

***ARTHUR
CHENEY TRAIN***



***THE BLIND
GODDESS***

Arthur Cheney Train

The Blind Goddess

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Table of Contents

[CHAPTER I](#)

[CHAPTER II](#)

[CHAPTER III](#)

[CHAPTER IV](#)

[CHAPTER V](#)

[CHAPTER VI](#)

[CHAPTER VII](#)

[CHAPTER VIII](#)

[CHAPTER IX](#)

[CHAPTER X](#)

[CHAPTER XI](#)

[CHAPTER XII](#)

[CHAPTER XIII](#)

[CHAPTER XIV](#)

CHAPTER I

[Table of Contents](#)

In that part of Cosmos men call "The Universe," and on the dust speck known as "Earth," a ray from the sun, now travelling in Aquarius, fell through ninety-three million miles of ether upon the grey wall of the Tombs prison, in which were herded several hundred human monads awaiting either trial or sentence by their fellows. The sunlight did not penetrate the wall, for it was enormously high and thick, designed to keep prisoners in at any cost, but its gleam was reflected to the other side of Franklin Street through the grimy windows of the Criminal Trial Term, dazzling the eyes of policemen, clerks, and court attendants, and crowning with a nimbus of red flame the head of a young girl who sat high above the spectators upon the dais beside the judge.

It was only three o'clock, yet already the electric cluster in the centre of the ceiling had been lighted, for darkness gathers early about those engaged in delving into human motives, and in assessing human responsibility, even when their deliberations are not already clouded by ignorance, cupidity, or vindictiveness. The blinding shaft of light which shot into the court-room beneath the partially lowered shades made the old judge blink.

"Pull down those shades if you please, Mr. Gallagher!" he said to the ancient officer who sat bowed in the corner behind the jury box. "You gentlemen have the advantage of not facing the light!" he added with a smile to the twelve assorted citizens who sat there charged with the duty of according to the unfortunates brought to the bar of justice what is known to the law as "a trial by their peers." "Thank you!" he murmured as the officer, having carried out his instructions, tottered back to his seat.

The judge was a timorous, kindly man whose thin white hair was brushed in streaks over a pink skull dotted with liver spots. When he became angry or confused—which often happened, since he was slow of understanding—his skull grew red and glistened with a film of perspiration. “Thank you, Mr. Gallagher,” he repeated. “What is next on the calendar, Mr. Dollar?”

The clerk, a pompous person with a horse’s face, whose steel grey hair was waved to resemble whitecaps advancing upon a sandy shore, arose and bowed to the judge with ceremony, since in honouring the bench Mr. Dollar honoured himself.

“A sentence, Yoronner. John Flynn for two convictions, murder in the second degree. You set three-thirty, you remember, at the request of Mr. O’Hara, his counsel.”

The judge nodded, adjusted his spectacles, and reached for his sentence book. Then he looked over the clerk’s desk to the row of chairs reserved for counsel, just inside the rail.

“Is Mr. O’Hara here, Mr. Quirk?” The man addressed got to his feet. He was a rickety figure, physically repellent, yet with something of attraction in his voice and manner. He was dressed in dusty ochre with a crimson tie; his face was yellow, cadaverous, and destitute of hair; he had pale green eyes, and an auburn wig which slanted across his forehead like an ill-fitting skullcap slipped awry. Yet his smile, except for his discoloured teeth, was engaging. In his hand, which shook as with palsy, he held a book.

“Yes, Yoronner,” he replied. “Mr. O’Hara is just outside. I’ll go fetch him.”

“Very well. Send for the defendant, Mr. Dollar.”

Mr. Dollar, elegant in a blue cutaway suit bound with braid, and with a heavy gold chain across his abdomen, resumed his seat, carefully dipped his pen, and inscribed something laboriously in a heavy volume. Then looking up at the officer standing by the rail, he called cheerfully in a resonant voice slightly reminiscent of County Cork:

“Captain Lynch! Kindly have John Flynn brought to the bar for sentence.”

The captain, who wore a white goatee, turned to the rear of the room, where another and younger officer lounged beside a closed door.

“John Flynn to the bar!” he called across the intervening space.

The officer in the rear opened the door and thrust his head into the black abyss behind it.

“Bring up Flynn!”

