."

Mrs. Gilderman lay thinking for a while. "You don't think anybody saw you down there, do you?"

"Why, no," said Gilderman; "at least, I think not."

"It would be dreadful, you know, if anybody knew what you had been doing. Just think how everybody would talk and laugh. You oughtn't to give way to your impulses as you do, Henry. Some time you'll get into trouble by it."

"Oh, I'm sure nobody saw me," said Gilderman, and then he was uncomfortably silent. It would, indeed, be very disagreeable to be gayed about such a thing.

"I want you to promise something, Henry," said Mrs. Gilderman, suddenly.

"What is it?" said Gilderman.

"I want you to promise that you'll never undertake to do as that Man told you—to sell all that you have and give it to the poor."

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Gilderman laughed. "I think you can set your mind at rest as to that, Florence," he said.

"But I want you to promise me—think of Reginald."

Reginald, by-the-way, was the name into which the baby had been born. It was the name of Gilderman's baby brother, who had died almost in infancy and whom he could just remember. "Very well, my dear," said Gilderman, "I promise."

"We must think always of little Reginald now," said Mrs. Gilderman; "we must remember that all we have is in trust for him. I want you to promise me, dear, because I don't want you to do anything rash. You are so impulsive—you poor, dear boy."

Gilderman laughed. "Very well, my dear," he said; "I promise you faithfully that I won't try to

sell a cent's worth, nor give away a dime to the poor more than I have to."

Just then the nurse came in to say that Mrs. Caiaphas was down-stairs.

"Go down and see her, Henry, won't you?" said Mrs. Gilderman, and Gilderman went, though reluctantly.

Gilderman made another confidant during the day. He was led rather inadvertently into doing so. It was Stirling West. There had been many visitors in the morning, and West had come around from the club a little before noon to congratulate his friend. The two were sitting together comfortably in the library smoking and looking out into the street. The newspapers lay in a pile upon the floor, and upon the uppermost sheet was a big pen-and-ink portrait of the Man of whom so many were now talking. West pointed to it and made some comment upon it. Gilderman looked down at the paper through the blue mist of tobacco smoke. "It doesn't look at all like Him," said he.

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"Doesn't it?" said West, and then he suddenly looked up at Gilderman. "Eh!" said he, "by Jove! How do you know it doesn't look like Him? Did you ever see Him?"

Gilderman had spoken without thinking. His first impulse was to equivocate, but he did not. It was easier to tell about it now that he had already spoken of it to his wife. He made a sudden determination to take West into his confidence and see what he said about it all. "Yes," he said, "I have seen Him."

"The deuce you say! When did you see Him?"

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"Not long ago. Yesterday and day before yesterday."

"Where?"

And Gilderman told him.

"The deuce you did! Well! Well! Well! You've kept yourself mighty close about it."

"I didn't want to tell about it," said Gilderman.

"Why not?" said West.

Gilderman considered for just one lingering moment. "Look here, Stirling," he said, suddenly, "I'll tell you about it, if you'll promise not to say anything about it to the other fellows."

"All right," said West. "I'll promise."

"The fact is," said Gilderman, "I let it out a moment ago without thinking what I was saying. I'm afraid I've been making rather a fool of myself, Stirling. You know I've been always more or less interested in that sort of thing. (West nodded his head.) Well, I went down to Brookfield with the De Witts to see their new house. While I was there I hunted up this Man, who was in the neighborhood at the time. I saw Him bring that other man back to life," he added.

"By Jove!" commented West; "the mischief you did!" He smoked a little while in silence. "But the newspapers say it was all a fake," he said, presently.

"It wasn't a fake," said Gilderman. "I don't know what it was, but I don't believe it was a fake. It was a horrible thing. I can't make head nor tail of it even yet."

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Then, in a more consecutive way, he told West all about what he had seen. West listened in silence, and for the third time he commented "By Jove!" when Gilderman had ended. He paused for a moment and then said, "And you saw all that, did you?"

Gilderman nodded his head. He did not say anything about his having seen the Man again—of having searched for Him for that special purpose, and he suddenly determined that he would not do so. "I don't want you to say anything about all this," he said; "I feel as though I had been making an ass of myself."

"Well, I don't know about that," said West. "That's putting it rather strong. You were always fond of that sort of thing, and everybody knows that that's your peculiar lay. I don't see what you like about it, for my part, nor why you want to go hunting around in the cemeteries that way."

"Well, I have had a dose of it this time," said Gilderman, "and I don't think I shall ever tamper with that sort of thing again."

Stirling West puffed out a cloud of smoke and said nothing further.

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## AN INTERLUDE

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WHEN a man conceives within his own mind an image of God with the intent to worship it, he does not, in worshipping it, really worship a God who is alive; he does not worship a God who made him and all mankind. That which he worships is only an image of God which he himself has created.

Let any man think of this fact for a little moment and he will see that it is true.

Suppose, for an instance, that, instead of an idea of God, you form in your mind an idea, say, of Cromwell, or of Washington, or of Napoleon, or of Lincoln. Is it not perfectly clear that that image is not the real living Cromwell, Washington, Napoleon, Lincoln, but only a mental picture of one of those men? You may cause that image—that mental picture—to seem to move and to speak and to assume different aspects; you may cause it apparently to will and to act, but it is not the real hero-man who so moves and speaks, wills and acts. It is only an imaginary speech and action of an imagined hero.

The real man is exactly a different thing. He is of real flesh and blood, and his speech and action depend upon his own volition and not upon your imagination. You may, if you choose, decorate the image in your mind with the laurel wreath of hero-worship, and you may cause the most noble and exalted thoughts to seem to pass through the imagined hero's mind. But it is not the living man whom you crown, nor do those thoughts really pass through the brain of the living man. That which you crown is only your own idea—your own created image of the man; and the thoughts which seem to pass through his mind are, in reality, only your own thoughts which you cause to pass through your own mind.

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So it is exactly with the worship of God.

For let the mind form ever so exalted an image of God, that image is, after all, only the creation of the mind; it is only a dead thing, and not the living fact.

When a man prays to such an image of God, he prays not to the actual living Heavenly Father who created him, but to an image of God which he himself has created.

For that image of God is no more really alive than the imagined hero is really a living man.

And as it is in the case of an imagined hero, so it is with that image of God. For let that image seem to move and to act ever so gigantically, it is, after all, only an idea in your own mind—a thing thinner and more unsubstantial than the thinnest ether—a thought without any real potency or any real life.

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The actual and living God is exactly and perfectly different from such an ideal image. He is infinite, the idea in the mind is definite; He is omnipotent, the idea in the mind is impotent to create so much as a single grain of dust; He is omniscient, the idea in the mind knows nothing and thinks nothing excepting such knowledges and thoughts that the man's imagination is pleased to place within its empty skull. He, the Ancient of Days, exists forever and forever; the idea in the mind continues to live only so long as we kneel to pray, and it vanishes instantly we arise from our knees and go about our earthly business. He is the fountain-head of all human intelligence, and has Himself created the rationality of man; that idea of Him—it crumbles and dissolves away before a five-minute argument with any clever sceptic or agnostic who chooses to assault it with the hard, round stones of reasoning and of fact. He, the Heavenly Father, is the fountain of all life; that idea of Him—what power has it to give life to anything? Can it—such an ethereal nothing, the creation of the mind itself—lift up the soul into a resurrection of life when the body of flesh shall grow cold and die? Can it illuminate that black and empty abyss of death with any radiance of life? What power has it to turn aside those floods of doubt which, now and then, bursting their bonds, sweep down upon and overflow the soul, drowning out even the faint little spark of hope which we all so carefully cherish. That image, like the image of the man-hero, is dead and impotent excepting as the man's own imagination makes it living and potential. Pray to your imaginary God in such times of black terror, and see how little that empty image can help and aid you. It is as powerless to save you from that flood of doubt as the African's fetich of wood is impotent to save him from the deluge of water that bursts upon and overflows the world about him. When that black and awful torrent—the fear of annihilation—sweeps down upon the man, it, the image, is torn away from his grasp like a dead fragment of wood and is swept away and gone, leaving him to struggle alone and unaided in the overwhelming flood.

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And yet man continues to worship this dead, self-created image. He says that God has this imagined attribute and that imagined attribute; that He thinks and feels thus and so, and does this and the other thing, now being angry and now pleased. But, after all, these things belong only to the image in the mind. What God really thinks and feels and intends is beyond the understanding of the man whom He has created.

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Why does man worship an image instead of the reality? It is easy to see why he does so. He worships that image, because in worshipping it he worships himself, it being a part of himself. He loves that image because he himself has made it, and because he loves all the things of his own creation. He is willing to do the supposed mandates of that self-created fetich (provided they are not too difficult of performance), because those mandates spring fundamentally from his own imagination, and because he likes to do as he himself wills to do.

