

Norton Roy

# Mixed Faces



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# Roy Norton

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### CHAPTER I

If Nature is infallible, there should be some philosophic or eugenic professor arise and explain why she made such a grievous error in the personal appearance, vocal qualities, and general gestures of the learned judge, astute politician and hopeful statesman, Hon. J. Woodworth-Granger and Mr. James Gollop, perigrinating drummer for a chocolate house. Either the Honorable Judge should have been a commercial traveler, or the commercial traveler a judge. Outwardly they could have passed for specimen twins, given handicaps to all comers, and easily won the blue ribbon. Inwardly their characteristics were as different as those of any two animals could be, the Judge having the ponderous gravity of a camel, whilst Mr. James Gollop was as sedate as a monkey and twice as ebullient. The Judge suffered from a prodigious sense of responsibility and dignity, whilst his double was given to frivolities, a distressing sense of the ridiculous and was as irresponsible and happy as a flea hurdling from one boarding house to another in a dog pound.

The first intimation the Judge had that some other person dared to look like him was when, as he strode into the lobby of the Media City hotel in the best city in his state, a grinning porter rushed up, seized his suit case and said affably, "Righto, Old Sport! Got here just in time this trip and I'll send your cases to number two sample room, and open 'em up if you'll gimme the burglar's kit. The room you kicked for last month – remember."

The Hon. J. Woodworth-Granger, who from force of habit never said anything until he had formulated the complete sentence and then edited it, and having a mind that moved with the frantic speed and wild agility of a tractor engine pulling a carload of coal, glared ponderously at the porter who took it as a joke. Gollop sometimes assumed that prodigious seriousness when about to pass out specimens of his best humor.

"Spring it! Spring it! I'm ready to laugh," the porter encouraged him.

"Young man," said the Judge, "I am not accustomed to having those in your evident station of life address me with any such familiarity. You should be old enough to know that it is unseemly. You can not succeed, even in a menial occupation, unless you cultivate that respect which is due not only to your superiors, but to those who patronize the hotel, or any other undertaking in which you are employed."

He might have gone ahead and imposed a fine for contempt of court, or sentenced the unfortunate porter to ten years in the penitentiary, had not other arrivals come surging through the door, which reminded him that perhaps it were wiser to register ahead of all newcomers and thus endeavor to secure the choicest room for himself. The Judge had the trait which is shared alike by some human beings and many hogs, that he demanded the best though every other human – or hog – has to suffer. He liked to make sure that his own feet were firmly planted in the choice end of the trough; so he hurried to the desk, leaving the jovial porter still grinning, still expectant and quite hopeful that the tip would be of its usual generous proportions. Jim tipped liberally, because his firm was what is known as "easy on the tabs." Anybody can be liberal if someone else furnishes the platinum. That's why trust magnates and drummers can't be distinguished, because somebody else always pays the bills, although there has never yet been invented any painless dentistry for extraction of the purse. The room clerk in the hotel was new to her job, and so was the boy who conducted the Judge to his room; but, sad to relate, the chambermaid winked at the Judge and blew him a kiss. She was rather pretty too. Now to have a pretty chambermaid blow one a kiss when he arrives in a fine hotel is not objectionable to most travelers. It shows such a friendly spirit, and makes one feel at

home, or else fancy that he is still in the running and not so old and ugly as he had begun to believe. Some men immediately adjust their ties and brush their hair and grin into the mirror; but the Judge wasn't that sort at all. The proof that he was no gentleman lies in the fact that he scowled in outraged dignity at that pretty chambermaid who had most prettily blown him a kiss, and that she gasped, sniffed, simpered and said, "You ain't forgot me, have you?"

"Forgotten you! Damn it! I never saw you before in my life!" said the Judge, annoyed and exasperated to the rare point where his temper overcame his language.

"G'wan Jimmy, you little josher! You'll be round chuckin' me under the chin before the lights come on. Gee! There goes the bell again! I'll bet my switch it's that scraggy old hen in forty-four, wantin' me to run out and buy her some hair pins, or to hook her up so she'll look like a prize winner at a wasp show. She makes me sick, she does! But I'll – Yes Ma'am! Coming right away," she answered in a honeyed voice, as the lady guest was heard calling her name through a transom somewhere in the distance.

The Judge carefully shut and locked his door. He was a church member in good standing and an unmarried man, so had to lock the girl out or perhaps thought it best to lock himself in. One never knows! The porter appeared with his suit case in his hand and perturbation in his soul, the double burden sufficing to render him serious.

"The baggageman says your sample trunks ain't come. He says he went to the baggage master and they had a look. He says you order get busy on the wires because maybe they carried 'em through on sixty-two and her next stop is at Chicago, and you can't get your layout back before – "

"I have no trunks, I tell you," interrupted the Judge, with freezing dignity. "Put that suit case over there in the corner and get out. Who do you think I am, may I ask? A commercial traveler?"

He had intended this as a stern piece of sarcasm; but it had the effect of causing the porter to blink, stare, drop the suit case and then blurt out, "Good Lord! You're Jimmy Gollop what travels for the Columbus Chocolate Company, ain't you? You're Jim Gollop what has stopped here for years, ain't you? If you ain't – " He jerked off his cap, scratched his red head and added – "If you ain't – For the Lord's sake don't say nothin' – "

"Jimmy Gollop! A commercial traveler! Me?" the Judge actually spluttered and then, recovering all his overpowering magisterial arrogance, responded loftily, "I am J. Woodworth-Granger, Judge of the Fourth District Court. You go down and tell the manager of this hotel to come here at once. I wish to see him. I demand an explanation for all this outrageous flippancy. If his guests are to be subjected to such coarse impoliteness, discourtesy, annoyance and familiarity, he should be notified or ousted from his position. It is an imposition on the public which can not be condoned by any one with a sense of propriety, or any citizen with regard for public welfare. Go and get him!"

The manager, anticipating some rare practical joke, or perhaps apprehensive of such, having experienced some of Mr. Jimmy Gollop's freakish efforts in the past, appeared and greeted the Judge with, "Look here, old man, for my sake let go. Don't pull anything this time. My board of directors is to have a meeting this afternoon and – " But the stern eye of the angry judge checked him.

The manager in his turn blinked, and gasped and then exclaimed, "Jordon says you told him you were the Judge of the Fourth District Court. You look to me like Jim Gollop. If you're really Judge Woodworth-Granger, I beg your pardon and think you ought to get your face changed for your own protection. If you're Jimmy Gollop – and I'm a Dutchman if you aren't – have some sense and quit your kidding. This has gone far enough! Look here, Jimmy, there's a limit to even one of your jokes. I can't stand for it to-day when my board of directors is coming. The last time you were here and put red fire on the roof and then turned in a fire alarm cost me twenty-five iron men and the hotel company a round dozen of Pommery. It's going too strong, I tell you! I'm a joke hound myself but a starving Dutchman can get too much limburger if he's locked up in a cheese factory."

Mutual explanations, and abject apologies on the part of the manager and the porter followed. Everybody apologized, except the pretty chambermaid, and the judge never saw her again. Also that

was a detail he didn't mention. He rather hoped she would come and apologize. In fact he thought hopefully of what he might say to her in his kindest judicial manner, and occasionally took furtive glances into the hall to see if she was coming. He was disappointed, perhaps, because she didn't come, for he was positive he could say things for the good of her soul, and – Oh, well! – he always subscribed for the Home Missionary Society. Moreover she was a particularly pretty girl as chambermaids go, and there is never an orchard without its peach.