Distance and indirection muffled his voice, as it did also the ultimate order of the sheriff’s officer in the pit below.

“Here you Flynn!”

Thus in inverse ratio to the square of the distance between the judge and the turnkey did the consideration shown to the prisoner diminish, until, indeed, had it extended across the Bridge of Sighs to the prison yard it might have vanished altogether.

“Are you going to sentence somebody for murder?” whispered the girl on the dais. “How terrible!” The white luminous spot of her face moved closer to the judge. “Don’t you hate to?”

The judge was a little afraid of her, for, besides the fact that she was rather imperious, her father was a very important person. He always strove to please everybody.

“Yes, of course it’s unpleasant—but one gets used to it. One gets used to everything, Miss Moira.”

“I should never get used to sending men to prison. I think all prisons ought to be abolished!”

The judge smiled at her tolerantly, thinking—in spite of the flaming glory of her hair that swept so low across her white brow—how much her intense blue eyes, her short, straight nose, her capable mouth with its full red lips were like the “Old Man’s.” He did not recall ever having seen her mother.

“That is easy to say, my dear! You must have been reading Bernard Shaw!”

“I haven’t. What does he say?” she inquired.

“That so long as we have prisons it doesn’t make much difference who occupy the cells.”

“Well, that’s just what I think!”

The judge fidgeted and pretended to examine the book before him. He wished that they would hurry along with Flynn. The girl was already becoming something of a nuisance. She made him uneasy. And she might so easily ask him a question that he couldn’t answer! So very easily! Still, he couldn’t very well have refused her request to be allowed to see him administer justice, for the all-powerful Richard Devens, her father, was one of his staunchest backers. Another thirteen months, and the judge would be up for re-election, going around soliciting campaign contributions, with his hat in his hand, if he were fortunate, or, if he were not, trying to enlist influence for a renomination — but in either case with his hat in his hand.

Moira Devens leaned back in her chair, leaving the judge momentarily in peace. Although she had never been in a court-room before, much less elevated upon a dais in full view of several hundred spectators, she was not in the least embarrassed. On the contrary, she rather enjoyed being there. As her father’s daughter she was used to receiving attention wherever she happened to be, and that she should be given a box seat at this particular drama seemed wholly natural.

Yet the performance was not at all like what she had expected. From what she had read in the newspapers she had always supposed a criminal trial to be a sort of gladiatorial combat, where wild beasts in the shape of bull-necked prosecutors and shyster lawyers fought with one another amid frenzied roars from the onlookers and bloodthirsty growls from the pens below; not a quiet, decorous affair like this, where if a juror coughed he covered

his mouth with his hand, and where the only sound was the crackle made by Mr. Dollar as he turned the stiff leaves of the court record. So quiet and decorous, in fact, that she almost wondered if they were alive, these motionless figures in jury-box and on the benches.

One face in particular—a woman's on the front bench—staring at her. A dead woman—or did she move? Out there—above—beyond—in the sunlight—there was air. But here—!

“May I?” she asked faintly, and filled a tumbler from the frosted silver ice-water pitcher beside the judge.

What a relief! Her forehead cooled. The blur lifted and the faces on the benches became definite. She could see the individual jurymen now—which of them had beards and which were bald—and the group of lawyers at the table outside the rail, with their books and brief-cases, and the rows of benches, one behind the other, filled with witnesses, relatives of prisoners, law students, persons waiting to see the judge, semi-respectables of all sorts, idlers, and “bums.” Some of the faces were grotesque, others jovial and mirth-provoking, some honest and direct, some cynical, crafty, and shifty-eyed—a haphazard collection of human animals. And all silent—all waiting for something.

It is getting darker. From outside at irregular intervals comes the clanging rush of an electric car, the distant roar of the elevated, the rumble of a mail-truck—inside only the soft rustle of papers and the murmur of the judge as he speaks to Mr. Dollar. The Quick and the Dead!

Somewhere in the subterranean caverns of the building a door bangs, and the woman on the front row of benches stifles a cry.

The judge looks up.

“Order there! Please see that there is quiet, Mr. Officer!”

The woman looks at him fearfully, one trembling hand covering the lower part of her mouth. She is emaciated, her lower lip sagging; but her face holds traces of beauty and

she carries herself with a certain distinction. The judge beckons to the officer. "Who is that woman?" he asks curiously.