Just so we worship, not the real Christ, but an imagined Christ that is not alive.

Christ entered into the city upon Palm Sunday.

This is the way we love to imagine that vast and tremendous fact—the final entrance of divinely human truth into the citadel of life.

We love to think of Him as a white-robed, majestic figure crowned with glory, with smooth hair and shining face—mild, benignant, exalted. We love to picture to ourselves how young men and

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maidens and little children ran before His coming and spread their garments or fragrant branches of trees in His triumphal way, shouting with multitudinous cadence, "Hosannah in the highest!" How splendid it is to think thus of the King of Glory coming into His city of holiness. Thus imagined, it is a grand and beautiful picture, and we wonder how those scribes and pharisees, those priests and Levites, blinded with their own wickedness, should not have seen the splendor of it all—should have denied and crucified One who came thus gloriously into their city.

But in so depicting that divine coming we bow in submission, not to the living fact, but to a picture of that fact which we ourselves have created in the imagination. That is how we would have liked to see the Messiah of Jehovah-God come into His glory. That is how we would have arranged it if we had had the shaping of events, and we can bow before that image easily enough. But, alas! for us it is not the way in which He really comes. For God does not shape His events as we would have them shaped; He shapes them exactly different.

Read for yourself the truth as it stands written in the Divine Word of Jehovah-God, and then ask your own heart whether you would not have rejected Him as the scribes and pharisees of that day rejected Him. [205]

For in the actuality of fact there could have been and there was no such glory of coming. That which the intelligent, thoughtful men of that day saw was, apparently, a common man, a journeyman carpenter, travel-stained, weary, footsore, riding upon a shaggy little ass, surrounded by a knot of rough fishermen and followed by a turbulent multitude gathered from the highways and the byways. For He had chosen for His associates, not the good and the virtuous, the reputable and the law-abiding citizen; He had chosen the harlot, the publican, the sinner, the outcast. For He proclaimed with His own lips that He was the Saviour of the sinners and not of the righteous. Read for yourself of the multitude that followed Him! How they stripped the clothes from their backs to throw in His path; how they rent and tore the branches from the trees, mutilating and dismembering God's created, shady things, they knew not why. That mob believed that He was coming to overthrow existing law and order, so that the rich and the powerful might be cast down, and that they, the poor and the destitute, might be set up in their stead. They believed (for He had demonstrated it to them) that He possessed a supernatural power to perform miracles, and that He could and would use that power to overturn existing order. For did He Himself not say with His own very lips that He could overturn the Temple of the Lord and could build it up again in three days. Such was the ignorant mob that shouted and raved when He entered the city riding on an ass. They expected to see something supernatural done, and, when He showed no miracles, they presently, in a day or two, turned against Him like wild beasts and gave Him over to mortal agony and death. Such as that was the crowd that really followed Him, and it was not beautiful and exalted. [206]

There the story stands written in the Book of Books—a Gospel so divine that every single word—yea, every jot and tittle written within it—is holy. There it stands terrible and stern for us scribes and pharisees of intelligent respectability to read. We cannot accept it in its reality; for even now we would deny it as we, scribes and pharisees, priests and Levites, did of old. For, alas! we cannot accept Him in His reality.

We pharisees of old preferred to see their Messiah come according to their idea of order and of righteousness, and when He did not come thus, we could not acknowledge Him. We of to-day build up a beautiful picture of Him, but, in reality, we would deny and revile the living fact as we did before. It could not be otherwise, for God has made us as we are. [207]

You of to-day ought not to blame us because we were afraid when we beheld that Christ of publicans and sinners bursting into our Temple, and, with fury in His voice and in His aspect, thrash those who sat there upon business doing no harm. What wonder when we heard Him say He could tear down our beautiful Temple (the fruit of so much reverential labor) and build it up again in three days—what wonder that we should have been afraid lest the mob, taking Him at His word, should rend and tear down all our sacred things with an insane fury. What wonder that Bishop Caiaphas, seeing all the terrors of violence that threatened the peace of the community, should have said: "It is better that this one Man should perish rather than all of us should die."

We scribes and pharisees—we are the bulwarks of law and order and of existing religion. Let Christ come to-day and we would crucify Him—if the law allowed us to do so—just as we scribes and pharisees did nineteen hundred years ago. For is it not better, indeed, that one man should die rather than that all existing order should be overturned, and that law and religion should perish? [208]

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Go ye down, scribes and pharisees, into the secret, hidden places of your city where the immortal and living image of God lies with its face in the dust of humility. There alone you will find the living Christ, and if you, finding Him in His rags and poverty, can truly take Him by the hand and lift Him up, then will He also raise you up into a life that shall be everlasting. For there is no other God of humanity than that poor and lowly image—no, not in heaven or on the earth or in the abyss beneath the earth.

For out of the dust of misery and of sin He lifts the lowly up and makes him new so that in a life hereafter he shall shine with a glory that is of God's creating, and not of man's.

He who has ears to hear let him hear, let him hear; only God be merciful to us poor hypocrites and sinners, who deny His living presence. Happy, indeed, is it for us that His mercy is infinite and endures forever, else we would perish in our own pride of lawfulness and virtue, and be forever lost to any hope of salvation.

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## XIV

### VERITAS DIVINIS, VERITAS MUNDI

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A DISTURBANCE even of a great magnitude does not pervade the whole of a community. You may hear, for instance, in the heart of the town that there is a riot going on in the suburbs, but you may not be brought any more actually in touch with it than though it were a hundred miles away. Unless you have the time to spend, and sufficient curiosity to go and hunt it out, you may not see anything of it unless it directly collides with some of your daily habits.

So it was with this riot. The public journals were heavy that morning with reports of gathering disturbances in the upper parts of the city, and there was a general feeling of apprehension of coming trouble. But when it actually came, people living in the houses in the upper reaches of the town saw nothing of it, even though it was then in actual progress within a mile of their own door-sills.

It was not until three or four o'clock in the afternoon that Gilderman heard of the attack made upon the Temple. He had been called away from home for a couple of days, and, being tired, had remained in the house that Sunday morning with his wife. The diamond necklace had been brought home from Brock's the evening before, and he had that morning given it to Mrs. Gilderman in the bon-bon box, as he had planned. They had both been very happy. It was only on his way to the club that he met Ryan and Stirling West coming to find him with news of the riot. The three went off together down to the rectory of the Church of the Advent, where the Caiaphases were still living until the 1st of May should take the late bishop's family into their new lodgings.

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The attack had been made just after the closing of the morning services, and there were all kinds of exaggerated reports about the affair. West, with a good deal of hesitation, told Gilderman that it was said that Bishop Caiaphas had been assaulted, and that he had only been saved from serious injury by the aid of the police. "That is not so, I know," said Gilderman. "The bishop wasn't at the Temple at all to-day. He told me only last night that he was to be out of town this morning, at the consecration of the Church of Beth-el."

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"Is that so?" said West. "Well, these things are always confoundedly exaggerated, you know. I'm precious glad that the dear old boy wasn't in the beastly row. I heard that he was knocked down and beaten."

"It's probably altogether a false report made out of the whole cloth," said Gilderman.

"Think so?" said West. "Well, I'm glad if it is so. Anyhow, it is certain that there was an attack on the Temple."

The three young men met the bishop just at the entrance of the park. His brougham drew up to the sidewalk when he caught sight of Gilderman and his friends. He was very agitated. He said that he was on his way to visit Pilate and to see if the governor would not take some steps to prevent the recurrence of any further rioting. He said that Mr. Doling and Mr. Latimer (the latter a cousin of Latimer-Moire's) had been to see Herod, but it seemed to be somehow very difficult to get the authorities to take any steps in suppressing the disturbance. "I should be very reluctant to think," said the bishop, and his voice trembled as he spoke—"I should be very reluctant to think that the authorities should take less interest in the protection of church property than of private or city property."

"Oh, I think that's hardly likely," said Gilderman. "I suppose they don't want to take extreme measures until extreme measures are necessary."

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"I hope it is so," said the bishop. "I hope that is the reason why they won't do anything."

"Would you like me to go up to Pilate's with you?" asked Gilderman.

"I wish you would, Henry," said the bishop. "I wish you would."

As the two bowled away through the park, the bishop gave Gilderman a brief account of the rioting of the morning and the attack in the Temple. There had, it appeared, been a business meeting held in the chapel after the morning service. It had been the custom for some time past to hold such meetings, for the members were always sure of being together at that time. The bishop said he had not altogether approved of these meetings, but it seemed to be more convenient to hold them then than at any other time, and there was more certainty of getting the committee together. There had, he said, been some difficulty for some time past in reaching any decision as to the design for the great chancel window, and Mr. Dorman-Webster had suggested that the committee having the window in charge should that morning meet with the finance committee, and that Duncan, of White & Wall, should then submit his designs to them as a body.

