



SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Chapter I.—At the suburban home of Charles Wainwright, "high financier," he and his broker, Scott Gibbs, hatch up a scheme to corner Borough street railway stock. They rely upon the support of Dick Horrigan, boss of the neighboring city, who is coming to discuss matters. Alderman Phelan, the thorn in Horrigan's side, whom Wainwright is anxious to conciliate, is also coming. Among the members of Wainwright's household are his niece and nephew, Dallas and Perry Wainwright, and his secretary, Thompson, a secretive young man in whom the financier has implicit confidence. Judge Newman, a neighbor of Wainwright, whose continuance in office depends upon Horrigan's favor, requests Wainwright's intervention with the boss. Another visitor to the Wainwrights is Alwyn Bennett, in love with Dallas, who is calling to ask her about her rumored engagement to Gibbs. Perry is in love with Cynthia Garrison, also a neighbor. II.—Cynthia is the daughter of a bank president who nine years before the opening of the story was ruined by the dealings of an unnamed dishonest financier and shot himself. His son thereupon disappeared. Mrs. Bennett congratulates herself upon the immaculate record of her son's defeated father. Dallas refuses to marry Alwyn unless he does something worthy of his family and education. Phelan and Horrigan face each other. III.—Phelan defies Horrigan. Judge Newman is turned down by the boss, but at Wainwright's request Horrigan becomes suspicious of Thompson, but Wainwright scoffs at the idea. Horrigan and Wainwright makes a corrupt deal whereby the former, for a big consideration, is to procure for the board of aldermen a perpetual franchise for the Borough street railway. The boss is worried by the reform movement threatening his power at the coming election and is casting about for a candidate for mayor with a clean record. He hits upon Bennett, who has had some slight political experience. The latter accepts, but warns Horrigan that, if elected, he will be absolutely honest and independent.

IV.—Bennett is elected and appoints Cynthia his private secretary. Phelan tells him that the financier who caused the ruin of the Garrisons was Wainwright, who is also the power behind the crooked Borough franchise bills, with Horrigan and Gibbs. Dallas and Mrs. Bennett visit the city hall.

V.—Gibbs tries to induce Bennett to sign the bill. The mayor's talk with Dallas is interrupted by Horrigan.

VI.—Bennett refuses to be bulldozed by Horrigan into signing the bill. The boss lacks one vote in the board of aldermen of the fourteen needed to pass the bill without the mayor's assent. Despite the fact that defeating the bill means impoverishing Dallas and Perry, whose fortune Wainwright has invested in Borough stock, Bennett vetoes the measure. VII.—Bennett's plan to save Dallas and Perry is to have Perry sell Borough stock short. The mayor's opposition causes Horrigan and Wainwright to amend the bill, retaining however, some of the most objectionable features. VIII.—Alwyn's lovelornness to Dallas at the Mayor's ball is interrupted by Horrigan. IX.—Gibbs secretly plays false to Wainwright and Horrigan by buying Borough stock on his own account. Horrigan "fixes" Alderman Roberts, a wavering member of his "solid thirteen." X.—Bennett warns Roberts against voting for the bill. In the presence of Cynthia, who is engaged to Perry, Phelan exposes Thompson as her brother, the long missing Harry Garrison, whereupon sister and brother embrace. Perry entering suddenly, is astonished at the sight.

(CHAPTER X—CONTINUED)

The retreating secretary halted as though struck. "That is another mistake, sir," he said in a muffled voice. "My name is Thompson." "Is it, though?" inquired Phelan innocently. "It's queer how I could get mixed up so. When I was chief of police there was a bank president named Garrison who shot himself after being swindled and whipsawed by a financier who was his dearest friend. He left a little daughter, Miss Cynthia, who you was lookin' at so keen just now, an' a son, who disappeared. That was nine years ago, an' I only saw the boy once, so maybe I've overplayed my hand

in pipin' you off for him. But," added Phelan, laying a strong, detaining hand on Thompson's shoulder, "here comes some one who can clear it up easy enough."

The secretary twisted in the iron grasp and sought vainly to break away as Cynthia and Perry entered. "Cynthia's lost her fan," explained Perry at sight of the alderman. "She's had me looking all over for the measly thing. Wait here a minute," he added to her, "and I'll chase into the conservatory and see if we left it there."