So, in due time, the Judge got away from that hotel unscathed; but to his extreme annoyance, now that he had openly plunged into politics and felt the necessity for becoming acquainted with the larger cities in the state despite the consequent discomforts of travel and sojourn, this man Gollop always intruded. That unfortunate similarity in appearance and gesture, voice and manner, was proven on a dozen occasions. That the habits of the Judge and the drummer were divergent made it all the more annoying. The Judge never had associated with, nor understood, what some persons called "A bully good fellow." He thought it was a rank and preposterous assumption on the part of a mere drummer to look, and talk, and act like a real judge who nursed an ambition to be governor of the state. It preyed upon his mind and caused him occasionally to say things that he wouldn't have said if he hadn't lost his temper, become momentarily a real human being, and found an unexpected safety valve in speech. Men merely vary in the choice of words. One says "Oh, dear me!" Another "Oh, Fudge!" another "Oh, Pshaw!" and so on down to the common, vulgar, horny-handed sonofagun who blurts out "Damn it all!" or worse and – the judge finally got to the limit. One writes this with glad, cheerful hopefulness for the entire human race because it's a fine thing to be natural and human, after all.

In the meantime Mr. James Gollop was working his Eastern territory. Working it both ways and up and down the middle; selling chocolates to people who thought they might do better with So-and-So, inducing some men to overorder, others to underorder, tipping porters, buying – sody pop (?) – now and then, spinning yarns, peddling the latest funny story, explaining to his house why his expense account should be passed without those querulous protests, and generally comporting himself according to his own erratic and sometimes pyrotechnical ideas. And when Jimmy breezed westward again and heard that the Judge of the Fourth Judicial District was his double he chuckled, laughed, and finally beat his plump legs at what was told him.

"By Gosh!" he chuckled to a confrère, "if that judge looks and sounds so much like me, I'll make a trip up to Princetown just to have a look at him and shake his paw, and congratulate him. We ought to make a right good team, although I can't exactly recommend him for his judgment in the choice of faces. I never yet won a beauty prize, although once upon a time I did win a family photograph album at a pie eating contest. Huckleberry too! Spoiled a forty-dollar suit of clothes and a two-dollar tie to win a sixty-cent album at a town fair. Got the album to prove it. Got it on the parlor table with the marble top down home in Maryland, and every time Maw looks at it she smiles and says 'Jimmy may be not much good at anything he's tried yet, but he can eat pie!'"

Now the peculiar part of Jim Gollop's makeup was that underneath all his banter, and his lightness, and his irresponsible sense of humor, there lurked something which made him keep his resolutions. He was a pretty good sort after all. Just a very human, contented, work-a-day man who liked other good fellows, was sorry for those who took life too seriously, never did any person a contemplated harm, knew neither malice nor envy, was always a booster and never a knocker, and whose sense of humor was generously given out for expansion rather than preserved to harass his own soul. So, one day, he made a sixty-mile journey out of his way to see, become acquainted with, and felicitate this judge whom he so startlingly resembled. For sixty miles he chuckled and bubbled with anticipation and curiosity. He even thought of a forgotten joke or two to spring and resolved that what he spent in entertainment for this meeting should come from his own purse and never appear on the expense account. True, it cost him a pang to forego that expense account, but he didn't see how he could ever explain to his firm that it had been necessary to travel sixty miles and entertain

a judge of a state court in the hope of selling him a big order of chocolate drops. He was afraid the firm might be skeptical. Some people can't be convinced.

And so, picturing a mutual hand shaking, some lively interchanges and facetious comments on what constituted good looks and bad looks, perhaps a luncheon or a dinner, and a new friend through the strange accident of nature, he climbed the stairs to Judge J. Woodworth-Granger's office with a cheerful smile on his face, and after a gasp from the office boy and some stares of astonishment from a clerk or two, was ushered in. He had expected to enter the tropics. He found himself as "happy as a Mexican hairless dog in the Arctic regions" as Marshall would say. Cold? There may be in the vast, dead planets of space places much colder than the North pole; but these would have been warm and comfortable compared with the atmosphere of Judge Woodworth-Granger's austere office when he turned his eyes on the person of Mr. James Gollop. Here before him, grinning and sticking out a plump, friendly hand, was the man to whose personal similarity he strongly objected, and of whose personal ways he disapproved.

"And so, sir," said the Judge icily, as he stood up and scrutinized the drummer, "you are the man who has caused me so much personal embarrassment, indignity, familiarity, and – if I never loathed my own appearance before, I can do so now after looking at you!"

Jimmy's grin froze on his face, became hard, and slowly changed to something very different. His well-meaning hand slowly came back as if half-paralyzed by such a reception. It had never before been rebuffed. It was a liberal hand that had gone into its pocket many times to help those in hard luck. It had never been slow in friendliness or that courtesy which prevails between well-meaning and generous hands throughout the sad old world. It had seldom been hastily raised in anger. But now it shut hard and its owner said, "So that's the way of it, eh? You're sore because I look like you. Why shouldn't I get hot under the collar because you look like me? About the only difference between us is that you're a judge and I'm a drummer. That doesn't keep you from being a good sport, does it? I came a long way to get acquainted with you and I like most people. It's not my fault that you look so much like me, is it?"

"Look like you? It's your fault that you look like me!" snapped the Judge as if that fault were an impertinence.

"Phew!" said Jimmy, puffing out his cheeks. "That's the sort you are, eh? Guess I made a mistake."

"I guess you did," grimly said the Judge, mimicking Jimmy's voice without in the least realizing it. And then he added, "Good day, Mr. Gollop. I hope I may not see you again and that you travel in some other territory than this."

As if incredulous, Jimmy stared at him for a full quarter minute and then, recovering his good humor, clapped his hat on his head and assuming a highly melodramatic air in imitation of the Judge's ponderous methods said, "Harold, beware! Beware! I say! It's a long worm that has no turning. Them papers shall be mine! I swear it on me lyfe." And with a boisterous shout of laughter turned out through the door and down the stairs. That ribald laughter still floated upward as he made his departure, and the Judge was annoyed. Very much annoyed. He felt himself soiled; quite as if the garbage van man had suddenly tried to kiss him with brotherly affection. It was outrageous! Impossible! And a mere drummer, too!

Jimmy retired to an hotel, pausing on the way to buy a pair of blue goggles, and to fit them on, and to pull his hat down over his eyes.

"I don't intend to look like that old catamount in his own town anyhow," he said to himself. "If he's as popular with his fellow citizens as he is with me it might not be safe. Wish I had a set of false whiskers to wear during my sojourn. Wonder when the next train leaves? I'm like the chap that got pinned down under a burning railway wreck and said he thought he really ought to get away from there. That's me! I want to get away from here."

In the hotel room he dug his pocket time table from his grip, and no hungry reader ever plunged into the pages of the latest "Best Seller" more avidly than did he thumb those flimsy pages. His capable fingers turned the leaves rapidly and, being expert and highly trained in working out the abstruse puzzles and problems with which time table people always try to fill their books so that people will get tired of seeking information and look at the advertisements, in less than five minutes he slammed the book shut and almost viciously hurled it back into his bag.

"By Heck!" he muttered, despairingly, "no train out till four o'clock to-morrow morning and – I'll bet it smells of new laid milk and long laid cows. There'll be an hour's delay while they fill the baggage car with chickens in coops. Serves the chickens right for getting up that early. Ought to go some place and have their heads chopped off. There'll be one combination smoker car filled with yawning farm hands who wear fertilizer on their boots. But it's me for that train!"

Then, recovering his cheerfulness, he sallied out to visit all the confectionary shops; but met with no success and attributed his failure to the hideous goggles and the fact that his customary happy and seductive grin was slightly stiff about the corners as if his face needed oiling. "Hang it all! Nobody but an undertaker could look happy in this town," Jimmy thought after his final effort. "No wonder that old cuss is so solemn. I'd be too, if I lived in a morgue!"

To escape the town he decided to make a pedestrian trip to where the only big enterprise near Princetown was in full blast. It was spoken of as "out at the falls" as if they were the only ones on earth. It was two and a half miles from the town and the day was hot. "Thank Heaven it might be worse," thought Jimmy. "I might have to tote a hundred pound grip this far in the hope of getting an order, and now all I've got to lug is my goggles." He took them off, wiped the sweat from his face, stopped to watch some fish in a stream, regretted that he hadn't brought some string and a fish hook, contemplated a swim, and then trudged onward, whistling as he went and wholly forgetful of his woes. He came in sight of "The Falls," and stopped.

