



The New Mayor Based on G.H. Broadhurst's Successful Play THE MAN OF THE HOUR

BY ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE

With all the advantages of wealth, education and good looks no vocation other than the enjoyment of wealth, the hero of the present story chose rather to sacrifice his ease and comfort on the altar of his duty as a citizen. His city called him to save her from spoliation and corruption, and he responded to the call. To lure him from the path of right came the seductions of love and the claims of a revered parent's memory, allied with the mighty forces at the command of political and financial malefactors. The firmness with which "the man of the hour" singled out for the high post in a great municipality those who saw in him only a speaking and a tool, resisted the very forces that had elevated him for their own purposes to official power will be an inspiration to the reader, as it has been an uplifting force in the minds of thousands who have witnessed its theatrical representation.

CHAPTER I

THE country house of Charles Wainwright, financier, topped the ridge overlooking the water in a climax of architectural hideousness and extravagant cost. The grounds of Charles Wainwright, financier, stretched out into countless acres of landscaped gardening. The whole estate of Charles Wainwright, financier, was a masterpiece of the art of the man who has money and knows how to use it. The name of Charles Wainwright, financier, was known almost everywhere in the city and where money ruled as undisputed and absolute monarch.



Scott Gibbs

and that interested me in you. For instance, that deal of yours in South Sea copper?"

"That was the deal the papers all..."

"All denounced you for? What do you care? You were within the law. They've been hammering me for years and attributing all sorts of low motives to me. As long as the law doesn't interfere I'm going to get all I can. So are you. So is every sane man. As long as it can be done without any fuss or shouting, a mosquito could bite twice as often if only he didn't sing a song about it. By the way, have you seen the papers?"

"No. Anything new?"

"One thing at least that ought to interest you. Listen to this: The engagement of the niece of a world celebrated financier to a prominent young broker is about to be announced. The young lady and her brother are orphans and are not only their famous uncle's wards, but also the sole heirs to his vast wealth. They are summering at his magnificent country place, where the fortunate broker is said to spend every one of the very few moments left vacant by his darling stock manipulations." No mistaking that, eh, Gibbs?"

"It ought to bring matters to a head, I should think."

"It certainly should," assented Wainwright. "In fact, it's such an audacious master stroke that I've a notion you may possibly have been at the bottom of it. Now, confess, weren't you?"

"Well, of course I didn't exactly write it. But..."

"Clever boy! Dallas will have to show her hand now or never. She's kept you on the anxious seat too long as it is. That's the reason I asked you up here for the day. She must settle it today if I can manage it. She knows how anxious I am for her to accept you."

"But I'm sometimes afraid she does not care for me."

"Then make her care. As long as she cares for no one else you can persuade her to believe she adores you."

"How do you know? You're a bachelor."

"Indeed, sir," replied the secretary, with a promptitude that had something almost slavish in it.

"Feeling all right?" went on Wainwright. "You need more exercise. Why don't you get out of doors oftener?"

"The work, sir?"

"Get another man to help you do the telegraph part of it, then. I..."

"Thank you, sir. You are very kind indeed, but if it's just the same to you, I'd rather handle it all myself. I hope the work's perfectly satisfactory, sir?"

"Perfectly, Thompson. You're the only employee I have who seems to love work for work's sake. Seen anything of Mr. Gibbs this morning?"

"No, sir. I don't believe he's up yet. Coming by such a late train last night, you know, sir, and..."

"I was up as late as he was, and I was at work by 8. But when a man takes his first holiday in six years, as he is doing, I suppose oversleeping is part of the fun. There's a man to put you to bed, Thompson! I remember when he started out he hadn't a penny—nothing but the resolve to get money and then to get more of it. And now look at him! At thirty-five he's the head of one of the busiest brokerage houses in..."

"Good morning!" broke in a voice from the foot of the broad staircase across the hall. "Sorry to be so late. Do you know how the market is?"

"It's opened even stronger than I hoped," said Wainwright. "Take a look at these dispatches and see for yourself. Had your breakfast?"