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There had been two designs made originally, but the design selected by the committee having the matter in charge (the design that the late Mrs. Hapgood had so much liked) had been so much the more expensive of the two that the finance committee had not as yet been able to agree to purchase it. So Mr. Duncan, of White & Wall, had come, bringing around both the colored designs. Mr. Parrott had also come to meet the committee. He was the importer who had brought over the Roman tapestries in gold and silver, and he had brought around colored photographs to show the committee. While the joint committee was sitting a Mr. Wilder Doncaster had come in with the news that part of the mob was coming up in the direction of the Temple. Although, as was said, there had been all morning a general apprehension of a coming riot, it had occurred to no one that the Temple could be the object of attack. No one had any thought of present danger until the mob was actually in the plaza of the Temple. The chapel in which the committee sat opened upon the side street, but, by some mistake, both that door and the door of the chancel had been locked, leaving only the other door leading into the Temple cloisters open. The committee, although they were even yet not exactly apprehensive of any violence, adjourned immediately, and Mr. Wilde went out to see if he could get some one to come and open the street door, so that they might escape the mob, which was then in the plaza. Almost immediately, however, the crowd had broken into the Temple and the cloisters. Mr. Wilde was forced back into the chapel, and a moment or two later the leader of the mob Himself entered at the head of the riot. He had, the bishop said, brought with Him a heavy whip, with which He began striking at the committee. Mr. Reginald Moire, speaking of it afterwards, said that he had seen Dorman-Webster struck twice across the face. All the time of the attack the Man continued repeating, "My Father's house is called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves."

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Gilderman listened intently as the two bowed rapidly along. He felt very sorry for his father-in-law. The poor bishop was so agitated that his hands shook and his voice trembled. Gilderman did not like to look at him in his agitation. "If they make another attack upon the sacred building," said the bishop, in a straining voice, "there is no knowing what damage they may not do. Suppose they should take it into their heads to smash in those beautiful, painted windows or blow up the chancel. I have suffered enough in spirit over our social riots of late, but this is the worst of all. To think of the poor, ignorant creatures attacking the Temple of God itself; it breaks my heart!"

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"Oh, well," said Gilderman, comfortingly, "maybe the worst is passed." But the bishop only shook his head; there was no comfort for him in Gilderman's words.

The bishop and Gilderman found Pilate at home and alone in his library. He was smoking a cigar, and he had evidently been reading a book which he had laid face down upon the table. It was one of the nether sort of imported novels. Gilderman, from where he stood, could not read the title of the volume, but there was no mistaking the yellow paper cover, the sharp type, and the disreputable vignette picture of the two laughing, black-stockinged women on the cover.

Pilate tried in every way to elude the subject the bishop sought to force upon him. He tried to talk about the Whitecourt lectures, the Women's Club, and the street missions, in all of which he knew the bishop was much interested. But the bishop would not talk about anything but the riot, and at last the governor had to submit. "My dear bishop," he said, "you don't understand these affairs. One must act deliberately and with caution in such a matter as this."

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"Act deliberately! Act with caution!" cried the bishop. "In the mean time, how are we citizens to be protected from such a mob as this, which may at any moment take it into its head not only to gut the sacred Temple and to smash its windows, but even to attack our very homes?"

"My dear bishop," the governor began again, "there is not, in my estimation, the slightest danger of any attack upon the private or the public property of this community."

"But, sir," said the bishop, "don't you know that there has already been an attack made upon the Temple and upon the persons of certain citizens gathered there?"

"I know," said Pilate, "but I think that comes within the province of the city authorities rather than under my authority. I do not feel the riot to be as yet of sufficient magnitude to call out the troops for active aid in suppressing it."

"But you speak about the mayor. Mr. Dorman-Webster went to see the mayor, and he expresses it as his opinion that the mayor is not to be counted upon for any assistance."

The governor almost shrugged his shoulders.

"And don't you mean to do anything at all, then?" cried the bishop. "Are not the laws made to protect us and our property?"

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"The laws? Yes, if you please. They are made to protect you, but I am not made to protect you—that is, you alone. The office of governor is made that the executive may protect not only you, but all men. Do you think I would be protecting these poor, misguided people if I called out the militia to shoot them down in the streets? My dear bishop, I cannot undertake to do that until there is absolutely nothing else to be done. Human life is too valuable for that."

The bishop was staggered for a moment. "I don't know," he said, "that I want that the troops should actually fire upon the mob."

"Then what do you want?" said the governor.

"I would suggest that the presence of the troops might overawe them."



Governor Pilate shook his head and smiled. "That can no longer be done," he said. "It has been tried, but it has never succeeded. It must be fire and blood or nothing. No, my dear bishop," he continued, "you people who are all calling so loudly upon me through the press and the post"—here he laid his hand upon a great packet of letters upon the desk—"you who are so calling upon me to take the law into my own hands and to execute it to your liking for the instant suppression of the rioting—you do not take into consideration the responsibility of my position. You see but one side of the question; I see both sides. I am not only governor of a part of the community such as yourself; I am also governor of the humbler classes of the commonwealth as well. I must consider them equally with you and your kind. I have no right to side myself with you and strike against them. I must stand between you and keep you apart from one another. I may sympathize with you—yes; but I cannot sympathize so far as to do violence against these poor, misguided people. I must hold my hand until nothing else remains to be done than to kill them."

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"I don't think I understand your position," said Gilderman, striking in. "It seems to me that there is a right and a wrong, and that it is right to do right and wrong to do wrong. It does not seem to me to be right that the violent and the vicious should be allowed to work their wills upon the peaceful and the innocent."

"I am sorry that you can't understand my position," said the governor, who had turned to Gilderman when he began speaking. "It is very plain to me, Mr. Gilderman. Suppose I should act hastily in this matter and make a mistake. All the blame of that mistake would fall upon me and upon no one else. It does not require any courage for you and those other gentlemen and ladies who write to me, to urge that I should at once act, and act violently, in this matter. To so advise does not take any courage; but it does take a great deal of courage for me to do such a thing upon my own responsibility. Consider the blame that would fall upon me if I should err in such a matter as this. I don't think I care over much for the opinion of other men, but even I do not care to take unnecessary blame."

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"But surely no blame can attach to you for merely putting a stop to rioting."

"Perhaps no. Perhaps yes."

"But," said the bishop, "even if blame is attached to you, you will have done your duty."

Again the governor smiled faintly. "That, my dear bishop," he said, "is a higher plane of ethics than I am able to attain. I would rather be at ease in my mind than in my conscience." Then he began fingering among his papers, and the bishop saw he wanted him to go. Nevertheless, Bishop Caiaphas would not give up entirely.

"You have no objection to my taking the matter in my own hands?" he said.

"None whatever," said Pilate.

"Then I shall go and consult my lawyer. I came to you, in the first instance, because it did not seem courteous to act without consulting you before taking any other steps. If I can have this man arrested upon my own responsibility I shall do so."

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"My dear bishop," said the governor, rising as the bishop arose, "if you will allow me to say so, the very best thing you can do is to go and consult with your lawyer. He will tell you just what to do. The law is open to you. If you choose to put it in operation against this Man, and if you can arrest Him and convict Him, I promise you I will not stretch out my hand to prevent His execution. Only, in doing what you do, you act upon your own responsibility."

Then the bishop and Gilderman took their leave and the governor sat down, took up his book, and resumed his reading almost with a grunt of satisfaction.

As Bishop Caiaphas was driven rapidly away from the governor's house he was very angry. He knew that it was very unbecoming in him, as a priest, to be so angry, but he did not care. Presently he burst out: "The idea of that man sitting there alone, debauching his own mind with a low and obscene novel, while this Man and His mob are allowed to overturn the religion of the world!" If Bishop Caiaphas had been a layman he would perhaps have added, "Damn him!"

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Gilderman did not say anything, but his heart went out in sympathy to his father-in-law.

Presently the bishop burst out again, "I'll go down and see Inkerman this evening!" (Mr. Judah Inkerman was his lawyer.)

"I would, sir, if I were in your place," said Gilderman. "I don't doubt that he'll tell you the very best thing to do. He's got lots of influence with Police Commissioner Robinson, too. And look here, sir," the young man added, "tell Inkerman not to spare any expense and to send his bill to me." He wanted to do something to comfort the bishop, and this was all that occurred to him.

"Thank you, Henry," said Bishop Caiaphas, gratefully. "No man ever had a better son than you."

Gilderman slipped his hand under his father-in-law's arm and pressed it.

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There was no further demonstration of the rioters against the Temple. The next day the mob

gathered again, but this time it did not move towards that holy edifice, but drifted down-town towards the law-courts. As the morning wore along it began to be apprehended that an attack might be made upon the public buildings or the sub-treasury or some of the larger banking-houses, but no such attack was made.