"Whew!" he puffed. "Of course they're not as big as Niagara – except to the folks of Princetown; but by Heck! They're some falls after all. And, what's more, some live individual knows it. Bet he wasn't born in Princetown anyhow. This looks like business."

He leaned on the railing of a bridge and speculatively regarded the considerable manufacturing plant that was in full industry, saw that its prosperity was evidenced by some big new buildings under course of construction, and deliberated over a long white sign on top that read "Sayers Automobiles."

He rather objected to that sign. If he had designed it it would have been twice as high, twice as long and might have read "Sayers Automobiles, best on earth for the money. Cheapest at any price. No home complete without one."

He remembered that he had ridden in one a few days before and that it was what he called "nifty and nippy." In fact he had thought he would like to have one – just a very small one to suit his purse, and had intended to ask what they cost. All his automobiling experience had been at the expense of his firm; but he had done quite a lot of riding. In fact the cashier had once asked him, sarcastically, whilst checking up his expense account, if he took an automobile to bed with him.

Jimmy got out his goggles, and visited the works. He was fascinated by the machinery, the noise, the way things were made. He wished that his line was automobiles instead of chocolates; but regretfully concluded that probably it took a long time to learn the patter, and how to run one, and that the only hopeless individual in the world was a candy drummer, because, "once a candy drummer always a candy drummer" was the proverb of the road.

A whistle blew and with a start he looked at his watch, scarcely believing it possible that he had passed the afternoon so quickly. He walked out through the big gates and started his homeward journey, and was surprised to realize that he was as tired as if he had done a heavy day's work. Absorbed in reflections concerning automobiles, and trade, he suddenly brought up with a jerk and heard behind him a man jamming on the brakes of a car, and using several shining expletives. Jimmy made the jump of his life and got out of the road just in time.

"Gee Whizz!" he exclaimed. "If I've got to be run down by a taxi let it be on Broadway, not on a rube trail. Thank the Lord it wasn't a hay cart, because it'd have got me, sure!"

The motorist, looking back in exasperation, abruptly brought his car to a halt and turning half round in his seat shouted, "Sorry I missed you so close."

"Why, did you want to get me? It was close enough to suit me," replied Jimmy, recovering his grin.

"Of course I didn't know you were blind, sir. I'm very sorry," said the man.

"Why? Do you prefer to run down the blind ones?" queried Jimmy, coming abreast of the car and then laughing when he remembered that he was still wearing those ridiculous blue goggles. "I'm not blind. I just wear these for ornament. But it's all right, old chap. Don't you worry. I reckon I was so busy thinking that I didn't hear you coming at all. I get rather fond of myself when I think, which isn't often enough so but that it surprises me to catch myself doing it. It's all right. No harm done."

The man surrendered to that entrancing smile and the glitter of exposed and perfect white teeth.

"Well the least I can do is to give you a lift, if you're going toward town," he said, with a return grin. "Get in, can't you?"

"Can't I? Watch me, as the drunk said when the policeman tapped him and told him he couldn't sleep sitting against a lamp post," and, grateful for conveyance, he climbed aboard. "It's the first time I ever won anything by missing anything," he said, laughing at his own paradox. "My feet are so sore from walking over these country roads that after this I'll never be able to look at a farm horse without tears in my eyes, and I'll take him by the hand and give the poor chap a box of corn salve. Phew! Pavements for mine. Do automobiles ever get sore feet out here?"

Jimmy learned that the driver was a foreman at the Sayers plant and was very enthusiastic about the merits of the car.

"It's not old enough or advertised enough to be well known yet," he said, "but she will be. I know. Been in automobile factories all my life. Worked for some of the best of 'em. These are A-1. And Sayers is a live one. Fine old feller, too. That's his house up there on the hill. Some swell, eh?"

Jimmy looked up and saw a fine home that he had admired on his way out and had deduced that it belonged to the nabob of the town.

"I could do with it first rate," Jimmy assented. "All except the society stunt and that – " He concluded with a little cluck of his tongue.

The driver laughed.

"You don't know old Tom Sayers," he said. "Old Tom doing society stunts! Humph! He began as a machinist. Then got to be a designing engineer and now – well – there you are! Self-made man, Old Tom, and as fine as they make 'em. I don't reckon he'd care for a house as grand as that but you see he's married. Funny how some women first want to get married, then want their men to get rich, then instead of bein' satisfied get the society itch and after that are forever scratchin', ain't it? Mrs. Sayers spends about half her time in Europe. Schools here weren't good enough for her girl Margaret, so she took her over to some of those nunneries in France and Switzerland, and goodness knows where. Gone some time now. Mighty pretty girl. But Old Tom? If you think he's ever gallivantin' anywhere except around his works, you ought to be up there loafin' some day when you think no one's about to see you! Old Tom can say things in five minutes that you don't have to learn by heart to remember the rest of your life. He works four hundred men now and he knows 'em all. Don't you doubt that!"

Jimmy, who was so keenly alive and imaginative that he was interested in nearly everything and everybody, looked back over his shoulder at the fine old remodeled colonial house on the hill with its broad sweep of lawns, its background of splendid trees, mountains in the distance, and the lively river at its feet, and, distinctly urban as he was, thought that if Mrs. Sayers knew when she was well off she'd stay at home.

"If I had a place like that with Maw in it – say sitting up there on the veranda, knitting – she's great on knitting, Maw is! – I reckon the show hasn't hit Broadway yet that could drag me out for

a single night. No-sir-ee! Not if the whole chorus had chocolate legs!" he said to the foreman, who vociferously agreed.

"Beats the Dutch how some folks get everything, and others nothin'," he half grumbled.

"Cheer up, son!" said Jimmy. "You never get anything by envying somebody else. Why, look at me! I haven't even ever owned a run-about! And I'm not kicking! I like to see others have a lot of things I can't have myself, because it makes me glad to think that most likely they're happy owning things I'd like to have too, if I could afford 'em. By gosh! It's the finest feeling in the world to know that other folks are happy. Keeps you from feeling unhappy yourself. Makes it a mighty pleasant world for all of us. All the money I've got in the world, if made into cloth, wouldn't make me a patch if I had a hole in the seat of my pants as big as a postage stamp; but I don't lay awake nights grieving for fear I'll be pinched for indecent exposure. Not me! I just thank God the hole's not any bigger and keep plugging along, and I whistle while I plug. It helps. Plug & Whistle, I reckon, is the best firm on earth."

His benefactor had become so engrossed in his quaint passenger that the car was driven squarely up to the hotel door to let him out.

"Got any kids at home?" Jimmy asked, and on being told there were three, said cheerfully, "Wait a minute," and ran up the steps three at a time to return with a box of chocolates purloined from his samples.

"Take that to 'em," he said to the driver. "They're all right, I know. I'm a candy drummer. Good thing you've only got three because I couldn't spare a bigger box. My boss isn't a bad old chap, but he did ask me one time if I went on the road to sell candy or to give it away. The only man in the world I'd like to change jobs with is Santa Claus. Much obliged for the ride."

He loitered in the hotel lobby long enough to read a bill announcing that there would be a mass meeting that night in the "Grand Opera House" under the auspices of the Princetown Municipal Improvement League and then saw in big letters, that the meeting would be addressed by "His Honor, Judge J. Woodworth-Granger."