"Yes, thanks," answered the newcomer, a well-groomed, stockily built man, lounging into the room, with a nod at Thompson, who discreetly withdrew into the adjoining office.

"Seems queer to have a whole day away from the office. I hardly know what to do with so much spare time."

"It's the everyday hard work that's put you where you are today, Gibbs."

"Perhaps that's how I know. And she doesn't care for any one else."

"You're sure? There's Bennett, for instance..."

"Alwyn Bennett? Why, absurd! She's known him all her life. They're just good friends; nothing more. He's our nearest neighbor here, and it's only natural. Besides, he isn't the sort of man who wants. He's an idler. She likes men who have made something of themselves—like yourself, for instance. So make yourself easy on that score. If Bennett loved her, he'd have proposed long ago."

"Not necessarily. He's not a man to get started easily, but once start him and..."

"Then don't start him. Go in and win. What is it, Thompson?"

"The secretary entered from the office with a dispatch."

"There's an answer, sir," said he. "Here's a bank..."

Wainwright read the message, scribbled a few lines and handed the reply to the secretary, who hurried out with it.

"So Thompson is not only a secretary, but a telegraph operator as well," remarked Gibbs as the clicking of a Morse instrument sounded from the office.

"He's everything," replied Wainwright. "He's a wonder. He heard me say I wished I had a good operator up here whom I could trust, so with-out a word to me he goes and learns telegraphy. I've had him nine years now and tested and tempted him fifty ways, but he's as true as steel, the one employee I ever had that I could trust. By the way, the message he just brought me ought to interest you. It tells me through Street railway stock is offered now at 63. I've given orders for your office to take all they can get hold of at that price quietly and without making any bids or attracting attention. That'll be the biggest deal of my career if I can carry it through. You understand your part perfectly. Take for yourself 20 per cent of the deal, handle the whole affair on the floor and not buy any of the stock for your own private account? Stick to that and there's just one thing that can possibly block us."

"You mean the defeat of the present city administration this fall?"

"Just that, and I don't believe it will be beaten. The organization's solid as a rock. They have the police, the officeholders and..."

"But the people at large?"

"The people at large are sheep that like to be driven by the strongest shepherd. If they weren't, they'd have broken loose a century ago and run the city and the country to suit themselves. Just now Dick Horrihan happens to be the shepherd who can make them go wherever he says."

"Shepherd and 'crook' combined, I should say," commented Gibbs, chuckling at his own feeble joke.

"I wouldn't let a speech like that get back to Horrihan if I were you," returned Wainwright dryly. "Your career might suffer. Nothing (except, maybe, gratitude) is so bad as humor for spoiling a man's chances in business or politics. A laugh costs more than people think. But, speaking of the election this fall, a reform wave or any change of city administration would smash our Borough Street railway deal. To offset that, I've joined hands with Horrihan. If I can bring him to see things my way, he shall have cash enough to buy all the honest voters he needs. He's coming here this noon to talk things over with me. Phelan's coming too."

"Phelan? You mean the alderman of the Eighth? You'll have a pleasant little gathering. Perhaps you didn't know that Phelan and Horrihan have had a row and..."

"And that's why I'm bringing them together here today. I want to patch up their quarrel if I can. I need them both. Phelan's a useful man."

"But Horrihan is boss of the organization. If you have him on your side, why do you bother about getting Phelan too?"

"Yes, Horrihan is boss. He's fought his way up by bulldog tactics. He has no diplomacy—nothing but brute force. Now, Phelan has just as much force in his way, but he's as tricky as a fox too. I've known him ever since he was chief of police. He's a dangerous man. If he's against his, he can make trouble. I want him. He's..."

"Judge Newman!" announced the butler.

A whimsical frown crossed Wainwright's face, but cleared into a passably hospitable expression as a little gray haired man, with a solemn, weak face, trotted pompously in on the heels of the butler's announcement.

