

***DAVID GRAHAM
PHILLIPS***



***THE SECOND
GENERATION***

David Graham Phillips

The Second Generation

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Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



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CHAPTER I

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"PUT YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER!"

In six minutes the noon whistle would blow. But the workmen—the seven hundred in the Ranger-Whitney flour mills, the two hundred and fifty in the Ranger-Whitney cooperage adjoining—were, every man and boy of them, as hard at it as if the dinner rest were hours away. On the threshold of the long room where several scores of filled barrels were being headed and stamped there suddenly appeared a huge figure, tall and broad and solid, clad in a working suit originally gray but now white with the flour dust that saturated the air, and coated walls and windows both within and without. At once each of the ninety-seven men and boys was aware of that presence and unconsciously showed it by putting on extra "steam." With swinging step the big figure crossed the packing room. The gray-white face held straight ahead, but the keen blue eyes paused upon each worker and each task. And every "hand" in those two great factories knew how all-seeing that glance was—critical, but just; exacting, but encouraging. All-seeing, in this instance, did not mean merely fault-seeing.

Hiram Ranger, manufacturing partner and controlling owner of the Ranger-Whitney Company of St. Christopher

and Chicago, went on into the cooperage, leaving energy behind him, rousing it before him. Many times, each working day, between seven in the morning and six at night, he made the tour of those two establishments. A miller by inheritance and training, he had learned the cooper's trade like any journeyman, when he decided that the company should manufacture its own barrels. He was not a rich man who was a manufacturer; he was a manufacturer who was incidentally rich—one who made of his business a vocation. He had no theories on the dignity of labor; he simply exemplified it, and would have been amazed, and amused or angered according to his mood, had it been suggested to him that useful labor is not as necessary and continuous a part of life as breathing. He did not speculate and talk about ideals; he lived them, incessantly and unconsciously. The talker of ideals and the liver of ideals get echo and response, each after his kind—the talker, in the empty noise of applause; the liver, in the silent spread of the area of achievement.

A moment after Hiram roused the packing room of the flour mill with the master's eye, he was in the cooperage, the center of a group round one of the hooping machines. It had got out of gear, and the workman had bungled in shutting off power; the result was chaos that threatened to stop the whole department for the rest of the day. Ranger brushed away the wrangling tinkers and examined the machine. After grasping the problem in all its details, he threw himself flat upon his face, crawled under the machine, and called for a light. A moment later his voice issued again, in a call for a hammer. Several minutes of sharp

hammering; then the mass of iron began to heave. It rose at the upward pressure of Ranger's powerful arms and legs, shoulders and back; it crashed over on its side; he stood up and, without pause or outward sign of his exertion of enormous strength, set about adjusting the gearing to action, with the broken machinery cut out. "And he past sixty!" muttered one workman to another, as a murmur of applause ran round the admiring circle. Clearly Hiram Ranger was master there not by reason of money but because he was first in brain and in brawn; not because he could hire but because he could direct and do.

In the front rank of the ring of on-looking workmen stood a young man, tall as himself and like him in the outline of his strong features, especially like him in the fine curve of the prominent nose. But in dress and manner this young man was the opposite of the master workman now facing him in the dust and sweat of toil. He wore a fashionable suit of light gray tweed, a water-woven Panama with a wine-colored ribbon, a wine-colored scarf; several inches of wine-colored socks showed below his high-rolled, carefully creased trousers. There was a seal ring on the little finger of the left of a pair of large hands strong with the symmetrical strength which is got only at "polite" or useless exercise. Resting lightly between his lips was a big, expensive-looking Egyptian cigarette; the mingled odor of that and a delicate cologne scented the air. With a breeziness which a careful observer of the niceties of manner might have recognized as a disguise of nervousness, the young man advanced, extending his right hand.

"Hello, father!" said he, "I came to bring you home to lunch."

The master workman did not take the offered hand. After a quick glance of pride and pleasure which no father could have denied so manly and handsome a son, he eyed the young man with a look that bit into every one of his fashionable details. Presently he lifted his arm and pointed. The son followed the direction of that long, strong, useful-looking forefinger, until his gaze rested upon a sign: "No Smoking"—big, black letters on a white background.