"Never saw her before, Yoronner. She's a hop-head. All shot to pieces. Shall I put her out?"

The woman gives them a look of agonised appeal.

"Poor thing! Please! Oh, please don't put her out!" Moira intercedes for her.

The judge hesitates and at that instant the door in the rear opens, and Flynn, the little murderer, enters, shambling along between two stalwart officers. They are so far away that they make no sound—mere moving figures on a film—as they skirt the edge of the room along a sort of runway.

"Order in the court!"

A burly, red-faced man with side-chops steps to the bar beside the defendant, who clutches the rail, cowering like a dog awaiting the lash. A murmur weaves along the benches. The Dead are coming to life. They sway forward in unison. The judge regards the prisoner almost affectionately. He feels sure that the defendant can harbour no personal animosity against him.

"Mr. Flynn," he says in a soothing tone, "have you anything to say why judgement should not be pronounced against you?"

The prisoner appears dazed.

"Didn't you hear His Honor's question?" asks Mr. Dollar.

Still, Flynn makes no reply, and his counsel bends over and whispers in his ear.

"He has nothing to say, Yoronner," replies Mr. O'Hara.

The judge gives a propitiatory rap with his ivory gavel. The Dead are harkening.

"James Flynn, you have been twice convicted of murder in the second degree, for the killing of William Fox and Arthur Brady, both police officers, in the performance of their duty. You are to be congratulated that the jury, in their mercy, did not find you guilty of murder in the first degree.

There is nothing for me to say. The law gives me no discretion. The sentence of the court is that upon the first indictment, number 949,671, for the killing of William Fox, you be confined in the state's prison at hard labour for the term of your natural life, and upon the second indictment, number 949,672, for the killing of Arthur Brady, that you be confined in the state's prison at hard labour for the term of your natural life—the second sentence to begin immediately upon the completion of the first.”

Nobody apparently sees anything peculiar about the affair. Mr. O'Hara steps back, the officers take the prisoner by the shoulders, steer him into the runway again, and they start away rapidly. “They are hanging Danny Deever, you can hear the quick-step play!” As they reach the door in the rear there is a little disturbance. Two men are shaking hands with Flynn—now civilly dead—bidding him good-by. There is hardly a pause. “Good luck, Jim!” The door closes without sound. Presently, from the depths below comes the muffled clang of iron. The officer on guard leans over and spits into a cuspidor. For an instant it seems to the girl upon the dais as if all the lights had grown dim. She forces herself to appear calm.

“Are there any other sentences, Mr. Dollar?” inquires the judge, smiling at his fair *amica curiæ*. “If not, call the next case.”

The Goddess of Justice, pictured upon the wall above the judge's dais as a beautiful and stately woman, holding in her right hand a crystal ball representing “Truth,” and in her left the scales in which guilt is balanced against innocence, gazes fearlessly over the heads of the spectators in the general direction of Sing Sing prison. The artist, a justly celebrated painter, has seen fit to depict the lady without the customary bandage across her eyes, in order to indicate that Justice no longer needs to be blinded to insure her

impartiality. It may be that he is quite right, and that in this respect modern differs from ancient justice, but if his taste for originality has, perchance, outrun his accuracy, those who have a fondness for tradition may solace themselves with the reflection that blindness may exist without blinders, that the most beautiful of eyes are sometimes sightless, and that by light alone may the vitality of the optic nerve be tested. There is little light in the Criminal Trial Term of the New York Supreme Court. Who dare say whether the goddess upon the western wall be blind or not? Let us be satisfied to note that her eyes are apparently fixed upon distance—and not upon the crowding suppliants beneath her—no, nor upon any one of them.

It was this fact that had always filled Hugh Dillon with such a smouldering resentment and induced a cynical wondering upon his part if, after all, she personified anything more “just” than the figures of the Parcae—the inexorable Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos—who spun, and measured and cut the thread of life, upon the panel to her left; or, even than the muscular male figures of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality upon her right. It was, he thought, as he sat there waiting beside his associate, O’Hara, rather ironical that the last vision of the poor wretch Flynn, just sentenced to jail for life—for two lives!—should be that of a joyous athlete bursting his chains while his two robust companions, representing the Brotherhood of Man, and obviously bursting with the Milk of Human Kindness, beamed upon him with such delight. Sympathy? A joke! Justice? There was no such thing! At best it was nothing but a haphazard human makeshift; at worst, a cant phrase, like making the world “safe for democracy.”