And, depositing the girl in a chair, he bolted away in search of the missing article.

"Now then, young man," said Phelan, "if your name's Thompson, as you say, there's no reason why you should object to my introduc' you to this young lady. Step up, son."

Still holding the reluctant, struggling secretary by the shoulder, Phelan turned to Cynthia.

"Miss Garrison," said he, "here's a gentleman I think you know. Would you mind lookin' him over?"

Wondering at the odd request, Cynthia raised her eyes to the stranger. But the latter persistently kept his face averted.

"I don't think I know him," she answered doubtfully. "There is something familiar about"

The secretary shifted restlessly, unconsciously bringing his profile into

groan, "and you must both promise not to betray my secret. It won't be much longer now, thank God! But you'll both promise, won't you?"

"Sure!" assented Phelan. "And you, too, Cynthia?" pleaded her brother. "You can trust me, can't you?"

"Of course I can. If you insist, I won't tell any one. I—"

"I'm happier this minute than I've ever been in all my whole life!" smiled the secretary, again clasping his sister in his arms. "If you only knew, little girl, how I've longed for this!"

"Here's the fan!" announced Perry, hurrying around the corner of the doorway. "Found it under a"—

He stopped short, open mouthed, dumb and motionless. Thompson and his sister stood in close embrace before him, with Phelan looking on like some obese caricature of a benevolent fairy.

The fan slipped from young Wainwright's nerveless grip and fell with a clatter to the polished floor, its ivory sticks snapping like icicles.

CHAPTER XI.

A T sound of the breaking fan all three participants in the strange reunion turned. For a second or more they faced the crimson faced, dumfounded Perry without a word. Here was an element in the affair on which neither Phelan nor Cynthia had counted when giving Thompson their promise not to reveal his identity. They gradually realized this, and it left even the ready witted Phelan speechless.

Perry himself was first to break the spell. "Well," he observed, with an assumption of airy scorn that was meant to be annihilating, "you all seem quite happy. Don't mind me! I'm sorry to butt in on this cute little love fest, but I left a fiancée here. Perhaps one of you can explain what's happened to her since I"—

"Oh, Perry," exclaimed Cynthia, "don't be silly! I'll tell you all about it some time. It is"—

"Some time!" squealed Perry, race battering down his attempt at sarcasm. "Some time! Maybe it might be just as well if you did condescend to explain. Here you promise to marry me, and ten minutes later I find you in a catch-as-catch-can hug with this ugly little shrimp and Phelan looking on as happy as if he'd eaten a canary! And then you've got the gall to tell me you'll explain 'some time!'"

He glared at Cynthia in all the majesty of outraged devotion, only to surprise on that young lady's face a look that indicated a violent struggle with the desire to laugh.

"This is funny all right, I guess not!" he snapped. "Cynthia, you've mauled and smashed a loving heart, and I'll make a hit with myself by forgiving you, but as for you," wheeled about and thrusting his furious face to within three inches of Thompson's immobile countenance—"as for you, I'm going to do all sorts of things to you the moment Miss Garrison will have the kindness to shanass you out of the room. Your sorrowful relatives will have all manner of fun sorting you out when I've finished with you! Steal my sweetheart, would you, not ten minutes after I'd"—

"There!" interposed Phelan, shoving his powerful bulk good naturedly between the two younger men and linking his arm in Perry's. "Now you've got quite a bunch of hot words off your chest, an' you'll be in better shape to hear sense. Ain't you just a little bit ashamed?"

"Ashamed?" spluttered Perry. "Who? I? Well, that?"

"Yes, you, youngster, and if you holler like that in company I'll sure be forced to wind up by spankin' you. Now, stand off there—no, over there where you can see Miss Garrison—an' listen to me. So! Now, first of all, did you happen to be in love with this young lady?"

"It's none of your measly business, but I did."

"Why'd you ask her to hitch up with you for keeps?"

"Because I loved her and"—

"Because you had a lot of faith in her, too, hey?" persisted the alderman. "Yes, and a nice way she's"—

"Pretty girl, too," mused Phelan as if to himself. "In my young days if I could 'a' got a little beauty like that to sign articles with me I'd 'a' thought I was the original Lucky Jim. I'd"—

"So did I!" interrupted Perry hotly.