"Beg pardon," he stammered, flushing and throwing away the cigarette.

The father went to the smoking butt and set his foot upon it. The son's face became crimson; he had flung the cigarette among the shavings which littered the floor. "The scientists say a fire can't be lighted from burning tobacco," he said, with a vigorous effort to repair the rent in his surface of easy assurance.

The old man—if that adjective can be justly applied to one who had such strength and energy as his—made no reply. He strode toward the door, the son following, acute to the grins and winks the workmen were exchanging behind his back. The father opened the shut street door of the cooperage, and, when the son came up, pointed to the big, white letters: "No Admittance. Apply at the Office."

"How did you get in here?" he asked.

"I called in at the window and ordered one of the men to open the door," explained the son.

"Ordered." The father merely repeated the word.

"Requested, then," said the son, feeling that he was displaying praiseworthy patience with "the governor's" eccentricities.

"Which workman?"

The son indicated a man who was taking a dinner pail from under a bench at the nearest window. The father called to him: "Jerry!" Jerry came quickly.

"Why did you let this young—young *gentleman* in among us?"

"I saw it was Mr. Arthur," began Jerry.

"Then you saw it was not anyone who has any business here. Who gave you authority to suspend the rules of this factory?"

"Don't, father!" protested Arthur. "You certainly can't blame him. He knew I'd make trouble if he didn't obey."

"He knew nothing of the sort," replied Hiram Ranger. "I haven't been dealing with men for fifty years—However, next time you'll know what to do, Jerry."

"He warned me it was against the rules," interjected Arthur.

A triumphant smile gleamed in the father's eyes at this vindication of the discipline of the mills. "Then he knew he was doing wrong. He must be fined. You can pay the fine, young *gentleman*—if you wish."

"Certainly," murmured Arthur. "And now, let's go to lunch."

"To dinner," corrected the father; "your mother and I have dinner in the middle of the day, not lunch."

"To dinner, then. Anything you please, pa, only let's go."

When they were at the office and the father was about to enter the inner room to change his clothes, he wheeled and said: "Why ain't you at Harvard, passing your examinations?"

Arthur's hands contracted and his eyes shifted; in a tone to which repression gave a seeming lightness, he announced: "The exams, are over. I've been plucked."

The slang was new to Hiram Ranger, but he understood. In important matters his fixed habit was never to speak until he had thought well; without a word he turned and, with a heaviness that was new in his movements, went into the dressing room. The young man drew a cautious but profound breath of relief—the confession he had been dreading was over; his father knew the worst. "If the governor only knew the world better," he said to himself, "he'd know that at every college the best fellows always skate along the edge of the thin ice. But he doesn't, and so he thinks he's disgraced." He lit another cigarette by way of consolation and clarification.

When the father reappeared, dressed for the street, he was apparently unconscious of the cigarette. They walked home in silence—a striking-looking pair, with their great similar forms and their handsome similar faces, typical impersonations of the first generation that is sowing in labor, and the second generation that is reaping in idleness.

"Oh!" exclaimed Arthur, as they entered the Ranger place and began to ascend the stone walk through the lawns sloping down from the big, substantial-looking, creeper-clad house. "I stopped at Cleveland half a day, on the way West, and brought Adelaide along." He said this

with elaborate carelessness; in fact, he had begged her to come that she might once more take her familiar and highly successful part of buffer between him and his father's displeasure.

The father's head lifted, and the cloud over his face also. "How is she?" he asked. "Bang up!" answered Arthur. "She's the sort of a sister a man's proud of—looks and style, and the gait of a thoroughbred." He interrupted himself with a laugh. "There she is, now!" he exclaimed.

This was caused by the appearance, in the open front doors, of a strange creature with a bright pink ribbon arranged as a sort of cockade around and above its left ear—a brown, hairy, unclean-looking thing that gazed with human inquisitiveness at the approaching figures. As the elder Ranger drew down his eyebrows the creature gave a squeak of alarm and, dropping from a sitting position to all fours, wheeled and shambled swiftly along the wide hall, walking human fashion with its hind feet, dog fashion with its fore feet or arms.