Jimmy had forgotten his rebuff, but now frowned a trifle at the recollection aroused by that name. He was entertained at supper by his sole fellow guest who sold machinery and hoped to get an order from the Sayers' plant. And although the technical part was as foreign as Greek to Jimmy, he was mightily interested and wanted to know all about it. After dinner he sat alone on the veranda in front of the hotel and watched people coming down the drowsy, shaded street or loitering in the town square. There was nothing else to do. No theaters, cinema shows but three nights a week, and this an off night. Some wandering fireflies absorbed him for a while, and then they flew away, leaving him alone. Suddenly he dropped his chair from where it had been tilted back against the wall, and said, "Well, I reckon I'll have to go and hear what the judge has to say about improving this place. It needs it!" He found the Grand Opera House readily enough by following the slowly moving people who traveled in but one direction. Also he found on entering that there's not much in a name, its grandeur consisting of a lot of badly worn wooden seats, dingy painting, and some strips of jute carpet in the aisles that looked as if they had been collected after a cyclone. The stage was the bright spot, due to the decorations of flags, banners and bunting. Jimmy got a seat in the back row after some difficulty. The Opera House was full, perhaps because there was no charge for admission, perhaps because there was no other place to go; but Jimmy charitably thought the town should be patted on the back for its interest in public improvements. Two girls played a duet on a piano and played it rather badly. And then there came in from the wings those who were to occupy the chairs on the stage. They entered as solemnly as if each was alone and about to recite Hamlet's soliloquy. Some of them threw out their chests and glared at the audience, others slunk in like harness makers visiting a lace factory. All were seated before there stalked in the counterpart of the drummer in the back row, and there was some evidence in the Judge's deportment that he had the dramatic sense to wait for a proper pause

so that the spectators might see him in all his aloof magnificence. Had the two girls played "See the Conquering Hero Comes," he might have accepted it as befitting.

"Stranger here, ain'tchu?" Jimmy's neighbor, a dried up little old man, queried.

"Yes, why?" Jimmy mumbled back.

"Come to stay long?"

"Never can tell," replied Jimmy aloud, and mentally added, "Hope not."

"Goin' inter business?"

"No."

"Lookin' fer a job? I hear as how old Tom Sayers is hirin' all the men he can git to work on his new buildin's." A moment's wait and then, "Ain't a bricklayer, be you? You don't look like one. Look more like – like a feller that don't know much about hard work. Interested in autymobiles?"

"Yes," said Jimmy, telling the truth.

The old man cackled and said, "By gum! I thought so – I can spot 'em."

"How do you do that?" queried Jimmy, instantly curious concerning this new psychological art.

"They all wear goggles and scarf pins," said the old man, triumphantly, and then, as a speaker got up to open the meeting, whispered, "That's old Smith. He's the mayor. He can't talk. Wait till you hear the Jedge spout. Then you'll hear somethin' if he gets goin' good. He can talk so loud that when he was in court before he was elected jedge, you could hear him four blocks away from the square. Best lawyer in the state because you could hear him the furdest."

"Hope he doesn't get going to-night," said Jimmy, and listened to the mayor, who mumbled something about "Distinguished fellow townsmen," "Ardent believers in City Beautiful," "Great and growing city of Princetown," and "Future metropolis of the state."

"The object of this meeting is to raise money enough to build a band stand in the middle of the square. Mr. Sayers has kindly agreed in consideration of the city's building such, to donate the cost of the instruments."

Jimmy's neighbor had cupped his hand behind his ear and was evidently disappointed. He started to ask Jimmy for an explanation but was interrupted by the applause which greeted the introduction of the Judge and relapsed, doubtless, hoping that he could enjoy such a golden tongued orator as one who could be plainly heard for four blocks when he "got goin'."

The Judge got up and bowed as the audience applauded. He stalked stiffly to the little center table in the forefront of the stage, buttoned his coat, shot his cuffs, and said "Ahem!" After that he took a long pause, carefully poured himself a glass of water, daintily wiped his lips with his pocket handkerchief, and in a louder tone said, "Ahem!"

"It's a mighty fine speech so far all right," commented Jimmy to the old man, who began excitedly, "You just wait! If he gets goin', I tell you –"

"S-s-sh" hissed someone in front of them, turning and glaring at the offender, and the conversationalist subsided and looked at Jimmy and glared and said, "S-s-sh!" as if the latter were the culprit.

"Friends and fellow citizens," said the Judge, condescendingly, "I esteem it a great honor to be called upon to address you to-night on a subject so near and dear to my heart as the welfare of this, my home city, the greatest city in the world as far as my affections can be bestowed. I have lived amongst you for nearly ten years ever since leaving the great universities beyond our borders, and I crave your indulgence for putting some of my larger views before you ere I speak on purely local topics. Friends and fellow citizens, we must make the world free for democracy. Let freedom of the seas be that shining shibboleth which through its ulterior meaning, when considerably scrutinized to its utmost and ultimate, and defined as we Americans who are fully cognizant of our grave responsibilities toward humanity and the affairs of other nations, races, and peoples of this globe, which is round – those responsibilities handed down to us by the father of our country, George Washington – interpret as meaning that we wish freedom of the seas. Not in the abstract, but in the

concrete, not in modicum but in unconditional unobstruction and under such international statutes and regulations as shall confine sea spaces to neither the individual, to the group, to those who live within certain prescribed boundaries which constitute government by the people for the people and of the people, nor yet again for any comity, compact, or treaty-tied group of nations. Small nations must be free by the exercises of their God-given processes of reasoning and power of thought to so constitute their affairs that they may, by their own approval and their own desires, succeed in securing that power of growth and expression which can come to a people solely and singularly when permitted the right of self-government."

"What's that?" whispered the old man, cupping his hand to his ear and looking a trifle bewildered.

"He means people ought to be allowed to govern themselves," explained Jimmy.

"Good Gawd! Did it take him all that time to say that?" questioned the old man.

"S-s-s-sh!" cautioned a highly impressed person in front, impatient lest he lose any of these obfuscated words of supposed wisdom.

"The way to be a good citizen is to be a good citizen," said the Judge impressively. "We learn by learning. The man who lives the longest is the oldest. All of us who do our best do our best. Our country is the home of the free and the brave, let us cherish its traditions. The best townsman is the man who does the best for his town. I can not stand before you to-night without feeling that the entire sentiment of the people is with me, my fellow citizens, and I should deem myself unworthy of addressing you here to-night, upon this platform, did I not make it plain to you, or as plainly as I can, that I consider myself as one of those in the vanguard of that high and lofty motive whose purity of purpose none dare assail, municipal improvements!"

In the tumultuous burst of applause that followed the old man croaked to Jimmy, "What was that he said?"

"He says he's for the band stand," Jimmy interpreted with great brevity. "That is, that's the way I understand it. Maybe that's not exactly what he means. It takes a lot of hard thinking and consideration to find out what some men really do mean when they talk."

"To hell with the band stand. I been here forty year and we got along all right without it, say I! If that's what he's talkin' about, I'm goin' home. I understood it was somethin' about taxes we was to hear. They got me taxed plumb out of my socks and – "

"S-s-sh!" cautioned those in the vicinity.

"And if they tax us for this I can't have any underwear at all! Lemme outer this. I'm goin'!" said the veteran and Jimmy was compelled to stand up to let him pass, and then, thinking this an excellent opportunity to escape, himself fled. The Judge was still uttering profound nothings when his last words were audible, and that proved that he was a great and blossoming statesman for whom no dignity was too high!

## CHAPTER II

Jimmy found the train all that he had anticipated, and then some; but being one of that fortunate cult who arise happily, sing in bathrooms to the annoyance of neighbors who waken with a grouch, enjoy breakfast, and tackle each day as if it were certain to be filled with sunshine, soon found the position entertaining. Although he knew nothing at all about the subject, he even indulged in a learned discussion on cattle with his seat mate, and held his own until he suggested that if milch cows were put in nice comfortable homes and liberally fed with condensed cream mixed with flour paste they would give pure cream instead of pure milk.

The farmer stared at Jimmy wondering whether he was seated with an insane man or not, and if so whether the latter might develop homicidal mania.

"I've always believed that cows were badly treated," Jimmy explained very soberly. "Their esthetic development isn't looked after properly. Now milk ought to be rich, creamy, sweet, and fragrant. Feed a cow on onions and her milk smells like onions, doesn't it?"

The farmer admitted that it did.