Who were these tax-eating judges and prosecutors that they should play fast and loose with human life and liberty! He hated all of them—self-seeking political sycophants like that curly-haired loafer Redmond, the assistant district attorney, pusillanimous time-servers like that fat-headed

judge, with their rascally crew of fawning attendants and process-servers feeding out of the public crib, police officers and detectives looking for promotion and a “record,” ready to swear your life away for a flat bottle, doddering clerks and henchmen pensioned off at the municipal expense “for services rendered”—the whole machine grinding along, “knock down and drag out,” hit or miss—one man sent up for life while another, more guilty, went free—the public money poured into the gutters to make a Roman triumph for any ambitious prosecutor who might hope to leap to political eminence from the corpses of his electrocuted victims—a spectacle for the idle and favoured rich like that hard young fool upon the bench beside the judge.

“Paul Renig to the bar! Hoyle and O’Hara—Mr. Dillon.”

His case. Sullenly he arose and took his seat at the counsel table beside the pallid young German he was to defend. What business had they to stick a flossy young girl up there as if she were at the opera? God, but she must be callous!—And of course, the judge was introducing Redmond to her! They were shaking hands. Bah! He need expect no mercy from Redmond now! They would turn a solemn trial involving a man’s liberty into a joust—a tournament for a lady’s glove.

“Is the jury satisfactory?”

Mr. Dollar was bowing as usual. Hugh nodded without looking at them. It made no difference. They were nothing but sheep! The jury would do exactly what the judge intimated they should do. Old fox! It was the emphasis, not the words that he used—the way in which he said, “Naturally, gentlemen, if you *have* any reasonable doubt of the defendant’s guilt you must, of course, give it to him!”—was enough to send any man straight to the chair. It was the practical equivalent of: “Nobody but a moron could have any question but that this defendant is one of the guiltiest men alive, and I shall expect you promptly to convict him.” Justice!

He raised his eyes to the beautiful face of the goddess. She was looking away from him—from all of them—far over their heads. A lot she cared!

Mr. Dollar had sworn the jury, who were settling back into their seats. Redmond got up and half turned to the bench—a handsome devil.

“If the Court please—Gentlemen of the Jury. The defendant, Paul Renig, is indicted for assault in the second degree, for attacking Wilhelm Ganz with a dangerous weapon. The assault was unprovoked and the complainant severely injured before he could do anything to defend himself. The simplest and quickest thing is to let him tell his own story. Mr. Ganz, take the stand.”

The foreman of the jury signified his approval of the assistant district attorney with a glance. That was the way to do things—smartly! No use wasting the time of busy men. How was it that Redmond always succeeded, somehow, in taking them all into his confidence, in making them feel that the unfortunate necessity of keeping such important citizens as themselves away from their much more important affairs really worried him?

The girl on the dais seemed to have forgotten her resentment against the prison system in her admiration for Mr. Redmond’s technique and, like the rest of them, clearly to understand that everything could be safely left to him. Certainly he was very handsome! He made Hugh think of one of those outline sketches of the Olympians in the back of an Allen and Greenough’s Latin Vocabulary—a curly-haired Hermes in a blue suit, lounging gracefully against Mr. Dollar’s desk—a complementary figure to those upon the wall—only superior! “Order in the court!”

The judge thought he had better show a little more attention to Miss Devens.

“I’m afraid this won’t amuse you much. It’s just an ordinary assault case, sent in from another Part—the calendars are so crowded,” he apologized.

But he need not have worried. The girl had become a woman in the last ten minutes. The sentencing of Flynn had done something to her. She had been brought face to face for the first time with the realities of life. There was a movement of general relief throughout the rows—a scuffling of feet echoing those of the complainant against Renig, as he sought to find his way to the witness-chair. Mr. Gallagher rescued him in the maze behind the jury-box.

“This way, sir.—Name?—William Ganz?—Mr. Wilhelm Ganz. Face the jury, please.” Mr. Dollar swore the witness: and Mr. Gallagher retired once more to his obscurity.

The girl shifted her glance. What a horrible looking man! She could not remember ever having seen anybody with such a face—like a chimpanzee. When he answered he bared his teeth in a gummy grin.