At first sight of this apparition Ranger halted. He stared with an expression so astounded that Arthur laughed outright.

"What was that?" he now demanded.

"Simeon," replied Arthur. "Del has taken on a monk. It's the latest fad."

"Oh!" ejaculated Ranger. "Simeon."

"She named it after grandfather—and there *is* a—" Arthur stopped short. He remembered that "Simeon" was his father's father; perhaps his father might not see the joke. "That is," he explained, "she was looking for a name, and I

thought of 'simian,' naturally, and that, of course, suggested 'Simeon'—and—"

"That'll do," said Hiram, in a tone of ominous calm which his family knew was the signal that a subject must be dropped.

Now there was a quick *froufrou* of skirts, and from the sitting room to the left darted a handsome, fair girl of nineteen, beautifully dressed in a gray summer silk with simple but effectively placed bands of pink embroidery on blouse and skirt. As she bounded down the steps and into her father's arms her flying skirts revealed a pair of long, narrow feet in stylish gray shoes and gray silk stockings exactly matching the rest of her costume. "Daddy! Daddy!" she cried.

His arms were trembling as they clasped her—were trembling with the emotion that surged into her eyes in the more obvious but less significant form of tears. "Glad to see you, Delia," was all he said.

She put her slim white forefinger on his lips.

He smiled. "Oh! I forgot. You're Adelaide, of course, since you've grown up."

"Why call me out of my name?" she demanded, gayly. "You should have christened me Delia if you had wanted me named that."

"I'll try to remember, next time," he said, meekly. His gray eyes were dancing and twinkling like sunbeams pouring from breaches in a spent storm-cloud; there was an eloquence of pleasure far beyond laughter's in the rare, infrequent eye smiles from his sober, strong face.

Now there was a squeaking and chattering behind them. Adelaide whirled free of her father's arms and caught up the monkey. "Put out your hand, sir," said she, and she kissed him. Her father shuddered, so awful was the contrast between the wizened, dirty-brown face and her roselike skin and fresh fairness. "Put out your hand and bow, sir," she went on. "This is Mr. Hiram Ranger, Mr. Simeon. Mr. Simeon, Mr. Ranger; Mr. Ranger, Mr. Simeon."

Hiram, wondering at his own weakness, awkwardly took the paw so uncannily like a mummied hand. "What did you do this for, Adelaide?" said he, in a tone of mild remonstrance where he had intended to be firm.

"He's so fascinating, I couldn't resist. He's so wonderfully human—"

"That's it," said her father; "so—so—"

"Loathsomely human," interjected Arthur.

"Loathsome," said the father.

"That impression soon wears off," assured Adelaide, "and he's just like a human being as company. I'd be bored to death if I didn't have him. He gives me an occupation."

At this the cloud settled on Ranger's face again—a cloud of sadness. An occupation!

Simeon hid his face in Adelaide's shoulder and began to whimper. She patted him softly. "How can you be so cruel?" she reproached her father. "He has feelings almost like a human being."

Ranger winced. Had the daughter not been so busy consoling her unhappy pet, the father's expression might have suggested to her that there was, not distant from her, a being who had feelings, not almost, but quite human, and

who might afford an occupation for an occupation-hunting young woman which might make love and care for a monkey superfluous. But he said nothing. He noted that the monkey's ribbon exactly matched the embroidery on Adelaide's dress.

"If he were a dog or a cat, you wouldn't mind," she went on.

True enough! Clearly, he was unreasonable with her.

"Do you want me to send him away?"

"I'll get used to him, I reckon," replied Hiram, adding, with a faint gleam of sarcasm, "I've got used to a great many things these last few years."

They went silently into the house, Adelaide and Arthur feeling that their father had quite unreasonably put a damper upon their spirits—a feeling which he himself had. He felt that he was right, and he was puzzled to find himself, even in his own mind, in the wrong.

"He's hopelessly old-fashioned!" murmured Arthur to his sister.

"Yes, but *such* a dear," murmured Adelaide.