"Good morning, Judge," said the host pleasantly. "You don't know Mr. Gibbs, I think of Gibbs, Norton & Co? Judge Newman is my next door neighbor on the left as you come from the station, Gibbs. You must have noticed the place—Queen Anne house, with..."

"Oh, he probably never gave it a glance," put in the Judge. "A mere cotage, that's all. When a man with my meager judicial salary has a social position to keep up and four daughters that aren't married and—Charles, you

can't realize what it means to have four unmarried..."

"No, I cannot," assented Wainwright quickly, "and from present signs I'm not likely to. I hope Mrs. Newman is well?"

The little Judge's face grew doubly important.

"Extremely well, thank you," said he. "A wonderful woman! You've met her, Mr. Gibbs?"

No! But of course you have often heard—By the way, Charles, it was she who told me to drop in on you this morning. You see—she—Mrs. Newman is most anxious for me to come up for re-election this fall. Mr. Horrihan, to whom I attached the subject, doesn't quite seem to see it that way. He doesn't want to have me renominated. I thought perhaps, as a personal favor to an old friend, you might say a word to Mr. Horrihan in my behalf."

"Of course I'll do what little I can. Horrihan will be here today. Drop in a little after noon and I'll tell you how my intervention turns out."

"Oh, thank you so much!" cried the Judge, positively wriggling in his delight. "Mrs. Newman will be so pleased. And, by the way, would you please say to her that I've never come over to see my daughters? Please ask him if he won't, I'm sure Mrs. Newman would be glad if he did. Well, till afternoon, then. Good morning."

"Queer little rat!" observed Gibbs as the Judge bowed himself out. "Mrs. Newman must be a marvel if all he says is..."

"She is a wonder as a husband trainer. She's tamed him so he doesn't know his soul's his own. A good little man because he's never had a chance to be otherwise. I'll speak to Horrihan about him, though. It's always well to have a friend on the bench. One never can tell when..."

But Gibbs was not listening. His heavy fage had lighted with a sudden glow of eagerness. Turning to note the cause, Wainwright saw his niece Dallas descending the stairs. Involuntarily she halted as she reached the threshold and saw Gibbs. Then, her sense of hospitality triumphing over impulse, she came in and greeted her uncle's guest with some show of cordiality.

"Remember, Dallas," said Wainwright as he prepared to go into his office, "Gibbs is here only for the day. I count on you to make his holiday as pleasant as you can." He glanced covertly at Gibbs, who had strolled to the window. Then the financier lowered his voice and said rapidly:

"Please be nice to Gibbs for my sake, Dallas. I do a great deal for you, and I don't often ask anything in return."

He patted her on the shoulder with a gesture meant to be affectionate and hurried into the adjoining office. Scarcely had the door closed when Gibbs turned from the window, crossed the room to where Dallas stood and in his usual direct fashion said:

"You saw that?"

"The article in this morning's paper? Yes."

There was no confusion, no embarrassment, neither in the clear, girlish voice nor in the honest dark eyes that met Gibbs' so calmly. He went on with a shade less confidence.

"It annoys you?"

"Very much indeed."

"You can't feel worse about it than I do, Miss Wainwright. I..."

"You didn't write it yourself, then?"

"Of course not! How could you think..."

"I didn't; I just wondered. Please see that the rumor is denied."

"Why should I? You are going to marry me some day, aren't you, Dallas?"

"Have I ever given you reason to think I would?"

"You have told me that I don't care for you the way you want me to. I have great admiration and respect for you, but that is all. And it is not enough to marry on."

"It is enough for me, if I have your admiration and respect to start on I'll soon make you love me."

"You would be satisfied with so little?"

"Yes. Knowing I could in time win more. You aren't the sort of girl who could marry a man if she didn't respect him—didn't admire him. You..."

"Perhaps I couldn't marry such a man. But perhaps I couldn't help loving him."

"Your chances for happiness would be better with me. Oh, Dallas, you know I love you! You've kept me waiting so long! Is it fair to either of us..."

"I hesitate because I want to be fair to us both. For that reason I must still ask you to wait."

"But I've waited so long! Tell me one thing: Is there any one else that..."