Suavely, ingratiatingly, Mr. Redmond began to question him:

“You are employed by the Eureka Gas Company of Richmond?”

“Yeh. Claim adjuster.”

“Do you know this defendant?”

“Yeh. He used to be one of our pay clerks.”

“Did you see him on Friday, October 8th?”

“Yeh.”

“Tell the jury what occurred.”

The chimpanzee turned to the jury and pointed to an angry red line along his temple.

“I seen this feller on Franklin Street. I was lookin’ fer him, see? He owed the company money.”

“*Object!*”

The word came like a musket shot. The target rang:

“Sustained!—”

“Of course, if you object, Mr. Dillon—”

“I object.”

The girl saw now where the shot had come from.

“If that is to be brought out I will bring it out myself!”

The speaker seemed needlessly contemptuous of Mr. Redmond—quite ill-mannered, in fact.

The assistant district attorney lifted his eyebrows to the jury as if to indicate that one had to be patient with these young cockatoos.

“Proceed, gentlemen!”

But the girl was no longer listening. She only saw the tall, straight youth in shabby clothes, whose black eyes were fixed in scorn upon the human monkey in the chair. A red spot burned in both his cheeks, his chin quivered—a bundle of nerves—Passion incarnate!

“And then?” inquired Redmond politely of the chimpanzee.

“He grabbed a pistol out of his pocket and floored me with the butt. Eleven stitches!”

He pointed to the still bright scar.

“Your witness.”

The jury with one accord turned to the youthful avenger at the bar.

“You’re an adjuster?” he asked indifferently.

“Sure.”

“Why were you looking for Renig?”

The chimpanzee bared his teeth and shot out his jaw.

“This here Renig was short seventy-two dollars fifty. Took it out of the collections, see?—I was looking fer that—the company’s money.”

“Was that all you were looking for?” The voice was insinuating with a hidden threat.

“Sure.”

“Did you ask him to sign a paper?”

The chimpanzee hesitated.

“A paper?”

“I said a paper!”

The threat had become apparent. The jury showed signs of interest.

“Answer the question!” admonished the judge.

“Yeh. I showed him a paper.”

“What was it?”

“A release.”

“Let me see it!”

“It’s in me coat.”

“Get it!”

Redmond looked slightly bored. The heart of the girl on the dais fluttered.

“Is this paper material?” inquired Judge Barker. “If not—in the interest of time—why not ask him what was in it?”

“The paper is very material.”

“How can it be?”

“I should prefer to bring that out in examination.”

“Very well. Try your case in your own way.” The judge spoke impatiently, and the girl suddenly hated her father’s old friend. Dillon took the document and flung it open with a gesture of disgust.

“Did you ask the defendant to sign this?”

“Sure, I did!” retorted the witness aggressively.

“It is a full release and acquittance to the gas company, is it not, for any damages he may have suffered through its negligence in occasioning the death of his wife and child!”

The jury stiffened to a man.

“Wha-a-at!” ejaculated Redmond. “Let me see it!”

“You will have your chance!” retorted Dillon.

“Well, what if it is?” sneered the witness.

“May I see that paper, please?” requested the foreman.

“One moment!”

Dillon’s arm hovered over the witness like a flaming sword.

“Is it not the fact—look at me!—is it not the fact that your company installed a defective stove in Renig’s flat, as a result of which his wife, who was going to have a child, became ill, and that he stole from the company in order to pay for a doctor to save her life? Is it not a fact that she and her three-day-old baby died from gas poisoning? And is it

not the fact that you”—he choked in spite of himself—“that you tried to compel him to sign a release under threat that if he refused you would have him arrested for larceny?”

He paused, his lips trembling.

“Well, what if I did?”

Life stopped in the court-room.

“You cur!”

The words cracked like a whip.

“Bang!” went the judge’s gavel. “Mr. Dillon! Mr. Dillon! That is grossly improper! I must admonish you! I do admonish you!”

“Oh!” moaned the woman on the front bench. “Oh! The poor baby!”

“I beg the court’s pardon!” said Dillon. “I apologize for the word—but not for the thought behind it.”

“I’ll show you whether I’m a cur or not!” snarled the chimpanzee, half rising from the chair.

Redmond stepped quickly to the bench.