"No wonder *you* say that!" was his retort. "You wind him round your finger."

In the sitting room—the "back parlor"—Mrs. Ranger descended upon them from the direction of the kitchen. Ellen was dressed for work; her old gingham, for all its neatness, was in as sharp contrast to her daughter's garb of the lady of leisure as were Hiram's mill clothes to his son's "London latest." "It's almost half-past twelve," she said. "Dinner's been ready more than half an hour. Mary's furious,

and it's hard enough to keep servants in this town since the canning factories started."

Adelaide and Arthur laughed; Hiram smiled. They were all thoroughly familiar with that canning-factory theme. It constituted the chief feature of the servant problem in Saint X, as everybody called St. Christopher; and the servant problem there, as everywhere else, was the chief feature of domestic economy. As Mrs. Ranger's mind was concentrated upon her household, the canning factories were under fire from her early and late, in season and out of season.

"And she's got to wait on the table, too," continued Ellen, too interested in reviewing her troubles to mind the amusement of the rest of the family.

"Why, where's the new girl Jarvis brought you?" asked Hiram.

"She came from way back in the country, and, when she set the table, she fixed five places. 'There's only four of us, Barbara,' said I. 'Yes, Mrs. Ranger,' says she, 'four and me.' 'But how're you going to wait on the table and sit with us?' says I, very kindly, for I step mighty soft with those people. 'Oh, I don't mind bouncin' up and down,' says she; 'I can chew as I walk round.' When I explained, she up and left in a huff. 'I'm as good as you are, Mrs. Ranger, I'd have you know,' she said, as she was going, just to set Mary afire; 'my father's an independent farmer, and I don't have to live out. I just thought I'd like to visit in town, and I'd heard your folks well spoke of. I'll get a place in the canning factory!' I wasn't sorry to have her go. You ought to have seen the way she set the table!"

"We'll have to get servants from the East," said Arthur. "They know their place a little better there. We can get some English that have just come over. They're the best—thoroughly respectful."

He did not see the glance his father shot at him from under his heavy eyebrows. But Adelaide did—she was expecting it. "Don't talk like a cad, Artie!" she said. "You know you don't think that way."

"Oh, of course, I don't admire that spirit—or lack of it," he replied.

"But—what are you going to do? It's the flunkies or the Barbaras and Marys—or doing our own work."

To Hiram Ranger that seemed unanswerable, and his resentment against his son for expressing ideas for which he had utter contempt seemed unreasonable. Again reason put him in the wrong, though instinct was insisting that he was in the right.

"It's a pity people aren't contented in 'the station to which God has called them,' as the English prayer book says," continued Arthur, not catching sensitive Adelaide's warning frown.

"If your mother and I had been content," said Hiram, "you and Delia would be looking for places in the canning factory." The remark was doubly startling—for the repressed energy of its sarcasm, and because, as a rule, Hiram never joined in the discussions in the family circle.

They were at the table, all except Mrs. Ranger. She had disappeared in the direction of the kitchen and presently reappeared bearing a soup tureen, which she set down

before her husband. "I don't dare ask Mary to wait on the table," said she. "If I did, she's just in the humor to up and light out, too; and your mother's got no hankering for hanging over a hot stove in this weather."

She transferred the pile of soup plates from the sideboard and seated herself. Her husband poured the soup, and the plates were passed from hand to hand until all were served. "If the Sandyses could see us now, Del," said Arthur.

"Or the Whitneys," suggested Adelaide, and both laughed as people laugh when they think the joke, or the best part of it, is a secret between themselves.

Nothing more was said until the soup was finished and Mrs. Ranger rose and began to remove the dishes. Adelaide, gazing at the table, her thoughts far away, became uneasy, stirred, looked up; she saw that the cause of her uneasiness was the eyes of her father fixed steadily upon her in a look which she could not immediately interpret. When he saw that he had her attention, he glanced significantly toward her mother, waiting upon them. "If the Sandyses or the Whitneys could see us *now!*" he said.

She reddened, pushed back her chair, and sprang up. "Oh, I never thought!" she exclaimed. "Sit down, mother, and let *me* do that. You and father have got us into awful bad ways, always indulging us and waiting on us."