Steps, none too light, clattered down the stairs, and into the library bounced a lad in tennis fannels. He was tall, well set up and good to look at and seemed always to have stepped directly from a bandbox and to have had extremely recent acquaintance with much soap and water.

"Hello, Dallas!" he shouted, encompassing his sister in a bear hug. "How soon are..."

"Here's Mr. Gibbs, Perry," Dallas reminded him as she emerged, somewhat crumpled, from the embrace.

"Have you..."

The lad's manner underwent a lightning and frigid change.

"Oh, good morning!" he grunted, with a curt nod to the visitor, and

pleking up a paper, turned to the sport-

ing sheet and became immersed in its contents, oblivious of all else.

"Mr. Gibbs is only spending one day with us," admonished Dallas, trying to soften her young brother's rudeness.

"Hope he'll enjoy it," came in absent tones from the depths of the paper.

Gibbs rose.

"I'm going out for a cigar on the terrace," said he. "I'll join you a little later."

"Perry," scolded Dallas as soon as the broker disappeared through the long windows, "how could you treat a guest of uncle's so rudely?"

"I don't like the fellow. And I don't like what I read in the paper today about him and you. Gee, what a messy paragraph! It's enough to make a white man with a cigarette to say a word to deny it in time for the retraction to get into tomorrow's papers, aren't you?"

"I'm not quite sure."

"Good Lord!" gasped Perry, stamping down in the nearest chair. "Are you crazy? Say, if you are looking for a real good, exciting match why don't you marry a Wall street stock report? It'd be better in Gibbs. If you marry him you'll only be an 'also ran' with the ticker tape and the market news. Oh, keep out of it, old girl! I owe something to your intelligent and distinguished little brother. If you've got to commit matrimony, marry some one I like, can't you?"

"I haven't given him a definite answer yet," admitted the girl, a little touched by the real feeling that underlay her brother's blipant words.

"That's good medicine. Confidence restored and the run on Brother's Emotions is checked. Next time you get the marry bee I have a dandy candidate to suggest for the job."

"Who?" laughed Dallas, amused in spite of herself.

"Alwyn Bennett?"

"How silly!"

"Not on your life! Words of wisdom from the young—that's what it is. Go ahead and marry Bennett. Be a sport and say 'Yes.' Why don't you want to marry him?"

"For any one of a million reasons. First of all, he never asked me to..."

"Maybe he's scared to. But if he wasn't stuck on you he wouldn't be hanging around here every day and going everywhere with you the way he does. I'll bet \$3 he's..."

"Mr. Bennett!" the butler announced. Brother and sister stared guiltily at each other.

"Speaking of angels!"—muttered Perry. But Dallas had already turned to welcome the visitor.

Alwyn Bennett at first glance had little to distinguish him from the average good looking young man about town. But a closer observer would have noticed a firmness about the shapely mouth, an honesty and strength of purpose about the eyes, a general air of latent power that lay unawakened beneath the jolly, purposeless exterior. No crisis had yet called forth any special manifestation of this power, and meanwhile Bennett was content to loaf through an existence that thus far had been decidedly pleasant. The only son of a widowed mother who advised and spoiled him, more than comfortably well off from the great fortune amassed by his dead father, possessed of a social position unassailable and equally fortunate in that mysterious quality that spells popularity—all these gifts had saved Alwyn Bennett the trouble of fighting life's battle or showing who might be within his reach.

"Good old Bennett!" hailed Perry. "We were just talking about you."

"Dallas Wainwright."

"Good!" answered Alwyn. "Anything is better than indifference. What were you saying about me?"

"You tell him, Dallas," grinned the boy.

"Be quiet!" whispered his sister, flushing with vexation.

"Then I'll tell for myself," went on Perry gleefully. "I was just asking her..."

Seeing the girl's confusion, Bennett quickly changed the subject by interrupting:

"My mother will be over here in a few minutes, Dallas. She is bringing along a guest of ours, who says you and she were chums at school—Miss Garrison."