"I"—

Phelan paused. This time Perry did not break in, and the half audible monologue continued:

"I'd have had the sense to know that a girl with eyes like those couldn't be a flirt an' couldn't double cross the man she loved if her life depended on her doin' it. I'd 'a' licked any guy that said she could, an' if I'd seen her kissin' another man I'd 'a' punched myself on the jaw an' called myself a liar. That's what Jimmy Phelan of the Eighth would 'a' done. An'"—

"Say," broke in Perry in a curiously subdued voice. "These eyes of mine do funny things sometimes. I'll bet \$9 they played a joke on me just now. And even if they didn't I don't believe 'em. Cynthia, I'm dead stuck on you! You're all right even if you did happen to be acting a trifle eccentric a few minutes ago. You can explain or not, as you like. If you'll just say you love us, that's ace high with yours truly."

He slipped an arm about her waist

as he spoke, awkwardly seeking to atone for his recent anger. The secretary looked at them for an instant, then said briefly:

"You can tell him, Cynthia. He's a good fellow. Come on, alderman. I think you and I still have something to say to each other."

Cynthia and Perry drifted away toward the conservatory again, quite oblivious of the others, while Phelan and the secretary made their way to a deserted alcove off the ballroom.

"I've been looking all over for you, Mr. Bennett," called Judge Newman, hurrying out through the chain of ante-rooms as Alwyn wandered out of the ballroom into the foyer a few moments later.

"Anything important?" asked Bennett, pausing in his stroll and greeting the older man cordially. He had known the judge as long as he could remember and had always had a decided liking for the pompous henpecked little dignitary. Surrounded as he was by political intrigue, heartache and association with rogues, the harassed young man rather welcomed the variety promised by a chat with his old friend of his boyhood.

"Anything important, judge?" he repeated. "Or are you just taking pity on a lonely chap and giving him a chance to chat with you over old times?"

"Well," began the judge, his customary air of pompous nervousness tinged by an almost conciliatory manner, "I would like to have a little business talk with you if you don't mind discussing work at a ball."

"Not at all. I've had the honor of dancing with three of your daughters this evening, and the least I can do is to repay such pleasure by"—

"Did you, really?" beamed the judge, on whom the unmarried state of his four fast aging girls rested heavily. "I'm sure Mrs. Newman will be pleased. But this business matter. You—you won't misunderstand me?"

"Of course not," replied Alwyn heartily. "You and I are too old friends, judge, to"—

"I hope so; I hope so," conceded Newman, with growing anxiety in his tone. "You see?"

"I see you have some trouble coming to the point," said Alwyn, pitying the judge's evident discomfort, "and I'm sorry you feel so. You were my father's friend, and I like to think of you as one of my own best friends. There surely should be no hesitation in asking anything in my power to grant."

Thus emboldened Newman blurted out:

"I—we—that is, seems to me you have been a little hard upon this Borough franchise bill, if you don't mind my saying so, Bennett. Couldn't you let us on then now?"

"Why, no, judge, I can't," replied Bennett, still falling to connect Newman with the Wainwright-Horrigan clique and attributing the judge's interest in the matter to an amateur's love of dabbling in politics. "I can't let up on that fight," he continued. "All perpetual franchises are wrong, and this particular franchise bill is rotten to the core. In sheer justice to my oath of office I must fight it."

"My boy," said the judge in a fatherly manner that he had often found successful in argument, "I was in politics long before you were born, and I'm speaking for your own good when I say I deeply regret the stand you've taken in this matter. You objected to the bill in its original form. Almost every change you demanded has been made in it. As the gentlemen who asked me to speak to you said"—

He checked himself a minute too late. The narrowing of Bennett's eyes and the vanishing of the friendly light in the young man's face warned Newman he had made a fatal error.

"So you come to me as an emissary, not as a friend," said Bennett slowly, "and the gentlemen you come from?"

"Are the men who represent all that can make or break your career—capital and political organization."

"In other words, Wainwright and Horrigan?"

"Yes. All they ask is that you remain neutral; that you"—

"That I look the other way while they rob the city?"

"I am an old man, Bennett," evaded the judge, trying another tack, "and

I've seen one rash step wreck many a bright career. Just as this will wreck yours. Never antagonize wealth and the organization. The public for whom you sacrifice yourself will forget you in a month. Capital and politics never forget."