“I had no idea—” he began in an undertone. “Fasset sent this case in from Part I, without my knowing anything about it. Rather a low trick of him! I suppose the complainant insisted on a trial. Of course the jury won’t convict, but technically there’s no defence. After all, this fellow Ganz was working for somebody else. He was only carrying out his orders. What would you suggest?”

The judge’s scalp had turned a glistening crimson. He loathed being put in such a position.

“Why do you bring cases before me until you have looked into their merits, Mr. Redmond?” he complained, yet with extreme politeness.

“There was absolutely no time to examine the witnesses, judge! I had to send over to Part I for something to keep the court going. Otherwise our calendar would have broken down. You know how the press howls when that happens.”

He smiled confidentially at the girl.

“Well, you better finish it, I suppose!” muttered the judge uneasily. “Why doesn’t your office keep its eyes open? I hate these cases! The Grand Jury ought never to have indicted. Get through it the best way you can!”

Dillon stood with his eyes fixed on the witness, who lowered back at him defiantly. Mr. O’Hara had entered the enclosure and had bent his head to that of the boy, who nodded.

“One more question,” he said, resuming his examination. “When you made this proposition to Renig and he struck you—in your opinion was his act rational or irrational?”

“Oh!—I must object! This witness isn’t an expert!” smiled Redmond. But he caught no answering gleam from the jury.

“Allowed,” murmured the judge wearily.

“I guess it was pretty irrational to crown me that way for nothing!”

“That is all!”

“That is all!”

Redmond waved the unfortunate Ganz from the stand. The jury watched him menacingly as he made his way to the seat.

Mr. O’Hara arose and addressed the court:

“If Your Honor please,” he said, in a rich voice full of deep cadences, “we desire to withdraw our plea of not guilty heretofore entered by us, and to substitute for it the plea of not guilty on the ground of insanity.”

“Insanity!”

The judge stared at him as if the word had more relevancy to the conduct of the lawyer than to that of his client.

“We plead insanity.”

Mr. Dollar thrust his silver coiffure over the edge of the dais.

“The Code allows them to do that, Yoronner.”

“Very well,” said the judge uncertainly.

Mr. Dollar sat down again, and the only sound in the court-room was the careful scratching of his pen. Presently he got up.

“Paul Renig, you desire to withdraw the plea of not guilty heretofore entered by you, and to substitute the plea of not guilty on the ground of insanity?”

“We do!” assented Mr. O’Hara.

Mr. Dollar sat down.

“Proceed, gentlemen.”

Mr. O’Hara had wandered out of the court-room again.

“The People rest,” said Redmond indifferently.

“The defence rests,” returned Dillon.

“Do you desire to sum up?” inquired the judge.

“I see no need of saying anything further,” replied Dillon. “If the district attorney desires this case to go to the jury, I am willing to submit on Your Honor’s charge.”

“That is entirely satisfactory to the People,” agreed his adversary.

“Order in the court!”

The judge pulled his silk robe about his shoulders, fumbled among the papers before him for his “Charge Book,” and, having looked up “Assault” in the index, read to the jury several ungrammatical and hopelessly confusing pages, then turned over to “Insanity” and proceeded to give them ten or twelve pages more, which no human mind could possibly make head or tail of, much less twelve well-meaning burghers drawn out by lot from barber shops, abattoirs, and delicatessens, and who never read anything but the comics in the Sunday supplement.

They paid no attention to him, and would not have understood what he was talking about if they had. So far as they were concerned the plaintiff was a dirty dog and that was the end of it.

“. . . And so, gentlemen, your verdict will be either ‘guilty’ or ‘not guilty on the ground of insanity.’ You may retire!”

But the jury showed no disposition to retire. Instead, the foreman whispered to the man beside him, who in turn communicated with his neighbour, who did likewise, until the circle had been completed. Then the foreman looked up at the judge and said:

“Unless the law requires us to go out we don’t need to leave the box.”

“I will receive your verdict,” said His Honor, who felt positive that under the circumstances nobody could possibly criticise his conduct of the case.

The foreman stood up.

“We find the defendant ‘not guilty—on the ground of insanity’—and,” he added with asperity, “we would like to find the gas company guilty of manslaughter, if that is correct.”