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Gilderman had an appointment at the office that morning. He did not go down-town till about noon, and then he found the blockade of cars extended far up into the town. At last his coupé could go no farther. The footman came and opened the door and told Gilderman that it was impossible to go any farther, and that a policeman had said that the streets were packed full of people. As the footman stood speaking to Gilderman, Downingwood Lawton came up to the open door of the coupé. "Hello, Gildy!" he said, "is that you? What are you doing down here? Come down to see the row?"

"Not exactly," said Gilderman, laughing. And then he explained. "I promised to be down at the office this morning and sign some papers. There seems to be pretty poor show of getting there, according to what my man says."

"Well, I should rather say so, unless you choose to foot it; and even then it's only a chance of getting through. By George! I never saw such a jam in my life."

"Were you down there, then?" said Gilderman.

"Yes; Stirling and I went over to see Belle and Janette De Haven off."

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"They went this morning, did they?"

"Yes, and we went down to see them off—just for a lark, you know. While I was down-town I thought I'd go over to the office and strike the governor for a check, and so I got right into the thick of it all. I left Stirling down there somewhere."

"What did Stirling stay down there for?"

"I don't know. Wants to see the row out, I guess."

"What are they doing down there now?" asked Gilderman.

"Nothing that I can see. The last I saw was the Man himself standing at the top of the court-house steps talking to a lot of lawyers. Where are you going now, Gildy?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Gilderman. "I don't suppose it's any use my trying to get down to the office."

"Not the least in the world. If you're going back up-town, I'll thank you for a lift. There isn't a cab to be had anywhere, or if you do find one it can't budge out of the block."

"Jump in, then," said Gilderman, "and I'll take you up with me."

Just at that time the Son of Man, weary, dusty, wayworn, was talking with the lawyers, giving utterance to those three great parables—the last of all He gave to the world. The first parable—the man who had two sons, the one of whom said, I will not go work in the vineyard, and yet went; the other of whom said, I will go, and went not. The second parable—the master of the vineyard who sent his servant to the husbandmen, who stoned him; then his son to the same husbandmen, who killed him outright. The third parable—that of how the king made a marriage feast for his son and yet had to send into the highways and byways for guests. Of how one guest came without a wedding garment, and, as a punishment, therefore, was cast into outer darkness where there was wailing and gnashing of teeth. The people listened and did not understand, and Gilderman drove away from Divine Truth in his coupé.

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"By George!" said Lawton, as the cab worked its way with difficulty out of the press of vehicles, "isn't this a lovely state of affairs? I came down from the country yesterday afternoon. I never saw such a sight in my life. Half the trees in the park are stripped as bare as poles. We went by one place where they'd been spreading branches in the street, and everything all a-clutter. It's a beastly shame, I say, that Pilate and Herod don't do something to stop it all."

As the coupé drove past the armory they saw that the authorities were at last evidently taking some steps to prevent any fatal culmination of the disturbance. The great armory doors stood wide open, and a crowd of people were gathered about. A couple of soldiers stood on guard, erect, motionless, endeavoring to appear oblivious to the interest of the clustered group of faces looking at them.

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"I am glad to see that, anyhow," said Gilderman, pointing with his cigarette towards the armory.

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## XV JUDAS

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THE burden of prosecution having devolved upon the Ecclesiastical Court, a decision was not long in being reached. Again it was the universally voiced opinion that it was better that one

man should die rather than that a whole nation should perish. It now remained only to arrest the creator of this divine disturbance of mundane peace.

That same afternoon Mr. Inkerman, the lawyer, called on Bishop Caiaphas to say that a follower of the Man had been found who would be willing, he, Inkerman, believed, to betray his Master to the authorities. It would, he opined, be out of the question to attempt an arrest in the midst of the turbulent mob that surrounded Him; such an attempt would be almost certain to precipitate a riot. But if this fellow could be persuaded or bought to disclose where his Master slept at night, the arrest could be made without exciting any disturbance.

"How did you find your man?" asked the bishop.

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"Oh, I didn't find him myself," said Mr. Inkerman. "Inspector Dolan found him. Dolan says he will bring him up here at five o'clock, if that will suit you."

"Very well," said the bishop; "that will suit me exactly."

At the appointed time there were four or five of the more prominent ecclesiastics present in the bishop's library—among the others, Dr. Dayton and Dr. Ives. A little after five Mr. Inkerman came quietly into the room accompanied by Gilderman.

"The inspector hasn't come yet?" he asked.

"No," said the bishop; "not yet."

"They've just called me up from the station-house, telling me that he was on the way," said the lawyer.

"How much do you suppose this man will want for his services?" asked the bishop, after a moment or two of pause.

"Oh, I don't know," said the lawyer. "Thank you"—and he took a cigar from the box the man-servant offered him—"I would not give him very much, though. He's only a poor devil, and a little money will go a great way with him. Offer him ten dollars."

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"Ten dollars!" exclaimed Dr. Ives. "Rogues must be cheap in these times, sir!" and there was a ripple of amusement.

"Some rogues are and some are not," said Mr. Inkerman, when the laugh had subsided. "I dare say it would take a pot of money to buy a Herod, and still more to buy a Pilate," and then again there was a ripple of laughter.

At that moment the servant came in bringing a printed card upon the salver. The card had a semibusiness-like, semisocial look. He handed it to the bishop, who glanced at it. "Oh," he said, "here he is. Show him up directly."

He handed the card to Dr. Dayton, who ran his eye over it. "It's Inspector Dolan," he said to the others.

In a little while the servant returned, holding open the door and ushering in the two men. The light shone upon the inspector's uniform, gleaming upon the badge on his breast. He came directly into the room followed by a rather small, rather thin man, with a lean face and reddish hair and beard, and a long, lean neck. The man seemed abashed and ill at ease in the presence of the clergymen. He stood in the farther part of the room, not far from the door. He held his hat in his hand, shifting it and turning it around and around. He was ill clad and rough looking, but his face was rather cunning than stupid. It was not altogether a bad face. His eyes wandered about the room, resting an instant upon each unusual object. There was a large photogravure in colors of Renault's "Execution in Tangier." That caught his eye, and his gaze lingered upon it for a moment—the severed head, the prone corpse lying upon the steps, the huge figure of the executioner looming above it, and the splashes of blood trickling over the white marble. He looked at the picture for an instant, and then he looked at the bishop; then he looked back at the picture again.

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Bishop Caiaphas was gazing steadily at him. "Well, my man," he said, at last, "Inspector Dolan tells me that you are willing to help us arrest this Man." The man's gaze dropped from the picture to the bishop's face. He did not reply, but he began again turning his hat around and around in his hands. "What do you know about Him?" the bishop continued.

"Why," said the man, "I know Him—that is, I've been with Him, off and on—that is, near for a year, I reckon."

"What makes you willing to betray Him?" asked the bishop, curiously. "Have you any cause of enmity against Him?"

The man looked at him with a half-bewildered look, as though not exactly understanding the purport of the question. Then a secondary look of intelligence came into his face. "Oh," he said, "do you mean have I anything agin Him? Why, no; so far as that goes I haven't anything agin Him, nor He hasn't done anything agin me. There was a lot of us together—a kind of company, you know—and I always carried the money for the rest. Sometimes we had a little money, and then sometimes we hadn't. I was with Him ever since last April a year ago up to last fall, when my father was took sick; and there ain't nothing in it. He won't take money Hisself for curing folks, and He wouldn't let any of us take money."

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"And are you willing to show us where we may find Him?" asked the bishop.

"Why, yes," said the other; "so far as that goes, I'm willing to do that if I'm paid for it. I haven't got nothing agin Him, but I don't owe Him nothing, neither."

Bishop Caiaphas was looking at the man, trying to get into the workings of his mind. "Of course," he said, "we are willing to pay you for your trouble. We don't ask you to help us for nothing."

"No, sir," said Iscariot, "I know that. I just mean to speak plain, sir, when I say I've got to be paid for doing it. You see, He don't pay me nothing, and I ain't beholden to Him for nothing, but, all the same, I ain't got no spite agin Him." [231]

"How much do you expect us to pay you?" said the bishop.

"I don't know," said the man. "How much do you think it would be worth to you? You see, I've got to keep track of Him all the time, and then I've got to let you know where He's going to be, and where you can come up with Him. It may be a matter of four or five days."

"This gentleman," said the bishop, indicating Mr. Inkerman, "seems to think that ten dollars would be about right."

The man looked down into his hat and began again turning it around and around in his hands. "I don't know that I care to do it for that," he said. "I don't know that I care to do it at all, but this gentleman here"-indicating Inspector Dolan-"he comes to me and he says he heard I know where He's to be found, and that I wasn't particular about keeping with Him any longer."

"And how much, then, do you think would be worth while?" said the bishop.