"I am not catering to the public. I am acting as my own conscience"—

"But this is stubbornness, not conscience. All you have to do is to remain neutral. If you do this I am authorized to promise you—now, listen—to promise you the nomination for governor when your term is"—

"That's the bait, is it?" cried Alwyn angrily. "If I consent to betray my trust I'll get the governorship. The bribe is golden, and I don't wonder at Horrigan for offering it. The only thing that surprises me is that he should have chosen such a man as you for his lackey and go-between."

"Lackey! Bribe! Go-between!" echoed the judge in real indignation. "How dare you, sir? This!"

"Isn't that a bribe," insisted Alwyn, "and weren't you the man chosen to offer it? It will do you no good to fluster or grow indignant. In your heart you know the words I used were deserved. The governorship offer was a bribe, pure and simple, and worthy the modern highwaymen who made it, but that you, a judge—a former friend of my own blameless father—that you should come to me on such a vile errand turns me sick. Heaven help justice and right when our judges can be controlled by a political boss and a roll of bills! That's all! I don't care to go further into the subject!"

Bennett walked away, leaving the little judge to stare after him, pink with wrath, speechless with amazement. In all his sixty years no man had thus laid bare to Newman his own heart, stripped of its garments of respectability and self deception. And, as usual in such cases, now that the truth had been driven home to him, Newman wrathfully denounced it, even to himself, as a lie.

Still flushed and incoherent, he wheeled to face a trio who were just returning from the supper room. They were Dallas, Gibbs and Wainwright.

"Hello!" exclaimed Wainwright in surprise. "What's the matter with you, judge? Are you ill?"

"If—if Mrs. Newman should come to know of this," spluttered the judge, glaring from one to the other, "she"—

"To know of what?" queried Gibbs. "What has happened?"

"Happened?" fumed Newman. "I have been insulted—grossly, vulgarly insulted!"

"Insulted, judge?" repeated Dallas. "By whom?"

"By Alwyn Bennett!" snapped the judge. "Outrageously!"

"Impossible!" exclaimed Dallas. "There must be a mistake somewhere. Mr. Bennett is too well bred to insult any man, much less a man so much older than"—

"A gentleman, is he? I should not have believed it. He has insulted me most!"

"I'm not surprised," observed Wainwright.

"Naturally," sneered Wainwright. "If you can remain on speaking terms with him after his abominable treatment of me you can easily overlook any other brutality of his."

"Tell us about it, judge," interposed Gibbs, seeking to avert any further clash between uncle and niece.

"I went to him," began Newman, "bearing a request from—from"—

The judge paused. It was not wholly easy to present matters to this honest eyed young girl in such a way as to bring her in his way of thinking. But Wainwright felt no difficulty. His shrewd brain caught at a means of turning the affair to account.

"You see, Dallas," the financier broke in, with a warning glance to Newman, "I begged the judge to intercede for me with Bennett, to ask him to bury the hatchet and let us be friends again for the sake of old times. I thought Judge Newman's age and his high office would compel a certain respect even with a man of Bennett's character. But I was wrong, and I am sorry, judge, for the unjust humiliation I caused you."

"I don't understand," said Dallas, looking in bewilderment from one to the other. "Judge, my uncle sent you to make overtures of peace? And Mr. Bennett refused to?"

"He not only refused, but called Mr. Wainwright a highwayman and"—

"But why?" demanded Dallas. "He pretended to misunderstand what I said about the conditions."

"Oh, it was a conditional offer, then? I thought"—

"Certainly there were conditions," cut in Wainwright, again coming to the emissary's rescue. "I asked that he take a position of neutrality in regard to this Borough bill. Simply neutral, mind you. Not to change his attitude in its favor, or?"

"That was a splendidly fair offer," cried Gibbs enthusiastically.

"So it seemed to me," agreed Newman, "but Bennett would not listen when I tried to point out his proper line of duty. He called me a go-between and"—

"Even after you told him we were granting practically all the concessions he had asked in the bill?" queried Gibbs.

"Willingly," replied her uncle, "if you'll give me a fair hearing. Bennett is in love with you. He knows Gibbs also wishes to marry you. He knows, too, that Gibbs' fortune depends on the success of the Borough franchise. If the bill is beaten, Gibbs will be practically ruined and thus in no position to marry. We've known all along of this reason of Bennett's for fighting our bill, but Gibbs forbade me to tell you. He was afraid you might think he"—

"I don't believe one word of it!" cried Dallas, her big eyes ablaze. "Alwyn Bennett could not stoop to such a thing."