"Well then, here's an idea you could make a fortune out of. By Jove! I don't believe it's ever been tried! Why not raise flowers on a dairy farm. Pick out cows with naturally sweet and kindly dispositions. Make nature fit nature. For instance, take a nice red cow and feed her on red roses. Nothing but red roses. Her milk is specially bottled and sold as rose milk. By and by, maybe, its color would be a beautiful red. It would smell like red roses. White cows should have lilacs and lilies of the valley. Yellow cows ought to be fed on daisies and such. Think of the advertising possibilities. 'Try our Rose milk, or Lily of the Valley milk or Daisy milk.' And say, what's the matter with feeding violets to blue cows? Violet brand would of course be the favorite for blonde women, and Rose milk for the brunettes. Make the cow's home surroundings lovely. Don't shut her up in a filthy stall but give her a room, and a nice bed, and pictures on the wall so she can have something to look at besides the doggoned scenery she has to see during working hours, when she's busy making milk and wishing the whistle would blow so she could lay off her overalls and go home to her family. Cows, I tell you, are –"

He turned towards his seat mate to find a vacant space and to discover a man with wild eyes and hasty furtiveness making his way toward the door of the other compartment, as if seeking safety.

"Well what do you think of that!" exclaimed Jimmy, sotto voice. "Confound it. It's the darned farmers that need educating; not the cows. I swear I believe cows have more sense of humor than some men. And I was just beginning to get good, too!"

And then, chuckling, he consulted his watch, and began leisurely collecting his belongings.

All his leisureliness vanished, however, from the moment when he issued from his hotel, and he became as brisk and busy as a cricket intent on ravaging an entire wheat field in a series of swift swoops.

"You seem to be in a mighty big hurry, Jim," complained one customer, later in the day, "What's the rush?"

Jimmy, mopping his forehead, for the first time appeared a trifle diffident, flushed like a school boy and then blurted, "Well, to tell the honest truth I am in a hurry. I'm trying to clean up and catch the six-thirty train east. You see – I don't know as there is anything to be ashamed of – I've got to get home to my mother."

Observing that this statement provoked no ridicule, he expanded.

"I suppose I've got as fine a mother as ever lived. She's down in Baltimore and she's due to have a birthday in just three days, and – you know, I've been with Maw on her birthday ever since she was born! That is – I mean ever since I was born. No sir-e-ee! Never missed once. We always looked forward to it, Maw and I do. Seems as if it was just our day, and nobody else's at all! Maybe it's more important to her because it happens to be my birthday too. I go home because I want to

be with her on her birthday, I reckon, and she likes to have me come home because it's mine. So, come rain or shine, loss of business or train wrecks, I'm home on that day, and – and the minute I step inside the front door, I'm – I'm just a kid again."

Two days later there leapt up the cement steps of a neat old-fashioned house in the suburbs of Baltimore a man who had come home to "feel like a kid again," and with a shout bolted inside to be received by a gentle gray-haired woman whom he picked up in his arms and kissed with boyish demonstrativeness.

"By Gosh, Maw! You're looking younger and prettier, every time I see you!" he exclaimed, holding her off at arm's length and studying her solicitously. "I never see you without wishing I could stay here all the time – just you and me. All alone! Just we two."

"Jims," she said, using an old pet name, "you'll get over that sometime. And – it's about time, too, isn't it, that you stopped courting your own mother, and began to remember that you're grown up. You will be thirty-four years old to-morrow and I shall be – "

"Twenty-four! Always twenty-four."

"Sixty-four!"

"Twenty-four! Don't I know? Haven't I kept count?"

"I can keep my own count. Sixty-four. I hope you didn't bring me another foolish thing for a birthday present. I always think of that hat!" And she lifted her fine chin and laughed amusedly.

"That hat," Jimmy expostulated, "was bought in the best shop on Fifth avenue and the girl that sold it to me put it on to show me how well it looked."

"It must have been the girl rather than the hat that hypnotized you into paying fifty dollars for something that would look better on someone of about sixteen rather than sixty."

Jimmy did not appear to take the joke in his usual good tolerance but soberly insisted that the hat was "A peach."

"No, the trouble with you is, Maw, that you don't realize how young you look, and how handsome you are. It's not my fault you look like twenty, is it? I told that lady hat drummer that I was going to give the hat to somebody that was a darned sight better looking than she was, and she said 'How old is the lady?' and I told her I wasn't discussing a horse and that the age was none of her business, but that if she'd think of someone who looked twenty, and get me a hat that would be the best in the shebang in the twenty-year-old class, and tell me the price and – "

"Well, Jims, don't you mind what I say," she interrupted with a smile. "You are a good son, though terribly extravagant. You bought sealskin furs that I can't wear, and a grand piano on which I can't play. But – " and she went over and put her hands on his shoulders and looked into his eyes with ineffable fondness – "Jims, what you gave didn't matter because I knew that your heart, all of it, was there in the gift! And often, when you are away, I thank God for giving me a son so unselfish, so loyal, so thoughtful, so true!"

There were many of Jim Gollop's customers who would scarcely have known him then; for there was a strange softening and adoration of his rugged face, quite as if beneath that careless, half-cynical, humorous mask there dwelt, abashed, seldom visible, some great tenderness of soul that now issued forth without reserve. He bent forward with a sudden reverence, very gently, with shining eyes, and then, folding her still more gently to his arms, kissed her white hair, and for a moment held her very close.

"Well, Jims," she said at last, slowly disengaging herself, "your room is just as you left it. No – not quite. I take it back. We had to remove your discarded shoes from the bed where you left them, and I think you left one slipper in the bath room and the other in the grate. Also some collars on the floor, some more scattered over the dresser, and a rather smelly pipe on a chair. Otherwise it's ready for you and Bessie has by this time drawn your bath, and – "

"I'm mighty glad about that pipe! I thought I'd lost it somewhere between Plattsburg and Buffalo. Funny, isn't it, how you become fond of a particular pipe? I always liked that one. This is a

real home coming! You see that pipe was given to me by Billy Baker. I've told you about Billy, haven't I? He's the chap that lives down in Greenville, Pennsylvania, who used to make the same ground I did, and sold that Florodora line. Poor chap! Married now. Got a kid he calls Arture Davis Baker! Now if he'd called that kid Jim – "

"It might have been as foolish as you! Hurry and come down stairs. We have chicken Maryland, oysters out of season, and corn cakes, and – don't moon about the bath room and try to sing, Jims!" His mother thrust him towards the stairs and as he ascended like a bell boy expecting a tip, watched him from sight.

Jimmy paused to look through his open window of his room at a big elm whose branches he could almost touch. "Hello Bill, old feller. Glad to see you looking well. How's the birds' nest business this summer? Oh. Got a dozen aboard have you, and you say mostly robins? Well, well, well! That's good! Tell 'em to sing to me at six o'clock to-morrow morning, will you? Thanks!"

He smiled fondly at the lawns and homely flower beds in the rear and thrust his head far out of the window to estimate the growth of a creeper that he had planted with his own hands. It seemed to him that there was no home, anywhere, as homelike as this old-fashioned house that since the death of his father he had gradually modernized inside to suit his tastes, despite his mother's protests against his extravagance. He rarely thought of those hard years following the death of his father, when the home was learned to be the sole remaining asset of what had been regarded as a fine prosperity; of how he had insisted on its retention; of how he had been compelled to work out of school hours; of his and his mother's reluctant surrender of the cherished dream that he might go through Yale; of how, long after he had found employment to support his mother, he had doggedly insisted on night study to complete his education following the foolish traditions of nearly every old Southern family that its male members must have a profession. Sometimes he remembered how reluctantly he had abandoned his dream of becoming a lawyer because he could not afford to let an opening "on the road" at a good salary pass by; but he was secretly proud of the fact that he had bravely concealed all the disappointment.

"My mother, our home, a few good friends, a little more in the bank at the end of each year and something each day to give me a laugh. What more could a man wish!" This had become his creed and he lived up to it in all ways, even if he had to create the laugh for his own amusement. He had gradually learned the hard lesson that a wise man cuts his suit to fit the cloth at his disposal and was thereby content. He had learned to lose with a grin and win without a boast.