"Oh, well," said the man, "I don't just know about that. I wouldn't mind doing it if you gave me thirty dollars." [232]

"Thirty dollars!" said Mr. Inkerman; but Bishop Caiaphas held up his hand and the lawyer was silent.

"I'll give you thirty dollars, my man," he said, "the day that your Master is apprehended."

"Thankee, sir," said the man. Still he stood for a while irresolutely.

"Well," said the bishop, "what is it?"

"Why, sir," said the man, "if you'll excuse me so far as to say-that is, I mean I didn't take what this here gentleman"-indicating Inspector Dolan again-"said just to mean that I was to help arrest Him. He asked me if I knew where He was at night. I told him yes. He says that if I'd show where He was there was money in it for me. I said I was willing to show him or any man where He was. But I didn't look to have any hand in arresting Him, though."

"But, my good fellow," said the bishop, "I can't pay you the money unless you do your part. Just as soon as He is arrested, then you shall have your money. Isn't that satisfactory to you?"

"Oh yes; I suppose so," said the other, doubtfully. But he still stood, turning his hat about in his hands.

"Well," said the bishop, "is there anything else?" [233]

"Only, if I might make so bold, sir, who's to pay me, sir?"

"Oh, that's it, is it?" said the bishop. "Well, I'll put the money in the hands of Inspector Dolan here, and as soon as the arrest is made he'll see that you are paid. Will that be satisfactory to you, inspector?" and the bishop turned to the police officer.

"Oh yes; it'll suit me well enough," said the inspector.

"Very well," said the bishop, "we'll arrange it that way. That is all we need of you now. You may go. Mr. Dolan will settle everything with you after the arrest is duly made."

After the clergymen had gone, Gilderman and the lawyer lingered for a while. "How do you suppose," said Gilderman, "that that man could bring himself to do such a thing as that? How do you suppose he thinks and feels?"

"Why, bless your soul, Mr. Gilderman," said the lawyer, "we can't possibly enter into the mind of a man like that to understand why he does a certain thing. Those people neither think nor feel as a man in our position thinks and feels. They don't have the same sort of logical or moral ballast to keep them steady. Any puff of prejudice or self-interest is enough to swerve them aside from their course to some altogether different objective point." [234]

"I think you are right, sir," said the bishop, almost with a sigh-"I am afraid you are right. One of the most difficult things with which I have to deal is the inability a man like myself has to comprehend or to come within touch of the mental operation of those poor people. Only this morning, for instance, I had to do with a really deserving case of charity-a man who had had his arm amputated and who had a wife-an intelligent woman-and three or four small children. He is just back from the hospital and in real destitution, and I went to see him, filled with sympathy. But before I had talked with him five minutes I was perfectly convinced that his one and only aim

was to get me to give him just as much money as he could squeeze from me. He asked me for twelve dollars a week, and when I told him I could not afford to give him but eight he was perfectly satisfied. A man in our position of life would express gratitude; he expressed little or none. He accepted what was done for him almost as a matter of course. It is terrible to think that you can't reach these poor people with sympathy or brotherly love and hope to meet with a return of affection—to be conscious that their chief object, when you wish to help them, is to get just as much money out of you as they can. I am always conscious that they feel that I am rich and have got plenty of money to spare, and that it is their right to get all that they can from me.”

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Thus spoke the bishop in his wisdom; and what he said was true. A gulf, not wide but as profound as infinity, separates the rich man from the poor man, and there is no earthly means of crossing it.

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## XVI

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### A GLIMPSE OF AGONY

IT was unfortunate that Mr. and Mrs. Dorman-Webster's grand affair, given in celebration of their silver wedding, should have happened just at this time. One of the public journals, commenting upon it, said that giving such an entertainment at such a time was like playing with a spark of fire over a barrel of gunpowder. It might not bring about an explosion, but then an explosion might follow—an explosion whose radius might destroy things of much more value than even Mr. Dorman-Webster's palace of marble and brownstone.

There had been almost no rioting at night. All the disturbance was during the day; but disjointed groups—sometimes even crowds—would pass occasionally along the street after nightfall with more or less tumult of noise and loud talking. There was a good deal of discussion as to whether it was safe for ladies to be out at night at such a time, but, in spite of the possible danger, nearly every one who had been asked to the Dorman-Websters' went. It was, indeed, a magnificent affair, and, in spite of the excitement of the riots, a great deal of space was given to it in the newspapers. It was said that Madame Antonini had been paid a thousand dollars to come on from the West, where she was then singing, to appear in the two numbers of the opening *musicale*. She sang to the accompaniment of a harpsichord that had belonged to a foreign queen, and which Dorman-Webster had, for that especial purpose, added to his famous collection of historical musical instruments of all ages. One of the features of the affair was the massive decoration of the stair-rails from the ground to the third floor with red-and-white rose-buds that were said by the newspapers to have cost two dollars each.

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Nearly everybody of the truly Roman caste was there. Gilderman went, but he had not been feeling well, and so had only stayed out the *musicale*, coming away before the supper, for the sake of a few minutes' midnight chat with his wife, who had promised, with the nurse's consent, to be sitting up when he returned. She was much interested in all that he had to tell her, but she appeared tired, and he did not stay very long. As it was still early he went around to the club. The Dorman-Webster entertainment had nearly depleted the "Romans," and Gilderman sauntered about with that lonely feeling that one always has in being at some place when one knows that one's friends are somewhere else. He had found Pilate sitting in the reading-room with a litter of papers spread around him.

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Pilate was not always asked to such entertainments as that of the Dorman-Websters'. He used to smile about it sometimes with his sphinx-like smile, but perhaps he would have been more than human had he not felt the fact of being left out of such lists of invitations. He looked up as Gilderman came in. "Why, Mr. Gilderman," he said, "how is it you're not at the silver wedding?"

"I was there," said Gilderman, "but I did not stay."

"Tired of it?"

"Oh no; not at all."

Then Pilate began again: "By-the-way, Mr. Gilderman, I was very sorry that I did not feel justified in calling out the troops last Sunday, as the bishop wanted me to do. I hope he understood my position."

"I think he did understand your position," said Gilderman, almost dryly. Pilate looked at him for a little while with his keen, steady eyes. Perhaps he did not know just what construction to place on Gilderman's phrase. Gilderman wondered whether he looked guilty of the double meaning he had intended. "Wouldn't you like to play a game of billiards?" he said.

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"Certainly," said Pilate. And then to the club servant, as he arose from where he sat: "Tell Abraham to fetch the soda-and-whiskey up to the billiard-room when he brings it. You'll have to allow me ten or a dozen points, Mr. Gilderman," he said. "I can't play billiards with you young fellows." And then they went off together to the billiard-room.

Some little time after midnight the men began dropping in from the Dorman-Websters' until there was quite a number present. About one o'clock a party of six or eight began playing poker, and in a little while afterwards Gilderman joined the game.

They had been playing maybe not over a quarter of an hour when those hands were dealt to Gilderman and Latimer-Moire which were afterwards so much talked about.

Ryan was dealing at the time, and Gilderman drew three cards to a pair of queens. The first card he turned up was a third queen, the next was an ace. He wondered passively how it would feel to draw a fourth queen, and then he turned up the card. It was the queen of clubs.

He felt struck almost as with a physical shock. He closed his cards slowly and laid them face down upon the table, and he was conscious as he did so that he had been able to infuse a perfect and complete expression of indifference into his face and action. Oh, if it were only possible now for some one to hold a hand to play against him! [240]

Then the play began, and he saw almost immediately that even this desire was to be gratified. One by one the other men dropped out of the game until only Latimer-Moire and himself remained. The betting went steadily on and on, each time being to the full limit. The stakes doubled and quadrupled again and again. It passed through Gilderman's mind, what if his opponent should, after all, have four kings? Such a chance was almost impossible, but the thought of it caused him a pang as it went through his mind. The rumor of the betting flew through the club, and quite a little crowd presently gathered around the table. Gilderman kept his cards face down upon the board. The men, as they came, went one by one around back of Latimer-Moire and looked into his hand. Nearly all of them laughed when they saw it. "Let's see what you've got, Gildy?" said Stirling West, over Gilderman's shoulder.

"No, by George!" said Gilderman, without looking around. He put his hand over his cards as he spoke. "I'm playing this hand alone," he said, "and I'll play it till the crack of doom, if need be." As he spoke another sudden, dull spark of apprehension passed through his heart. What if Latimer-Moire should have four kings, after all? [241]

The betting went on and on, and now there was perfect silence.

"Look here, old fellow," burst out Gilderman, at last, "I tell you plainly you're up against an almost certain thing. I don't want to win your money, but I'm not going to give in as long as you keep at it."

"You haven't won your money yet, my boy," cried Latimer-Moire. "Don't you worry about me; I'll look after myself," and a general laugh went around the table.

One or two more bets were made, and then Gilderman called the game.

"I thought you were going to keep it up till the crack of doom," said Latimer-Moire.