"You let me alone," replied her mother. "I'm used to it. I did my own work for fifteen years after we were married, and I'd have been doing it yet if your father hadn't just gone out and got a girl and brought her in and set her to work. No; sit down, Del. You don't know anything about work. I didn't bring you up to be a household drudge."

But Del was on her way to the kitchen, whence she presently reappeared with a platter and a vegetable dish. Down the front of her skirt was a streak of grease. "There!" exclaimed Mrs. Ranger, coloring high with exasperation, "your dress is spoiled! I don't believe I can take it out of that kind of goods without leaving a spot. Hiram, I do wish you wouldn't meddle with the children! It seems to me you've got enough to do to 'tend your own affairs at the mill."

This was unanswerable, or so it seemed to her husband. Once more he felt in the wrong, when he knew that, somehow, he was in the right.

But Adelaide was laughing and going forward gracefully with her duties as waitress. "It's nothing," she said; "the stain will come out; and, if it doesn't, there's no harm done. The dress is an old thing. I've worn it until everybody's sick of the sight of it."

Mrs. Ranger now took her turn at looking disapproval. She exclaimed: "Why, the dress is as good as new; much too good to travel in. You ought to have worn a linen duster over it on the train."

At this even Hiram showed keen amusement, and Mrs. Ranger herself joined in the laugh. "Well, it was a good, sensible fashion, anyhow," said she.

Instead of hurrying through dinner to get back to his work with the one o'clock whistle, Hiram Ranger lingered on, much to the astonishment of his family. When the faint sound of the whistles of the distant factories was borne to them through the open windows, Mrs. Ranger cried, "You'll be late, father."

"I'm in no hurry to-day," said Ranger, rousing from the seeming abstraction in which he passed most of his time with his assembled family. After dinner he seated himself on the front porch. Adelaide came up behind and put her arm round his neck. "You're not feeling well, daddy?"

"Not extra," he answered. "But it's nothing to bother about. I thought I'd rest a few minutes." He patted her in shy expression of gratitude for her little attention. It is not strange that Del overvalued the merit of these trivial attentions of hers when they were valued thus high by her father, who longed for proofs of affection and, because of his shyness and silence, got few.

"Hey, Del! Hurry up! Get into your hat and dust-coat!" was now heard, in

Arthur's voice, from the drive to the left of the lawns.

Hiram's glance shifted to the direction of the sound. Arthur was perched high in a dogcart to which were attached two horses, one before the other. Adelaide did not like to leave her father with that expression on his face, but after a brief hesitation she went into the house. Hiram advanced slowly across the lawn toward the tandem. When he had inspected it in detail, at close range, he said: "Where'd you get it, young gentleman?" Again there was stress on the "gentleman."

"Oh, I've had it at Harvard several months," he replied carelessly. "I shipped it on. I sold the horses—got a smashing good price for 'em. Yours ain't used to tandem, but I guess I can manage 'em."

"That style of hitching's new to these parts," continued Hiram.

Arthur felt the queerness of his father's tone. "Two, side by side, or two, one in front of the other—where's the difference?"

True, reflected Hiram. He was wrong again—yet again unconvinced. Certainly the handsome son, so smartly gotten up, seated in this smart trap, did look attractive—but somehow not as he would have had *his* son look. Adelaide came; he helped her to the lower seat. As he watched them dash away, as fine-looking a pair of young people as ever gladdened a father's eye, this father's heart lifted with pride—but sank again. Everything *seemed* all right; why, then, did everything *feel* all wrong?

"I'm not well to-day," he muttered. He returned to the porch, walking heavily. In body and in mind he felt listless. There seemed to be something or some one inside him—a newcomer—aloof from all that he had regarded as himself—aloof from his family, from his work, from his own personality—an outsider, studying the whole perplexedly and gloomily.