"Cynthia Garrison! Oh, I'll be ever so glad to see her again! I..."

"I know who she is!" cried Perry, refusing to be snubbed. "They say she's a gorgeous looker. When her kennel was under the hammer I bought in her two pet Boston terriers, Betty and Prince. Maybe that won't

make me solid with her, eh? Walk I guess. All I ask is a start, and you'll find a whole lot of cripples slower than I'll be. If they're walking over I might walk out, sort of abseil-like and happen to meet 'em. Maybe that's a bum idea? Good old me!"

Fall of his Machiavellian scheme, the lad booted through the long window and was gone.

"Dallas," began Bennett, without preamble, "you must surely know why I'm here today. You've seen that paragraph in the..."

"I have seen it," she answered quietly.

Taken aback by her manner, Bennett hesitated an instant; then asked nervously:

"The—the rumor isn't true, Dallas? Tell me it isn't!"

"Why shouldn't it be true?" she countered perversely, as though not wholly sorry to witness the new look her words called to his face. The look deepened as Bennett continued:

"You don't love Gibbs? Surely you don't love him?"

"..."

The French windows swung wide, breaking up her reply.

CHAPTER II

ALWYN BENNETT turned sharply toward the window, angry at the interruption, but Perry Wainwright, ushering two ladies in from the veranda, met his scowl with a wink of triumph.

"Not so loud, eh?" called the boy.

"Met them as they were turning into the drive. You see..."

"Oh," observed the younger of the two women—a pretty, flower faced girl who since her entrance into the room had been engaged in exchanging delighted greetings with Dallas. "So you came to meet us? You said you just happened..."

"Did I?" asked Perry in deep amazement. "Well, well! The fact is, I wanted to do something startling in honor of meeting you, so I told my first lie. I..."

"Don't mind him, Cynthia!" laughed Dallas. "He's taken that way quite often."

"Oh, it's his usual pace, then?" queried Miss Garrison innocently. "I thought perhaps he was just warning up..."

"And now," pursued Dallas, taking possession of Cynthia, much to Perry's disgust, "tell me all about yourself. Have..."

"There isn't much to tell. But there's going to be. I'm going to work."

"Work? What for?"

"For a living, of course."

"Not really..."

"Yes, but it's ridiculous!" broke in Mrs. Bennett, a sweet little old lady who now found her first chance to edge in a word amid the general volleys of talk. "But Cynthia is set on doing it."

"Why shouldn't I? I haven't a dollar, and there's a theory that one must live..."

"But what are you going to do?" asked Dallas.

"I don't know. I have a pretty good education. I shall find something. I—Dallas, I think your brother is giving us a high sign of some sort."

"I am!" declared Perry. "I just wanted to tell you there's a surprise waiting for you. Two surprises in one kennel. Want to see 'em?"

"What is he talking about?" queried Cynthia, appealing to Dallas for light on the mystery.

"About Betty and Prince Charlie," reported Perry. "Your two Boston terriers that I bought. Want to see 'em?"

"Oh, the darlings! Of course I do. Where are they?"

"Come along and I'll show you. The darlings, eh? Talk like that makes me wish I was a dog."

"Don't despair," suggested Cynthia. "Maybe you'll grow."

Still puzzling vaguely as to the meaning of this cryptic utterance, Perry followed Miss Garrison to the room, a grin of satisfied ambition wreathing his tanned face.

"To think of poor little Cynthia having to go to work!" sighed Dallas, looking after them. "One would as soon think of putting a butterfly into harness. Is it true she has no money left?"

"I'm afraid it's only too true," answered Mrs. Bennett. "Her father lost everything in speculating. He was cashier of the Israel Putnam Trust company and afterward president of it..."

She paused as the office door opened and Thompson, the secretary, came into the room. At sight of Mrs. Bennett he seemed about to turn back; but, changing his purpose, crossed to the table and began to look for some documents he had failed to gather up.

"What was the rest of the story about Mr. Garrison?" asked Dallas, really interested in the older woman's recital.

(Continued Next Week.)

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