"It's on your account I call the game," said Gilderman. "Let's see what you've got."

Latimer-Moire laid down a card. It was the ace of clubs. He couldn't have four aces, for Gilderman had one. What was it he had? What *if* he had four kings? Gilderman held his breath. Then his heart gave a bound and he knew that he had won. Latimer-Moire laid down a knave. Three more knaves followed, laid down upon the table one by one. What triumph! What glory! Gilderman held his cards firmly in his hand. His impulse was to pretend that he was beaten. "Well, well!" he said, trying to infuse all the disappointment he could into his voice, "who would have believed you would draw four cards and get four jacks by it? Well, well!" [242]

"Let's see what you've got, Gildy," said West.

But still Gilderman lingered. The triumph was very, very sweet under the tongue of his soul. "Four jacks!" he repeated. "Well, well, well!"

"Oh, show up your hand, Gilderman!" called out a voice from those who stood looking on.

Then Gilderman laid down his hand, spreading all the cards face up upon the green baize tablecloth.

There was a moment or two of silence and then almost a roar of laughter. Stirling West fetched Gilderman a tremendous clap upon the shoulder. "Gildy's luck forever!" he cried out. Latimer-Moire joined the laugh against himself, but very constrainedly. Gilderman relit his cigar, which had gone out. His hand was chill and trembled in spite of himself. He assumed an air of perfect calmness and indifference, but his bosom was swelling and heaving with triumph. Then he pushed back his chair and arose. [243]

"Hold on, Gildy!" cried out Latimer-Moire. "Ain't you going to give me a chance to win my money back?"

"Not to-night," said Gilderman; "some other time maybe, my boy, but I can't spoil such luck by playing another hand to-night, old fellow."

"Why, confound it—hold on, Gilderman, you can't go away without giving me some show. Just a couple more hands."

"Not to-night," said Gilderman, and then he walked away with Stirling West. Pilate had come to the table and was standing looking down at the cards that still lay face up upon the board. Some one was explaining the game to him. "Well," he said, "I've been playing the game for about forty years now and I don't think I ever saw a piece of luck like that. Four queens against four jacks!"

Gilderman, as he walked away, heard the words and his bosom swelled with a still bigger load of triumph. As he whirled home in the electric cab he lay back in the leather cushions and gave himself up to the delight of his triumph. He was filled full with a great and pervading joy. That last queen! What a delicious shock when he turned up the card and saw what it was! What a glorious piece of luck! And then he thought, what should he do with the money? He did not want Latimer-Moire's money. He would hand it over to the bishop; that was what he would do. Suppose he gave it to that one-armed fellow the bishop had spoken about the other day. No; it was too much to give in a lump to a poor devil like that. He revolted somehow from the thought of doing that; he would hand it over to the bishop.

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Presently the cab stopped at the sidewalk in front of his own home. The *chauffeur* jumped down and opened the door and Gilderman stepped out. He lingered for a little while after the cab had whirled away into the darkness. The night was very mild and pleasant, and the moon was beautiful. So he stood for a while smoking his cigar, thinking of his luck and feeling very happy. The white clouds of smoke drifted pallidly away in the milky moonlight.

Suddenly there was a disturbance some little distance up the street, and a lot of figures came out from the park. Then they came marching down the sidewalk. Even in the distance Gilderman could see the gleam of brass buttons and of official badges, and he knew that they had been making some arrest. As the crowd approached, Gilderman walked slowly up the broad stone steps to the wide vestibule above. The porter opened the door at his coming, but Gilderman did not immediately enter. He stood upon the top step smoking a last puff or two at his cigar before he threw it away, and watching, with a sort of idle curiosity, for the crowd to go past on the other side of the street. Presently they were there, passing under the wide aureola of light of the double cluster of electric lamps at the curb.

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Then Gilderman saw who it was that they had arrested—it was He.

Gilderman could not see whether He had handcuffs upon the wrists, but two policemen walked one upon each side of Him. Two or three policemen came behind them, and there was quite a crowd of men besides, one of them with his head tied up in a bloody cloth. As they came under the circle of light one face was turned and looked straight at Gilderman. The features appeared to be calm and emotionless. There was no hat upon the head, and Gilderman was almost sure he saw red drops of moisture, as of sweat, shining on His brow. Then they had gone by and Gilderman stood looking after them. The hall porter had also come farther out into the vestibule to see the crowd as it passed by.

As Gilderman stood gazing after the departing figures another figure came down the street, this time upon the same side as that on which he stood. It was a man walking rather close to the curb. Presently he also came within the circle of light directly in front of the house. He seemed to shrink for a moment and then walked out into the street. He looked up quickly towards Gilderman as he passed, and then Gilderman recognized him. He was that one of the disciples whom he remembered having seen a few days before—the short, thick-set man with the bald head and curly hair and beard. He turned his face towards Gilderman as he passed. Gilderman came partly down the steps. "Stop a minute, my man," he said; "I want to speak to you."

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The man hesitated for an instant and then stood still. He hung back in the partial darkness of the street, and as Gilderman approached he seemed to shrink back farther still.

"Was that your Master who went by just now?" asked Gilderman.

"Yes, sir," said the man.

"Where are they going to take Him?" asked Gilderman.

"I don't know," said the man; "I didn't have time to ask."

He was looking furtively down the street. The crowd had disappeared in the distance, but Gilderman could hear the sound of voices and the tread of feet far away. There was just a flitting glimpse of them as they passed under a circle of light a block or so away.

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"Where are you going now?" asked Gilderman.

"I don't know," said the man. "I'm going to see where they take Him."

He stepped farther back into the street as he spoke. He lingered for a moment and then turned and went away in the direction the others had taken. After he had gone a little distance he began running. Gilderman could hear his footsteps passing away down the street farther and farther. He saw a glimpse of his figure flitting under a corner lamp, and then he was gone.

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So it is that the life of that young man came just within touch of the agony suffered alone in the darkness of the garden. So it is that we all of us, rich in our possessions of happiness and of wealth, live each his life, unconscious of the divine travail going on beneath until suddenly the end of all comes and we stand face to face with that which has been done. So it is that, all unconsciously to us, beneath the thin and crackling shell of mundane life, God is working out His end and we know nothing of it.

We laugh, we sing, we dance, we love, we hate, we triumph and strive for joys that turn to

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ashes in the mouth, and all the time the divine phenomenon of life is working out its completion beneath those shadowy appearances of things real. Now and then, maybe, like this young man, we suddenly come face to face with the Divine Humanity and maybe feel the soul quake at His presence. Then the face passes by and we see it and think of it no more except as an incident.

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As Gilderman turned and went up into his warm and well-lighted house, filled with its richness and delectabilities, he wondered passively what would be done to the Man; what would be the end of it all with Him. The baby was awake and crying, and as Gilderman went to his room he caught a fleeting glimpse of the silently moving nurse passing across the dim upper hall.

Oh, the triumph of finding that a fourth queen had been dealt him! Four queens! He saw just how that queen of clubs had looked when he turned it up. How the fellows had roared when he showed his hand!

He looked at his watch as he wound it up. It was half-past two o'clock.

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## XVII THE END OF THE WORLD

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**A**ND so came the end. As all the world knows, we fulfilled our allotted mission and crucified the Truth.

Caiaphas was a merciful man-kind, gentle, and with a very loving heart. But his religion was cruel, relentless, and devoid of mercy. According to his creed, all men who disobeyed the laws of social order suffered eternal punishment as a penalty forever and forever in the life to come. Also, according to that creed, all men were in danger unless they believed the almost unbelievable things of Scripture. He himself would not have tortured or tormented a mouse for doing wrong or for going astray, but he assented, almost with equanimity, to the monstrous assertion that God Almighty would torture and torment a man forever and forever for sin or for disbelief.

It is strange that the religion of such a good man as Caiaphas should be of such a monstrous sort; it is still more strange that such doctrines should have appeared to him not only to be sacred and holy beyond measure, but to be the actual foundation of existing social order.

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Nevertheless, such he held to be the case, and his dogmas appeared to him to be singularly sacred. For his religion he was cheerfully ready to sacrifice his own life or the life of another man.

Whether he reasoned about the matter or did not reason about it the fact remained that that dreadful thing was his religious creed, and when he deemed it in danger of overthrow he fulminated that terrible saying: "It is better that one man should die rather than that a whole nation should perish."

So the one Man died, and the nation, having fulfilled its mission, perished also as a nation.

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When Christ yielded up the spirit it was said that the sun was darkened and the earth shook and the veil of the Temple was rent in twain. But we—priests and Levites, scribes and pharisees—saw nothing of that. That cataclysm was seen only by the few who saw with the eyes of the spirit. To us the burning sun rode as majestically as ever; to us the earth stood firm; to us that Temple of Faith (that was never to be completed) stood also firm upon its foundations.