As he was leaving the gate a truck entered the drive. It was loaded with trunks—his son's and his daughter's baggage on the way from the station. Hiram paused and counted the boxes—five huge trunks—Adelaide's beyond doubt; four smaller ones, six of steamer size and thereabouts—profuse and elegant Arthur's profuse and elegant array of canvas and leather. This mass of superfluity seemed to add itself to his burden. He recalled what his wife had once said when he hesitated over some new extravagance of the children's: "What'd we toil and save for, unless to give them a better time than we had? What's the

use of our having money if they can't enjoy it?" A "better time," "enjoy"—they sounded all right, but were they *really* all right? Was this really a "better time"?—really enjoyment? Were his and his wife's life all wrong, except as they had contributed to this new life of thoughtless spending and useless activity and vanity and splurge?

Instead of going toward the factories, he turned east and presently out of Jefferson Street into Elm. He paused at a two-story brick house painted brown, with a small but brilliant and tasteful garden in front and down either side. To the right of the door was an unobtrusive black-and-gold sign bearing the words "Ferdinand Schulze, M.D." He rang, was admitted by a pretty, plump, Saxon-blond young woman—the doctor's younger daughter and housekeeper. She looked freshly clean and wholesome—and so useful! Hiram's eyes rested upon her approvingly; and often afterwards his thoughts returned to her, lingering upon her and his own daughter in that sort of vague comparisons which we would not entertain were we aware of them.

Dr. Schulze was the most distinguished—indeed, the only distinguished—physician in Saint X. He was a short, stout, grizzled, spectacled man, with a nose like a scarlet button and a mouth like a buttonhole; in speech he was abrupt, and, on the slightest pretext or no pretext at all, sharp; he hid a warm sympathy for human nature, especially for its weaknesses, behind an uncompromising candor which he regarded as the duty of the man of science toward a vain and deluded race that knew little and learned reluctantly. A man is either better or worse than the manner he chooses for purposes of conciliating or defying the world. Dr. Schulze

was better, as much better as his mind was superior to his body. He and his motherless daughters were "not in it" socially. Saint X was not quite certain whether it shunned them or they it. His services were sought only in extremities, partly because he would lie to his patients neither when he knew what ailed them nor when he did not, and partly because he was a militant infidel. He lost no opportunity to attack religion in all its forms; and his two daughters let no opportunity escape to show that they stood with their father, whom they adored, and who had brought them up with his heart. It was Dr. Schulze's furious unbelief, investing him with a certain suggestion of Satan-got intelligence, that attracted Saint X to him in serious illnesses—somewhat as the Christian princes of mediaeval Europe tolerated and believed in the Jew physicians. Saint X was only just reaching the stage at which it could listen to "higher criticism" without dread lest the talk should be interrupted by a bolt from "special Providence"; the fact that Schulze lived on, believing and talking as he did, could be explained only as miraculous and mysterious forbearance in which Satan must somehow have direct part.

"I didn't expect to see *you* for many a year yet," said Schulze, as

Hiram, standing, faced him sitting at his desk.

The master workman grew still more pallid as he heard the thought that weighted him in secret thus put into words. "I have never had a doctor before in my life," said he. "My prescription has been, when you feel badly stop eating and work harder."

"Starve and sweat—none better," said Schulze. "Well, why do you come here to-day?"

"This morning I lifted a rather heavy weight. I've felt a kind of tiredness ever since, and a pain in the lower part of my back—pretty bad. I can't understand it."

"But I can—that's my business. Take off your clothes and stretch yourself on this chair. Call me when you're ready."

Schulze withdrew into what smelled like a laboratory. Hiram could hear him rattling glass against glass and metal, could smell the fumes of uncorked bottles of acids. When he called, Schulze reappeared, disposed instruments and tubes upon a table. "I never ask my patients questions," he said, as he began to examine Hiram's chest. "I lay 'em out here and go over 'em inch by inch. I find all the weak spots, both those that are crying out and those worse ones that don't. I never ask a man what's the matter; I tell him. And my patients, and all the fools in this town, think I'm in league with the devil. A doctor who finds out what's the matter with a man Providence is trying to lay in the grave—what can it be but the devil?"