“I will receive the first part of your verdict—and treat the rest as a recommendation,” smiled the judge. “I congratulate you, gentlemen. I thank you for your attention. I think that is all for the day?—The defendant is discharged.”

“. . . With the thanks of the court!” murmured Mr. Redmond as they all arose. Then stepping to the dais he asked humbly: “May I take you home in a taxi, Miss Devens?”

And so the monads who composed the jury, and who had neither heard nor listened to the law, and who neither understood it nor could have understood it, nor applied it if they had got it into their heads, these twelve monads, being human monads, did what the human emotions within their bosoms directed them to do.

The judge nodded to Mr. Dollar.

“Adjourn court,” he directed.

Captain Lynch lifted his goatee ceilingward.

“Hear ye! Hear ye! This court stands adjourned until Monday morning at ten o’clock!”

As if a stop-cock had been pulled in the bottom of an aquarium, the contents of the Criminal Term began to run

out—at first sucking away only those nearest the entrance, then as the current strengthened, pulling them all into the aisles and leaving only the lees upon the benches: Mr. Wilhelm Ganz, the woman in chinchilla, a punctilious drunk, and a “nut” with a package of papers tied in a newspaper who wanted “to speak to the judge just for a minute.”

His Honor, now at last relieved of all official responsibility, shook hands cordially with Miss Devens.

“Sorry we couldn’t give you a more thrilling afternoon. Look in on us again. Remember me kindly to your father.” The shining pink spot of his cranium bobbed down the three steps of the dais above the flying carpet of his gown and disappeared into the robing-room. At the other end of the aquarium the fish were wriggling in a solid mass through the big doors.

“Quiet there!” admonished the officer. “Stop your shoving!”

A cold shaft of air pierced the sickly-sweet atmosphere. A sallow law clerk, with an armful of books, hunched his shoulders to light a cigarette.

Miss Devens was looking past the gallant Mr. Michael Redmond at the group clustered around Renig and his attorney.

“Take me home?” she repeated. “Oh, my own motor is waiting, thank you.”

“May I come to see you sometime?”

“Oh, do.” She was barely polite. “What is the name of that young lawyer?”

“Dillon—Hugh Dillon. He is with Hoyle and O’Hara.”

From the counsel table Dillon saw the girl pull her sables about her white round neck. He also noted, with unconscious satisfaction, the dismissal in her gesture, and how Mr. Redmond imperceptibly dissolved into the group about Mr. Dollar. But his mind was occupied with Renig. The fellow was a nervous wreck, and another family had already moved into his flat. He might lend him a blanket and let him

sleep on the sofa in the office for a night or two. Then he saw the reporters step aside to allow the redheaded girl, who had been sitting beside the judge, to approach. Why should she come hanging around? It annoyed him even more than her gratuitous presence. Why couldn't she have the decency—having paraded her vulgar curiosity all the afternoon—to take herself off? Still, he was not unconscious of the fact that she was pretty in a bizarre, theatrical sort of way. He could see "Deacon" Terry of *The Tribune* extending a wicked ear, and Charley White of *The Sun* drifting innocently in their direction.

"Mr. Dillon?"

A wisp of auburn hair had escaped the rim of her small toque, the rich colour in vivid contrast with her pellucid skin and the strange blue of her eyes. Somewhere, when on leave in Paris, he had seen a picture of a woman with that sort of colouring, and it had taken his fancy—in the Louvre, maybe, or was it the Luxembourg? He got to his feet.

"My name is Devens—Moira Devens. I would like to do something for Mr. Renig." Her voice was low, her manner contained.

He felt somehow impelled to do as she wished. Without replying, he turned to the ashen face of the man beside him, who was staring vacantly at the Blind Goddess.

"This lady wants to talk to you, Paul!"

"I don't feel like talkin'!"

Miss Devens sat down on the other side of the table and leaned forward on her arms.

"Mr. Renig, I want you to let me help you."

Renig, for the first time since his trial had begun, stopped the slow rhythmic movement of his jaws.

"That's all right, miss. I can make out."

"But I— Oh, please, isn't there anything I can do?" The reporters made a semicircle behind her.

"Speak up, Paul!" urged Charley White. "Don't be bashful. We all know you're broke."

The muscles of Renig's face twitched. Then he muttered something to Dillon, studiously looking away from the girl meanwhile.