We came and went about our daily business, unconscious that anything had happened. For so it is, we see and think only of the things of the earth; for so it is that there is to us no other light than the light of the sun of this world, no other things than the things of this mundane universe—beyond these all is void and darkness. These mundane things stood firm and unshaken when the Son of Man yielded up the spirit, and only those who saw beneath the shell of things beheld the darkness and the terror.

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A poor carpenter had died that the Law and the Gospel might be preserved, and a few rough fishermen—a few poor, ignorant, superstitious outcasts thought that they saw the flaming orb of day turned into a smoky blackness; that they felt the earth strain and crack beneath their feet; that they beheld the bulwarks of religion split in twain from top to bottom.

Gilderman was worried that morning because the baby had caught cold. The day was pleasant and the sun shone brightly. Do you think he would have believed you if you had told him, in the midst of his worries, that the most tremendous cataclysm of the world was about to occur?

He felt a great sense of relief when Dr. Wellington entered the study. "I'm so glad you've come," said Gilderman, and the two shook hands almost cordially. At that same moment the old

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world came to an end and a new world began.

So the annihilation of the ages was beheld by the scribes, the pharisees, the priests, Levites, and Romans.

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## XVIII

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### THE SPIRIT AND THE FLESH

WHEN men have slain the Living Truth and a new age has arisen from its death, the world still rolls onward in its course and mankind does not know that anything has happened. Children are born into the world, men and women are married, others die, and only a few poor, lowly ones know the significance of that death and resurrection. Thus it must ever be. In the outer world there is no sign; each man pursues his own business and pleasure with just the same avidity as though God's Truth had not perished in the flesh to rise again into the glory of resurrection.

Yea; judgment-day may come and the angel may blow his trumpet until the earth shall crack and heaven itself shall tremble, but the ears of man are deaf to the blast and his eyes are blind to the terrors that overhang the soul. In his ears are stoppers of clay and over his eyes is a film of flesh, and neither sound nor sight can reach him.

What wonder, then, that men not only deny their Creator and their Redeemer, but even refuse to believe that the soul within them is alive. To them the body seems alive and not the soul; to them it seems as though this world is the end of everything.

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Mrs. Gilderman, though she had not recovered from her confinement with the rapidity that a washerwoman might have done under the same circumstances, was, nevertheless, so nearly quite well by the end of the month as to be able to be down-stairs and about the house. She did not go much abroad. Maybe on a fine afternoon she would take a spin in the park in the automobile or out along the river, but she did not go shopping, and was yet watched by her nurse with the jealous care due to a convalescent patient of such pre-eminent importance. But, though she did not go abroad, her friends came to see her, and she often held receptions in her own room with tea and wafers, maybe, and a babble of feminine chatter. She was conscious that her imported blue tea-gown was vastly becoming to her blond beauty, and she made the most of it, lying back in a nest of blue silk, silver-embroidered cushions.

It was about this time that she made Gilderman promise to have his portrait painted. "I want Reginald to have it to say," she said, "that that is the way my father looked in the year that I was born."

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So Gilderman had commissioned Norcott to paint a full-length portrait of himself with a bit of realistic background showing a glimpse of the famous Cyprian Adonis fragment. No one living could do those little realistic bits of background as could Norcott.

During this same month the Biddington-De Vaux wedding was to come off at the national capital—Arabella Stewart Biddington and Lord George De Vaux, an *attaché* to a foreign embassy. Gilderman, on the score of relationship to Miss Biddington, had, of course, to go. That same day he was also to give a sitting to Norcott. He was growing very tired of these sittings. There had been a great many of them, for Norcott was endeavoring to make the work a *chef-d'œuvre*. At first Gilderman had been very much interested in the artist, his surroundings, and the studio in which he worked. Not only had Norcott much to say for himself, but he had collected about him an enormous amount of bric-à-brac, rugs, tapestries, and hangings. You would have pronounced the anteroom to the studio to have been cluttered were the things gathered there less fine and interesting than they were. The studio itself was a great, high-ceilinged room with a big skylight. There was more bric-à-brac, rugs, tapestries here, but in the wider spaces they did not seem so crowded together as in the anteroom. Gilderman had become pretty well acquainted with all these surroundings by now, and they were no longer so interesting to him as they had been at first. He sat there in the morning of the Biddington-De Vaux wedding feeling rather bored. He had to take the trip to the capital in the afternoon, too. That also was a bore in prospect.

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The outer door of the reception-room of Norcott's studio was so arranged that when it opened a chime of bells was rung. Norcott was working silently and industriously and Gilderman was sitting thinking about the nuisance of the impending journey, when suddenly the chime of bells rang out upon the silence of the studio. Presently Norcott's Moorish servant came bringing in a card. Norcott looked at it. "It's Santley Foord, Mr. Gilderman," he said. "Would you like him to come in? He's a very interesting fellow, and it might entertain you."

"Santley Foord?" said Gilderman. And then, remembering the name: "Oh yes; he's the fellow who wrote and illustrated those very interesting articles about the West-China *imbroglio* for the *Mundane Sphere*, is he not?"

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"Yes, that's the man."

"I'd be very glad to meet him," said Gilderman, welcoming any break in the monotony of the sitting.

Then Santley Foord came in. He was a lively, brisk little man, with a face burned russet-brown by the sun, a mustache nearly white, and very light, closely cropped gray hair. He had a strong jaw and chin, and his little eyes were as bright and as black as beads and danced and twinkled and were never still for a moment. Norcott introduced Gilderman, who bowed with a manner that was very urbane. Santley Foord was evidently extremely gratified by the introduction.

"I was very much interested in your West-China articles," said Gilderman. "It seemed to me that your sketches were strikingly clever, too. That one with the dead bodies lying on the snow and the flock of crows around them and the long line of road cut through the snow and stretching away to the distance against the gray sky impressed me extremely."

"I am highly flattered that you should have noticed it, Mr. Gilderman," said Foord. "One can always get a capital effect of snow in reproductive process. And then, I suppose, the subject was very fetching. I stood there in the snow sketching the scene over the back of my Tartar pony, with the sketch-book resting on the saddle, while my two Kalmuck men brewed some tea in a deserted hut at the road-side." Then he began describing incidental scenes connected with the circumstances of the massacre. He talked well, and Gilderman listened much interested. [258]

From this subject, at a question from Norcott, the narrator branched out into his experience in a Tartar village. He described his introduction to a fat old Tartar chief, and he mimicked the obese Oriental with an almost startling vividness. Gilderman laughed heartily, and as he did so he registered in his own mind that he would give a man's dinner-party and would ask Santley Foord. It would be very entertaining. How Stirling West would enjoy the fellow.

"But, after all," said Foord, "you don't have to go out to the far East to find such things. I've come across a mine of interest here that nobody seems to know or to think anything about. Did you, for instance, know that the disciples of that carpenter, about whom there was so much talk awhile ago, are still living here in the very midst of the city, a community in themselves? They claim to have had supernatural experiences and to have seen visions and all that sort of thing. They have strange religious ceremonies and meetings, in which they appear to go off into a trance state, and a good many of the poor people among whom they live believe all that they say to be a *bona-fide* fact." [259]

"I thought all that trouble was over and done with now," said Gilderman.

"Oh no, indeed. Why, I'm going to meet Dolan-Inspector Dolan, you know-at eleven o'clock to-day, and we're going down to a meeting that those people are going to hold this morning. I'm going to make a sketch of it. They are quite the most interesting thing I have come across for a long time, and I think the world will be rather struck to find that these strange folk are living in its very midst without its knowing anything at all about them."

"Really!" said Gilderman. And then, after a moment of pause: "Do you know, Mr. Foord, I'd like immensely to go with you and Dolan and see these people."

Santley Foord laughed. "Well, Mr. Gilderman, to tell you the honest truth, I don't believe you would like it very much. The surroundings are not especially pleasant. I've got used to all those kinds of sights and smells by this time. One gets used to no end of such things knocking about on the rough side of the world, but I don't believe you'd like it." [260]

Gilderman laughed in answer. "I don't know that I would especially like the sights and smells," he said, "but I'd like very much to see what these poor people are doing." And then, after a brief second of hesitation, he continued: "Such things interest me very much. I saw the Man Himself two or three times while He was alive, and spoke to Him once face to face. He impressed me very singularly."

"Did He, indeed?" said Santley Foord.

Gilderman had found it very hard one time to confess this to his wife. It had not been so hard to repeat the narrative in part to Stirling West, and since then he had described the scene in the cemetery several times to friends who had asked him about it. He described it now, growing conscious as he did so of how flat his narrative was compared to the clever way in which Foord would have told the story.