Mr. James Gollop, despite his unserious demeanor when abroad, never departed from his home to resume his never ending circle "on the road" without a sigh. It was so on the day when, his birthday holiday over, he tripped down the steps throwing a parting joke over his shoulder at his mother, and hastened to the end of the quiet residential street to board a street car; but in the street car and later, in the train, he sat soberly thinking and wondering if there was no way on earth by which he could be at home each day.

"Maw's not getting any younger," he thought to himself. "Every day I'm not with her is one day less on my account that I can never catch up. And all accounts sometimes come to an end when the Big Auditor decides it's time to close them."

He threw off his brooding when he reached New York, and was the old, alert, bubbling Jimmy when he reached his firm's headquarters, where he was prepared to wrangle with the auditor over items on his expense list, demand better samples than the last lot, suggest some special cartoons for a special trade, cajole the house in sending out some special souvenirs for some special customers, and find out from the credit man what he thought of Jones Jobbing Co. for a little larger order. And then, all these affairs adjusted diplomatically, he went out to make some personal purchases. He was reflecting on the fact that everybody in New York seemed in a hurry to get to some place or another when he was arrested by a cheerful voice so evidently aimed in his direction that he looked up with

a start; a rich voice that said, "Well for goodness sake! Fancy seeing you here; but of course that is foolish, because I know you have to come here on business at long intervals. How are you?"

"Very well, thank you," said Jimmy, accepting the proffered hand and shaking it warmly, but at the same time mentally perturbed because he could not think of the charming young lady's name, nor whence she came. "And I am somewhat surprised to meet you here, too."

"Oh, Mother had to come to do a lot of silly things and dragged me along to chaperone her, I suppose," said the girl with a laugh that exposed teeth fascinatingly small, white and regular, between lips fascinatingly generous and well formed. "And what is more, I hate New York and like the country, and – I'm bored stiff with tagging around into millineries, and shops, and such. I can get enough of shops at home!"

"Of course! Of course!" agreed Jimmy affably, but feeling himself a little pompous through his failure to remember where such a charming creature dealt out chocolates when on her job. His mind was working like lightning and speculated, "Plague on it all! They look so different in their go-away-duds from what they do behind the counters with nice white aprons and nice little white caps and nice white linen gloves and – why can't I remember! – Where does she work? She's familiar but – ummh! – It never does to let 'em think you've forgotten 'em, because they resent it and knock your sales when you come around again. Isn't she the manageress at Bodley's out in Cincinnati? No-o – I think – I think she's at the Bijou in Pittsburgh. Ummmh! It's up to me to make her believe I've been thinking about her ever since I sold her place my last order."

Aloud he said, "Well you're no more bored stiff than I am. And I, too, only come to New York because I have to. Which way are you going?"

"Nowhere in particular just now," she said, "except to look in that shop window up there. Are you interested in windows?"

"If they've got chocolates in them," he replied with a wry grin, and she laughed.

"Chocolates? I detest them!" she exclaimed, and Jimmy knew just how she must feel about chocolates when all day long she saw people buying them, and sometimes gobbling them.

They looked in the window and Jimmy was glad that it was a leather show that had not only gloves and knickknacks but some good horse furniture as well. His companion seemed to know all about saddlery and went into raptures over a pigskin creation; but with a sigh, remarked that she didn't feel able to afford it, and they explored farther. She kept Jimmy too busy mentally to permit even his agile mind to indulge in continued speculations as to her identity. He knew that his first duty was to prove entertaining, and in some distress as to what might be the best tack, suddenly took advantage of a sandwich man's conspicuous overcoat that read, "The Marvelous Age. Matinee today. Royalty Theater."

"Oh, I'd love to see that!" exclaimed his companion, and that gave him his cue.

"Off we go then," he said.

"What? You take me to a theater without a chaperone? I'm astonished!" And then she laughed as if highly amused by something extraordinary.

"Mabel," he said, gravely, "you don't know me when I'm in New York. It's the matinee for ours."

"The 'Mabel' settles it," she declared mischievously, and went with him gayly down the cross street leading to the theater.

Dexterously as he fished to glean from her where she worked when at home, he was still ignorant of that important point when, the performance over, they emerged into the street.

"Now," she said, "you can leave me at the Holland House. That is, unless you wish to come up and pay your respects to Mother; but come to think of it, she may not be home yet."

"No," said Jimmy, in perplexity, "I have an appointment. You must extend my respects and good wishes. But – say! There's the big Horse Show on in Madison Square Garden to-morrow afternoon. Can't we see that? If you will but say 'yes,' I'll book seats for your mother, and for you, and for me. How about it?"

"Get Mother to a Horse Show? Heavens! But – I'd like to go." She spoke with bright wistfulness that absolutely finished him.

"Well, your mother will let you, won't she?" he asked hopefully.

"Let me see," she said thoughtfully as they stood in the hotel entrance, and drew from her bag a tiny silver mounted appointment book and consulted its pages. "Oh, goody! Mamma has an appointment up town that I can easily beg off from. Yes. Do get two tickets and we'll go."

"I'll call here for you at two o'clock," said Jimmy. "Will that do?"

"Excellently. But, mind you, no box! I like to see a horse show from close down to the ground. They don't look so dressed up and silly as they do from the boxes. I rather suspect that the horses don't like those in the boxes," she said with a smile.

"Agreed," he answered, and made his devoirs.

He walked briskly as far as the corner, then turned and looked back to make certain that she had disappeared. He hastened back, intent on gaining the desk before others had reached it, but found himself too late. He was compelled to bide his time whilst several people registered, and then sidled up to the desk. A very haughty young man swung the register toward him but he ignored it and, leaning confidentially across, said, "There's a young lady and her mother stopping here and I can't remember their names. Perhaps you could tell me what – "

"Sorry! There are probably fifty young ladies and their mothers stopping here," said the hotel clerk, icily. "If you're on the square in asking for such information, I'm sorry I can't give it; but if you've got some lay of your own, you're in the wrong nest. This isn't the Sports Half-way House, you know."

"But see here. I'm in earnest about this, you know, and – " began Jimmy, and was interrupted with a curt "Sorry! Nothing doing!"

He might have argued the point had not there been another interruption and after a moment he left, shrugging his shoulders a trifle, and condemning himself as an ass for his failure to remember who this "Mabel" was. The failure rendered him doubly keen, for it was a part of his business training, self-imposed, to remember names and faces. He went to his own hotel and for an hour ran through the pages of his blue book. It was a peculiar creation of his own. It was strictly private. It contained details concerning customers. It was like a highly developed "Who's Who," diary in his trade and made interesting reading.

"Barclay, James W. 114z Chestnut, Philadelphia. Credit AAA1. Rather stiff. Likes to be Mistered. Teetotaler. Chief entertainment, Y. M. C. A. lectures. Home mission movements and prayer meetings. Hot stuff on religion. Show him the Zoo. P. S. Five children, all girls, oldest named Martha. P. S. On Oct. 14 youngest kid, Ruth, suffering from the flu. Note – don't forget mention it when next see him and express hope she has recovered satisfactorily.

"Barnes, Thomas R. 1627A La Salle St., Chicago. Credit fair. Called 'Tommy.' Red hot sport. Horseraces. Prize fights. Poker. (Go easy on stakes because unless careful will boost the comein.) Likes Pommery Sec. P. S. Likes chorus girls. P. S. Dangerous joshier when loaded. P. S. When he expresses desire to spend quiet evening skidoo. P. S. Oct. 27th – Bailed Tommy out for hitting a policeman. Policeman not much hurt, Tommy a wreck. P. S. Jan. 15th, sent bell boy 3 a. m. to my room to borrow fifty bucks. P. S. Jan 17 – Tommy paid the fifty. P. S. Jan 19, got Tommy off on Century Limited, and separated him from girl named Lulu. P. S. Feb 1, letter from Tommy thanking me for separating him from girl named Lulu.