He had reached his subject; as he worked he talked it—religion, its folly, its silliness, its cruelty, its ignorance, its viciousness. Hiram listened without hearing; he was absorbed in observing the diagnosis. He knew nothing of medicine, but he did know good workmanship. As the physician worked, his admiration and confidence grew. He began to feel better—not physically better, but that mental relief which a courageous man feels when the peril he is facing is stripped of the mystery that made it a terror. After

perhaps three quarters of an hour, Schulze withdrew to the laboratory, saying: "That's all. You may dress."

Hiram dressed, seated himself. By chance he was opposite a huge image from the Orient, a hideous, twisted thing with a countenance of sardonic sagacity. As he looked he began to see perverse, insidious resemblances to the physician himself. When Schulze reappeared and busied himself writing, he looked from the stone face to the face of flesh with fascinated repulsion—the man and the "familiar" were so ghastly alike. Then he suddenly understood that this was a quaint double jest of the eccentric physician's—his grim fling at his lack of physical charm, his ironic jeer at the superstitions of Saint X.

"There!" said Schulze, looking up. "That's the best I can do for you."

"What's the matter with me?"

"You wouldn't know if I told you."

"Is it serious?"

"In this world everything is serious—and nothing."

"Will I die?"

Schulze slowly surveyed all Hiram's outward signs of majesty that had been denied his own majestic intellect, noted the tremendous figure, the shoulders, the forehead, the massive brow and nose and chin—an *ensemble* of unabused power, the handiwork of Nature at her best, a creation worth while, worth preserving intact and immortal.

"Yes," he answered, with satiric bitterness; "you will have to die, and rot, just like the rest of us."

"Tell me!" Hiram commanded. "Will I die soon?"

Schulze reflected, rubbing his red-button nose with his stubby fingers.

When he spoke, his voice had a sad gentleness. "You can bear hearing it.

You have the right to know." He leaned back, paused, said in a low tone:

"Put your house in order, Mr. Ranger."

Hiram's steadfast gray eyes met bravely the eyes of the man who had just read him his death warrant. A long pause; then Hiram said "Thank you," in his quiet, calm way.

He took the prescriptions, went out into the street. It looked strange to him; he felt like a stranger in that town where he had spent half a century—felt like a temporary tenant of that vast, strong body of his which until now had seemed himself. And he—or was it the stranger within him?—kept repeating: "Put your house in order. Put your house in order."

CHAPTER II

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OF SOMEBODIES AND NOBODIES

At the second turning Arthur rounded the tandem out of Jefferson Street into Willow with a skill that delighted both him and his sister. "But why go that way?" said she. "Why not through Monroe street? I'm sure the horses would behave."

"Better not risk it," replied Arthur, showing that he, too, had had, but had rejected, the temptation to parade the crowded part of town. "Even if the horses didn't act up, the people might, they're such jays."

Adelaide's estimate of what she and her brother had acquired in the East was as high as was his, and she had the same unflattering opinion of those who lacked it. But it ruffled her to hear him call the home folks jays—just as it would have ruffled him had she been the one to make the slighting remark. "If you invite people's opinion," said she, "you've no right to sneer at them because they don't say what you wanted."

"But I'm not driving for show if *you* are," he retorted, with a testiness that was confession.

"Don't be silly," was her answer. "You know you wouldn't take all this trouble on a desert island."

"Of course not," he admitted, "but I don't care for the opinion of any but those capable of appreciating."

"And those capable of appreciating are only those who approve," teased

Adelaide. "Why drive tandem among these 'jays?'"

"To keep my hand in," replied he; and his adroit escape restored his good humor.

"I wish I were as free from vanity as you are, Arthur, dear," said she.

"You're just as fond of making a sensation as I am," replied he. "And, my eye, Del! but you *do* know how." This with an admiring glance at her most becoming hat with its great, gracefully draped *chiffon* veil, and at her dazzling white dust-coat with its deep blue facings that matched her eyes.

She laughed. "Just wait till you see my new dresses—and hats."

"Another shock for your poor father."

"Shock of joy."

"Yes," assented Arthur, rather glumly; "he'll take anything off you.