Foord listened very interestedly. "By Jove!" he said, when Gilderman had ended, "I would have given a deal to see that, Mr. Gilderman. It beats anything I ever saw down in India, and I've seen some very strange things there, too." Then he began a vivid description of the old trick: how he had once seen some jugglers put a woman under a basket that was just big enough to cover her, and of how one of the Indians had run the basket through and through with a sword. His description of the woman's screams and of the trick blood that flowed from under the basket and over the hot, white stones of the pavement was almost horribly startling, and Gilderman, as he listened, again registered a determination that he would ask Santley Foord to a man's dinner some time in the near future. [261]

After a while Foord arose from where he was sitting and sauntered around the room, looking at some of the pictures and sketches. Then, having completed his inspection, he said, in his almost abrupt fashion: "Well, it's time to go around to the St. George. If you really care to go with us to see these people, Mr. Gilderman, I'll be glad to take you along."

"I'd like to see them," said Gilderman, "but I don't know whether Norcott's through with me yet."

"Just give me five minutes more, Mr. Gilderman," said Norcott, "and then we'll call the sitting off for the day."

Gilderman took Foord around to the St. George with him in his automobile, and they got out together and entered the wide, marble-flagged vestibule almost arm-in-arm. They found Inspector Dolan already there and waiting. He was sitting on one of the leather-covered seats that stood along the wall and was talking to a stranger. He arose as Gilderman and Foord came in, and he looked distinctly surprised to see Gilderman. [262]

"Mr. Gilderman wants to go along with us," said Foord, and then the inspector laughed.

Gilderman ordered an electric coach, and as they whirled away down-town he offered his cigarette-case to his companions.

"I don't think I've seen you, inspector," he said, "since that man sold his Master to the bishop that day. Whatever became of him? I wonder if he ever felt sorry for what he had done."

"Sorry!" said the inspector—"sorry! I should think so. The officers found his dead body hanging to a tree the day after the execution."

"Oh yes," said Gilderman, "I remember now reading an account of it. But I did not know it was that man who hanged himself."

"Yes, sir, that was the man."

The coach stopped in a narrow and dirty street. Then they all got out and walked for some little distance down the paved court until the inspector at last turned into an alleyway.

The alley opened into another paved court, and here Gilderman found himself in the midst of the sights and smells of which Santley Foord had spoken. There were two or three rather dilapidated houses looking down upon the court. They were shabby, squalid-looking piles, and overhead, from house to house, were stretched clothes-lines, with clothes hanging out to dry, motionless in the dull, heavy air. The court was paved with cobble-stones, and here and there water had settled in stagnant puddles. There were a couple of ash-barrels standing by one of the houses, piled high with ashes and scraps of refuse. [263]

The inspector led the way directly to one of the houses. He put his hand upon the knob of the door and turned it very softly. Then he opened it and entered with Gilderman and Foord at his heels.

Gilderman found himself in a dark, narrow entryway. The walls of the entry had that peculiar, greasy look that seems always to belong to houses of the poorer sort, and there was everywhere a rank and pervading smell. As the inspector closed the door, another door at the farther end of the entry opened and a stout woman, unmistakably Jewish in appearance, stood framed in the space of light behind. She hesitated for a moment, and then said, with a sharp, rasping voice: "What do you want? What are you doing here?" [264]

The inspector walked directly along the passageway towards her. "That's all right, Sarah," he said. "It's Inspector Dolan."

"What's the matter now?" said the woman. "I 'ain't been doing no harm."

"There's nothing the matter at all, only these two gentlemen here want to go up-stairs to see your friends on the third floor."

"There ain't nobody up on the third floor," said the woman, sullenly; "they 'ain't been here for a couple of days."

The inspector laughed. "That's all right, Sarah," he said. "We'll go up and look for ourselves. Just you stay down here. And don't you go kicking up a row," he added, turning suddenly stern in his demeanor.

The woman shrunk back as though threatened with a lash, but she did not go entirely away. She partly followed them and then stood watching with a sort of impotent sullenness as they went up-stairs, the inspector leading the way.

Gilderman was nearly overpowered by the close, heavy atmosphere of the house. His companions did not seem to think anything of it at all, and he knew that the people who lived every day in that atmosphere would not be aware of its close fetor. Surroundings of this sort were infinitely distasteful to him, but since he had come so far he made up his mind that he would go on to the end. [265]

As the three climbed the stairs Gilderman became aware of a strange, droning, sing-song sort of chant, or rather mummer, that grew louder and louder as they ascended. He found it came from one of the rooms on the third floor. The inspector led the way directly to the door of this room, and Santley Foord turned and said to Gilderman: "It's those people you hear, and, by George! Mr. Gilderman, we're in luck; they're about some of their religious ceremonies this minute. I hope you'll be able to see some of them in a trance state."

The inspector stood for a while with his hand upon the knob as though listening. Then he said, in a low voice, "I'll wait outside here."

"Is it perfectly safe?" asked Gilderman, instinctively lowering his voice to the same pitch as that in which the inspector spoke.

"Lord bless you! yes, Mr. Gilderman," said Dolan; "they're as harmless as mice."

Then he opened the door and Foord stepped into the room, closely followed by Gilderman. There were maybe a dozen or so men in the crowded space. The room was very close and hot. Some of the inmates were sitting around a deal table; two were standing with their backs to a cold and rusty stove, and one was leaning against the wall, his face hidden in his arm, his body shaking as though he were crying. None of them seemed to be aware of the presence of the intruders, and then Gilderman saw with a shock, almost as of awe, that they were indeed in a state as though of entrancement. The faces of all were transfixed, vacant, exalted. They seemed all to be lit with a singular illumination. It was almost as though the faces were translucent and illuminated to that singular roseate brightness by a light from behind. Gilderman had never seen anything like it before. By-and-by a feeling akin to terror began to creep over him. What did it all mean? A strange, groaning murmur coming from the breasts of the men filled the room full of sound, now rising fuller, almost into articulate speech, now quavering away into a dull murmur. It was very impressive—almost awful, to Gilderman.

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If Foord was at all impressed he was too busy to yield to his emotions. He had taken out his sketch-book and was sketching rapidly. Inspector Dolan was looking over his shoulder through the half-open door.

None of the three knew what it was that they had come so near to seeing; for the crying man with his face hidden against the wall was Thomas the Doubter.

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Still Foord sketched away rapidly, and by-and-by Gilderman found himself becoming interested in the swift, dexterous strokes of the pencil and the quick suggestions of portraiture. "Do you suppose they mind you doing this?" he whispered.

"Lord bless you, no!" said Foord, *sotto voce*. "They don't see or know anything when they're in that state."

At the sound of the voice the crying man lifted his face for a moment from his hands and looked towards Gilderman with strange, filmy, sightless eyes. His cheeks were drenched with tears. Gilderman knew that though the man looked towards him he did not see him.

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As Gilderman continued down-town towards the office, he felt strangely softened and moved—strangely impressed by what he had just seen. Again, as he thought over it all, a feeling as of awe came upon him. He did not understand what it was he had beheld, but the impression lay heavily upon him. A recollection of the morning's scene, accompanied by the same feeling of awe (though less strong and vivid), recurred again to him that afternoon as he crossed the river to embark upon the other side for the capital. He was standing in the bow of the ferry-boat at the time looking out across the water. He had never seen a human face illuminated as those faces had been. It was as though the spirit shone forth and consumed the fibres of flesh that incased it. Was it then, indeed, true that the spirit was so present in every fibre of flesh that it could thus glorify the human body to that strange illumination? The bright surface of the harbor stretched away before him, shut in by the distant farther shore of clustered buildings. A huge out-going steamer was ploughing its slow and monstrous way down the river. Gilderman saw everything and yet saw nothing as he stood there pondering the remembrances of that morning.

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He suddenly awoke to the things of every day as the boat thumped its way into the slip, and he pushed forward with the crowd which, as soon as it had poured off from the boat, presently spread out until he was able to hurry through the waiting-room of the depot to the train.

His man met him at the gate and directed him to the parlor-car, where Stirling West met him. "Hello, Gildy!" he said; "I thought you were going to be left."

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As they went together along between the rows of chairs to the compartment where Tom De Witt and his mother and two sisters already sat, Stirling West nudged Gilderman with his elbow. "Ain't she a daisy!" he said, in a whisper. And Gilderman, looking down, saw an exceedingly pretty and stylishly dressed blond girl sitting with an elderly man of senatorial appearance.

He felt a distinct pleasure in the prettiness of the girl, and he looked back at her again as he was about to enter the door of the compartment. He was already forgetting what he had that morning seen.

THE END

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By MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

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**By LEW. WALLACE**

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**Transcriber's Notes:**

Punctuation errors repaired.

Text spells the more usual "capitol" as "capital". This was retained.

Page 218, "Glderman" changed to "Gilderman" (Gilderman when he began speaking)

Page 257, "Ford" changed to "Foord" (said Foord. "One can)

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK REJECTED OF MEN: A STORY OF TO-DAY \*\*\*

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