"Coldwell, Henry J.; Mgr. Fountain Conf. Co., Savannah. Credit A1. Likes a decent show. No legs. Moony about wife and family when away from home. Spiritualist. Wife a blonde who likes to think she's reforming lower classes. Grandfather old cuss named Poindexter who was defeated for Congress by but seventeen votes. P. S. Nov. 5, great grandmother a Fairfax of which very proud. P. S. Dec. 7, great great grandmother a Lee. P. S. Jan. 15, great aunt a Washington. P. S. Feb. 4, great grandmother danced with Lafayette. Mar. 15, brought ugly old painting of joker in wig and stock at

second-hand shop Bowery and expressed to H. J. C., with note that was assured this was portrait of ancestor. Total cost \$1.15, charged exs. Mar. 23 – Enthusiastic letter thanks from J. H. C. in which says exactly like miniature portrait in possession his aunt and no doubt of its authenticity. Mar. 28, got biggest order ever received from J. H. C. Hope cr. man will O. K. it"

There were some names and records in this interesting book that dealt with employees. For instance:

"Bangs, Reginald, 1 R Mohawk St., Buffalo. AA1. Sentimental cuss. Quotes poetry. Thinks has artistic temperament. Not much business head. Place made a success by head clerk, Miss Norah Cahill, who runs it and him as well. Play Norah to win, for first, second, and place. P. S. Jan. 13, gifts and hot air wasted on Norah and no good. Got to have the goods and the prices. P. S. Mar. 4, Cahill nearly scalped me over seventeen cents difference in accts. LOOK OUT FOR THE LOCOMOTIVE when dealing with this Cahill person. P. S. Cahill can be influenced by clerk named Mary Mooney. \$1.50 Dr. Exs. flowers for Mooney."

In nearly all cases where clerks or counter girls had influence on orders, their names and foibles and identifications were carefully registered as they were learned; and these were scattered through as appurtenances to the different shops. "Mary Smith. Red-headed. Does hair up like a Hottentot. Jingles with bangles and is color blind"; or "Chief salesgirl Freda Isenheimer. Nose like prow of ship. Warts on her neck, grin like a cellar door, teeth like an old horse. Flaps hands when talks. Voice like saw mill and waddles like a duck lost on a desert." And "Jenny Gray. All peach. Goo-goo blue eyes. About thirteen hands high and chestnut in color. Well-gaited and has boss under thumb." But although Jimmy carefully read all these and pondered each, he was still uncertain regarding whither the name or place of the young lady he was to entertain at the horse show. And, the most annoying part of it all was that he, confirmed bachelor, suffered from an unwonted sense of liking for this same girl. Her conversation seemed to him peculiarly bright and entertaining. She looked so much more attractive than any other girl he had ever entertained. There was something about her face, and the line of her throat that he had discovered while surreptitiously studying her there in the half darkness of the theater that was so much more graceful, so much more refined, so much more beautiful than he had ever observed in any other girl. It began to seem difficult to believe that he could ever before have seen her, and yet failed to note such a combination of charms. He thought he must have been blind as a bat when he passed her by; but again he fell back on the excuse that a girl in a shop uniform was an entirely different appearing person from the same girl out on a holiday. He did not at all realize that his interest in this unidentified queen of chocolates was becoming less and less of a business nature until he finally blurted in desperation, "I don't give a cuss where she peddles the sweets; but by gosh! I've just got to learn her name and address because – Oh, hang it! Because!"

## CHAPTER III

Jimmy Gollop, like most commercial travelers of the first flight, not only knew how to wear clothes but what clothes to wear. And on this day of days paid particular care to his appearance. He rather anticipated that the candy girl would appear in some plain, tailormade gown. Her hair, one of her chief charms of personal appearance, was heavy and beautiful, and of a most baffling shade of color that shone brown in darker shadows and yet in full light glinted as if subtly suggesting gold. Jimmy, who had a natural sense for color, pondered over this and decided that the tailormade would be of navy blue and that therefore violets would be the correct thing in the flower line to show his appreciation.

"But how in the deuce am I to send them up to her hotel when I don't even know her name!" he thought.

However, he was sufficiently independent to buy the finest violets he could find and to appear at the hotel entrance with them in his hand. The young lady was not there. Jimmy tried to appear unconcerned, and for a time stood like a rather modern statue of "Cupid bearing flowers." Now and then he peered into the hotel lobby and it seemed to him that whenever he did so the human icicle behind the desk was glaring in his direction as if contemplating a call for the police, or sending a message to the Ladies' Protective Association for Attractive Young Females.

At last when he was becoming fidgety and consulting his watch at intervals of not longer than three minutes, the girl appeared.

"Well, in the name of common sense," she demanded, "why didn't you send your card up, or have the desk call me? I hope you're not in the habit of expecting young ladies to meet you on the corner. I waited and waited, and then was just about to –" She stopped at sight of his lugubrious face, relented, and laughed. "Never mind! Don't take it to heart, and – are those violets for me? You are a dear, after all! I love them." She took them from his outstretched hand and buried her face in them, whilst he, usually so nimble of tongue and ready of word, was striving to overcome this alarming confusion and embarrassment that rendered him about as quick of wit as a soft-shelled clam. In fact, he felt like a jelly fish save that he was twice as incompetent.

"You see," he began lamely, "I didn't quite know what to do. I was afraid that maybe your mother had objected to your going to the horse show, and –"

"Why, you're not afraid of her, are you? You never seemed so before. I thought – I thought you and she were rather good friends." There was a vague tinge of sarcasm in her words and tone but like a wobbly legged pup trying to catch a butterfly he mentally leaped at this offering and began cudgeling his memory in quest of women who ran chocolate shops. Could it be that she was the daughter of the widow Haynes who owned the Bon-Ton in Detroit? Impossible! The widow was not more than thirty. Maybe Mrs. Harris of Miami? No, if Mrs. Harris had a daughter she would have that unmistakable Southern peculiarity of speech. This girl was from somewhere farther north. It couldn't be that she was the daughter of Mrs. Schumann of Milwaukee? Heaven forbid! For Mrs. Schumann was so fat she shook like an unsupported pyramid of blanc-mange whenever she moved.

"I had hopes for you yesterday," a voice aroused him from his lapse. "You acted as if you could talk when you turned loose; but now you're back in your old hopeless form. Come on! Wake up! Oh, I forgot to tell you the great news. Like to hear it?"

"I like to hear you say anything," said Jimmy, hopelessly at her mercy and speaking the truth, and nothing but the truth so help him Bob! and glancing at her with that unmistakable sick-calf expression that seems to be the inevitable accomplishment of all lovers, and that the original Eve must have noticed in the eyes of Adam as he stood lolling around Eden in his red flannel underwear.

"Mamma got an invitation to spend the winter down in St. Augustine with the Charles K. Wilmarths, and she knows I hate them. She wanted to go because, as you know, she thinks she's not

at all well, and also because the Charles K. Wilmarths are rather swagger. Either because she wished to get rid of me, or because I raised such a fuss, she compromised. I'm to be allowed to stay here for the next four months and take painting lessons from Jorgensen. I intend to have a studio of my own. I'm to live at the Martha Putnam hotel, which, as you know, never, never allows a man farther through its doors than the waiting room. Happy? I'm so happy I could shout!"

"Then you've no longer any interest in the business?" inquired Jimmy, for the want of something better to say.

She looked out of the taxi-window for an instant, as if recalling something and then said, slowly, "Yes, to tell the truth I have. It means so much. I'll admit that I'm more or less a business person. I like to see things grow bigger and bigger, and sell more and more, and get to mean something. Not that the dollars and cents count so much, after a time, but because a name somehow becomes a standard. Yes, I shall miss what you call the business; but, after all, it will not stop because I'm not there to enthuse over it, and – " She interrupted herself with a half-suppressed laugh – "Mother doesn't look at things exactly as I do. She detests it and is ashamed of it, I have an ideal!"