But when I—"

"It's no compliment to me," she cut in, the prompter to admit the truth because it would make him feel better. "He thinks I'm 'only a woman,' fit for nothing but to look pretty as long as I'm a girl, and then to devote myself to a husband and children, without any life or even ideas of my own."

"Mother always seems cheerful enough," said Arthur. His content with the changed conditions which the prosperity and easy-going generosity of the elder generation were

making for the younger generation ended at his own sex. The new woman—idle and frivolous, ignorant of all useful things, fit only for the show side of life and caring only for it, discontented with everybody but her own selfish self—Arthur had a reputation among his friends for his gloomy view of the American woman and for his courage in expressing it.

"You are *so* narrow-minded, Artie!" his sister exclaimed impatiently. "Mother was brought up very differently from the way she and father have brought me up—"

"Have let you bring yourself up."

"No matter; I *am* different."

"But what would you do? What can a woman do?"

"I don't know," she admitted. "But I *do* know I hate a humdrum life."

There was the glint of the Ranger will in her eyes as she added:

"Furthermore, I shan't stand for it."

He looked at her enviously. "You'll be free in another year," he said. "You and Ross Whitney will marry, and you'll have a big house in Chicago and can do what you please and go where you please."

"Not if Ross should turn out to be the sort of man you are."

He laughed. "I can see Ross—or any man—trying to manage *you*! You've got too much of father in you."

"But I'll be dependent until—" Adelaide paused, then added a satisfactorily vague, "for a long time. Father won't give me anything. How furious he'd be at the very suggestion of dowry. Parents out here don't appreciate that

conditions have changed and that it's necessary nowadays for a woman to be independent of her husband."

Arthur compressed his lips, to help him refrain from comment. But he felt so strongly on the subject that he couldn't let her remarks pass unchallenged. "I don't know about that, Del," he said. "It depends on the woman. Personally, I'd hate to be married to a woman I couldn't control if necessary."

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," cried Del, indignant. "Is *that* your idea of control—to make a woman mercenary and hypocritical? You'd better change your way of thinking if you don't want Janet to be very unhappy, and yourself, too."

"That sounds well," he retorted, "but you know better. Take our case, for instance. Is it altogether love and affection that make us so cautious about offending father?"

"Speak for yourself," said Adelaide. "*I'm* not cautious."

"Do try to argue fair, even if you are a woman. You're as cautious in your way as I am in mine."

Adelaide felt that he was offended, and justly. "I didn't mean quite what I said, Artie. You *are* cautious, in a way, and sometimes. But often you're reckless. I'm frightened every once in a while by it, and I'm haunted by the dread that there'll be a collision between father and you. You're so much alike, and you understand each other less and less, all the time."

After a silence Arthur said, thoughtfully: "I think I understand him. There are two distinct persons inside of me. There's the one that was made by inheritance and by my surroundings as a boy—the one that's like him, the one

that enables me to understand him. Then, there's this other that's been made since—in the East, and going round among people that either never knew the sort of life we had as children or have grown away from it. The problem is how to reconcile those two persons so that they'll stop wrangling and shaming each other. That's *my* problem, I mean. Father's problem—He doesn't know he has one. I must do as he wishes or I'll not be at all, so far as he is concerned."

Another and longer silence; then Adelaide, after an uneasy, affectionate look at his serious profile, said: "I'm often ashamed of myself, Artie—about father; I don't *think* I'm a hypocrite, for I do love him dearly. Who could help it, when he is so indulgent and when even in his anger he's kind? But you—Oh, Artie, even though you are less, much less, uncandid with him than I am, still isn't it more—more—less manly in you? After all, I'm a woman and helpless; and, if I seriously offend him, what would become of me? But you're a man. The world was made for men; they can make their own way. And it seems unworthy of you to be afraid to be yourself before _any_body. And I'm sure it's demoralizing."

She spoke so sincerely that he could not have resented it, even had her words raised a far feebler echo within him. "I don't honestly believe, Del, that my caution with father is from fear of his shutting down on me, any more than yours is," he replied. "I know he cares for me. And often I don't let him see me as I am simply because it'd hurt him if he knew how differently I think and feel about a lot of things."

"But are you right?—or is he?"