"No?" said Wainwright. "Then you probably will refuse to believe what I am about to tell you now. I considered Borough stock a safe investment, and I put all your money and Perry's in it. Bennett knows this, and in spite of the knowledge he is trying to kill the franchise even on the certainty of begging you and Perry along with Gibbs. If only he can ruin Gibbs he cares nothing about making you and Perry paupers too. That is the sort of man you are defending against your own uncle. I have just learned besides that he has secretly, through his brokers, sold large blocks of Borough stock short. This his veto that ruins us will make him a very rich man."

"It isn't true!" affirmed Dallas in dogged certainty. "Mr. Gibbs, do you confirm this story of my uncle's?"

"Please leave me out of this, Miss Wainwright," answered Gibbs gently. "I prefer to say nothing to prejudice you. When I fight I fight fair."

"Even at the cost of all your money," amended Wainwright. "Gibbs, this is carrying your sense of honor to an absurd point. And Bennett will"—

"Parlon me," broke in Alwyn, entering the foyer and going up to Dallas. "I'm a little late for our dance. I was detained by"—

"Alwyn!" exclaimed Dallas in relief. "I'm so glad you came here just when you did. Now we can clear this up in a word."

"Clear what up?" queried Bennett, glancing about in suspicion at the three silent men.

"You know Mr. Gibbs is favored in the Borough Street railway affair," began Dallas. "He told you so at your office that day we were there. Well—"

"Yes, but don't let's discuss business tonight," replied Bennett. "This is our dance, and"

"Wait, please. You know his fortune was largely tied up in Borough stock,

but here is something you didn't know. My uncle says my money and Perry's is all invested in that stock and that if you defeat the bill we will be dependent on Mr. Wainwright's charity. If that is true, you didn't know it, did you?"

(To be Continued.)

Statement to Voters.

The office of County Coroner is not a political but a judiciary office as much so as the Circuit Judge or Justice of the Peace. In aspiring to that office I would just as soon ask a Republican, as a Democrat, Socialist or nonpartisan for his support, as the office should be and during my incumbency always has been conducted without regard to politics.

I have resided in Clatsop County for 34 years, my whole interests are here, and I expect to remain here.

I have tried to conduct the office with impartiality and fairness and with a due regard to the interest of the taxpayers. The annual appropriations of the County Court for the Coroner's office which includes, physicians, jurors and witness fees and other necessary expenses such as boat hire have been \$600.00 and the actual expense has often been much below this figure. I have always deemed it an honor to be Coroner and am willing to submit the matter of my re-election to the voters on my record during my long tenure in the office.

W. C. A. POHL.

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"Harry," the girl was pleading, "you do know me!"

her range of vision. With a gasp, Cynthia sprang to her feet, her face white, her eyes wide and incredulous.

"It's not—it's—oh, Harry!" she cried in an ecstasy of recognition, flinging her arms about the secretary's neck. "Harry! Brother! Back from the dead! Don't you know me? It's Cynthia! Don't!"

"I am afraid you've made a very strange blunder, Miss Garrison," returned the secretary, his voice hoarse and tremulous. "My name is"—

"Your name's Harry Garrison!" Phelan shouted. "What's the use of lyin' to your own sister? I give you credit for havin' good reasons for callin' yourself Thompson, an' I think I begin to see what them reasons are, but when it comes to denyin' your own sister you're playin' it down low, whatever your game may be, and I've a good mind to"—

"Harry," the girl was pleading, "you do know me! After all these nine lonely years have you no greeting for me? Every night I've prayed that God would bring you back to me, and now"

The secretary's pallid, expressionless mask of a face broke in a flash into a look of infinite love and yearning.

With a single gesture he gathered Cynthia's fragile body in his arms and crushed her against his breast.

"Oh, my little sister!" he murmured, a great sob choking his words. "My little, little sister!"

Phelan cleared his throat and coughed savagely to express his contempt for the mist that sprang into his own hard old eyes. The sound recalled the secretary to himself.

"You've trapped me into this," he exclaimed, with a laugh that was half a

He gathered Cynthia's fragile body in his arms.



He slipped an arm about her waist as he spoke.



Charles Wainwright.