Jimmy never quite idealized the chocolate trade before; but there was something rather fine in what she said, he thought. After all, maybe it was one form of Americanism that she had voiced, and it became a trifle nobler when he considered that it meant industry, energy, and honesty. To do something and do it well. To be proud of doing something well. To be proud that one wasn't a loafer or a drone, or a parasite on the body economic. He was striving to correlate all this when made aware that the taxi had stopped and that they were at their destination. He actually submitted to an overcharge of a half-dollar inflicted by the hatchet-faced brigand who had jerked his taxi-meter over with a bang before his fares had time to inspect it. And then, resolving to forget everything save the fact that they were entering the Horse Show, and that he was somehow treading in ether because he had found a girl who was different from all others, he became himself again.

"We're not so very late after all," he exclaimed as he glanced up at the big tower clock. "I thought I waited an hour for you. But, anyhow, here we are, and now for it!"

They sauntered in and he was proud to observe that many eyes were turned in the direction of his companion. It made him feel rather egotistical, for there were many girls there well worth looking at, and people don't always go to horse shows to look at horses. Jimmy forgot all about chocolates. Unconsciously he relapsed to his habitual self, and, inasmuch as most any one who is unassuming and entirely natural is entertaining, seemed to keep his companion happy.

"I like it all," she said, in an interval. "I like to look at those in the boxes who came here for nothing else than to be looked at. It makes them happy to see others looking at them. I suppose they must feel for the moment that they are as good as the horses. Some people will make mistakes of that sort, you know, and never learn the truth. And I like the horses for themselves. They are so unlike. So like people. Some of them are shy, some of them nervous, some of them conceited, and others are as self-satisfied as if already they had won the blue ribbons. Funny, isn't it, that I never suspected that you had any interest at all in them?"

"Well, you see," said Jimmy. "We never had much of a chance to understand really what either of us enjoys or dislikes before we met here. It makes a lot of difference when, how and where people meet. I suppose you'll laugh if I tell you when I first fell in love, because it was with a horse. Honestly, it was! I'm in earnest about it. Things didn't come any too easy around our house – I mean Maw's and mine – after my father died. Somehow his death sort of changed me from a boy into a man, and, – well, I just couldn't think of enough ways to keep her from wanting anything. I felt as if I'd have to be a man big enough to fill my father's place and to take care of her. There wasn't a way to make a penny that I didn't consider just on her account. And I got a job after school hours delivering stuff for a grocery store, down in our town. I had to care for and drive a poor old feller with the string halt, and spavins, and I used to wonder why I couldn't get his tail to grow longer. Honestly, I thought all horses' tails were about eight inches long until an old horse trader looked my friend over one day

and said, 'Hello! That nag's been docked sometime! He didn't always pull a grocery cart. Shouldn't wonder if there'd been some class and pedigree to him sometime.' Then he had the impertinence to stick his dirty fingers into my friend's mouth and hoist his upper lip and say, 'Methusalem was old, but this plug could make him look like a suckling,' I remember that I was angry, and that I wished that my friend had bitten him. I'd have done it myself if I had been big enough, or a horse. You see, I was proud of that horse, and liked him, and he loved me. As a joke the hostlers down at the boarding stable where we kept him called him Bovolarapus; but I called him Bo for short, because it didn't seem fair that we shouldn't be familiar with each other. I'm sure he thought of me as Jim for short; so I called him Bo. He used to take a kick at anybody else who came near him, but I could put a hot iron on his poor old heels without a single vicious jerk from him. He bit nearly everyone who got too close or too curious, but he'd put his lips up to my cheek and kiss me when something had hurt my feelings, and I'd get into some quiet lane and tell him all about it – sometimes with my arms around his tired old neck! I tell you he was mighty comforting to me when everything went wrong. You won't believe it, but I used to fancy that sometimes he tried to whisper into my ear and that he said, 'Take it quietly, boy! Just do the best you can. I know that sometimes the hill is terribly hard to climb, and bitterly long, but somewhere there is always a top. Don't think of the load, the whip, or the hill, but keep thinking, always, of what it's like on top. Many times they'll hurt you when you're doing your best, because they're cruel, or don't understand. But most of those who drive you – and someone or something must drive you as long as you live, – don't really mean to be hard. It's merely because they don't understand. Sometimes you'll be very tired, and out of breath, and the sweat of hard work will drip and trickle from your ears down over your eyes, and you'll think that another yard is beyond all you can do. But keep on! Stick it! You can always do a little more than you think you can if you've the courage to try. And there's always a top to every hill, lad! It's only up there that you can breathe, and that the load is light, and that there is rest!'"

A band that had been playing off up in the balcony at the far end stopped, as if waiting for the next event, and abruptly aware that he had said so much, and surprised by his own unmeasured loquacity, he, too, stopped, abashed, and for the first time in his speech looked at her and met her eyes. They were soft, filled with wonder, absorbed. He could not have defined why he was so swiftly ashamed of thus openly flouting that boyhood heart of his upon his sleeve. He could not have explained what strange lapse had overpowered him to thus unbosom long forgotten things. He looked away from her toward the entrance. Men were bringing tall hurdles outward to place them in the arena. The jumpers were coming for exhibit.

"But," she insisted breathlessly, leaning toward him, and her hushed voice sounding distinct from all the murmur surrounding them, "Tell me the rest of it!"

"Tell you the rest of it? There's nothing more to tell! Nothing except – except –" He hesitated, then laughed as if in self-derision. "My friend fell down one day, half way up a hill. The top was there, just above him. The top for which he had so valiantly tried. I, a boy, his only friend, got his tired old head up on my knees and cried. A policeman came and shook his head and went away and phoned. A vet came and said, 'The best thing to do is to shoot him,' and then the policeman pulled out a gun, and went toward Bo's head and bent over the brave and tired old eyes of my friend, and – I fought! Fought so hard that they had to give us a chance, Bo and me. They laughed, but the vet phoned my employers and what they said, I never knew; but I do know that they gave me my friend, and that about midnight I got him home, weak and tottering, and put him out in our back garden, and told Maw all about it. I thought she would understand and she did. She understands everything. Everything! No one else ever could. And so – um-m-mh! Bovolarapus was the first horse I ever owned and the last. We had to go without some few things, Maw and I, to pay pasturage for a year or two until he died, but it doesn't at all matter now. You see he was a sort of inspiration to me because he told me so many things, and – that somewhere, a long way I fear from where I've ever reached, there's a top to the hill. He taught me that be we driver or driven there's a heart of things that has to be learned. That the driver may learn

from the driven and that there is always the promise that the driven may drive. And so may God pity the man who thinks that he can drive his world alone, because, as far as I can dope it out, everything in life is made up of give if you would take, and take only when you give. I may be wrong. One never knows. That's the pity of it all. But that's the way it looks to me, and – that's the way communing with a poor old horse taught me, the only game I try to play. It's only when we've lost the true sense of things that we say 'Life's nothing but a horse show – after all!'"

Staring at the arena, and bringing his thoughts back to their surroundings, he waited for her to speak; but for the moment they seemed fixed in a little oasis of silence, embodying but them alone. It was the girl who broke the peculiar stillness.

"I – I – never thought you were like that," she said, almost as if soliloquizing. "I thought you were out for yourself and nothing else! I didn't in the least think you could ever feel anything beyond yourself. You humiliate me – in a way – my stupidity! And I feel like apologizing for my past unkindness, because I didn't; as you say – because I didn't at all understand!"

He couldn't quite grasp it all, although her every word had been audible and distinct. To what did she refer? "Past unkindness?" He strove to think when she had been unkind to him and where. The baffling sense of having forgotten something he should have remembered, again disturbed him and drove him to jest.

"Don't say that!" he cried in pretended alarm. "You make me feel like the coon who was sentenced for stealing chickens when the judge said, 'You are incorrigible. This is the twenty-seventh time we've had you up for this heinous, fearsome crime. But now you have gone the limit! You stole two black hens on the night of April seventh.' Then he stopped and glared at the nigger who leaned over the dock rail, hopefully, yet frightened, and said, 'I think you should be sentenced to ninety-nine years in the penitentiary!' And the nigger thought it over and looked at the judge, then around the court and gasped, and said, 'Jedge, sah! I thank my Gawd them chickens was black. It must have been the color, sah, that made you so kind, because I reckon if they'd been white you'd have sure had me hanged!'"

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