"Mr. Renig tells me," said Hugh, "that if you really want to help him, there is one thing he feels very deeply about—he owns only the old yellow suit he has on. He would like to wear black for his wife and child."

"Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" suddenly sobbed Renig, dropping his face in his hands. "Oh, Jesus!" he rasped, as he searched in his pocket for a handkerchief.

Dillon put his arm about him.

"Buck up, old man!"

The girl opened a bag of gold mesh and took from it a roll of yellow bills.

"Please take this!" she said, pushing it under Renig's sleeve. "It will keep you going for a while."

Renig fingered the money in bewilderment.

"Five hundred dollars!—My wife and baby are dead from a leak in the gas, and you give me five hundred dollars? Is that straight?"

"Sure, she's a rich woman!" interjected "Deacon" Terry, with a prophetic vision of a full column on the morrow's front page.

"But why—should you give me five hundred dollars?"

The girl closed her bag with a snap.

"Because," she answered half whimsically, "because—well!—for one thing my father happens to be a director of the gas company."

"Holy Mike!" ejaculated Charley White, searching quickly for his hat, which had rolled under the table. "Let me get to the 'phone!"

At that instant Mr. Wilhelm Ganz, who had been listening attentively, shouldered his way into the group.

"Listen here!" he declared, "if there's money going 'round how about the seventy-two fifty he owes the company?"

The “Deacon” turned on him with a snarl.

“Get out of here before we boot you out!”

Ganz lowered his head belligerently.

“Keep your hands off me! Even if the jury did acquit this feller, he stole seventy-two dollars, didn’t he? I can have him arrested for that, and I’m goin’ to. There’s some justice left!”

“Justice! Bah!” roared White. “You baldheaded baboon!— Try it!”

“I will see that the money is repaid!” said Moira coldly.

“Mr. Renig, here is my address. Come and see me if you need any more help. May I speak to you outside, Mr. Dillon?”

She nodded to the reporters and to Mr. Dollar, and turned confidently to Hugh—a self-possessed young person with a well-developed histrionic sense.

The court-room was already nearly empty. The “nut” who wanted to speak to the judge for a moment had followed him up-stairs, and the decorous drunk had been officially awakened and cast out. The only spectator left was the woman in chinchilla, who had crept nearer and nearer as the little scene inside the rail was being enacted. Now, as Captain Lynch held open the gate for Moira to pass out of the enclosure, the woman swayed toward her with an almost imperceptible forward movement of her hands.

“Go over and wait for me at the office, Paul,” directed Dillon, following the girl into the lobby. In spite of what he regarded as her ostentatious largesse his heart was still hardened against her. Nevertheless, this did not exclude a certain curiosity as to what she might prove to be like on further acquaintance. She was quite different from any girl he had ever met before. Neither of them noticed the woman who was lurking in the shadow between the outer and inner doors.

“Won’t you drive uptown with me, Mr. Dillon? I want to talk to you.”

To Hugh it was an astounding suggestion. What could she want of him? Was she worried about the case, perhaps?

“About Renig?”

“Yes—partly.”

“What do you want to know about him?” he asked, without moving further.

She gave a gesture of impatience.

“I can’t talk to you here. I—I’ve got an appointment uptown.”

He looked at her, frowning. She could not be peremptory with him, whatever prerogatives might be accorded to her by others.

“I have one myself at my office, Miss Devens. I’m sorry.”

An angry gleam came into her eyes.

“Perhaps you’ll take me to my motor, then?”

“Delighted.”

From the shadow the woman in the chinchilla boa watched them disappear down the stairs. The voice of O’Hara at her elbow startled her so that she almost screamed.

“Look here, Mrs. Clayton! I want to be as friendly to you as I can, but this isn’t treating us fair. If I told Mr. Devens he’d cancel his contract with you.”

She had shrunk away from him and stood with her handkerchief to her lips, whimpering.

“I know I shouldn’t have come. But money isn’t everything. Sometimes I feel as if I’d go mad unless I could touch her hand. But I won’t do it again. I promise you, Mr. O’Hara.”

“Well, see that you don’t.”

He lifted his square derby hat and stalked by her into the court-room.

“Hold on a minute, Jerry!” he called to the janitor, who was turning off the lights. “Got to find my bag.” His eye caught the Blind Goddess. “Why the devil don’t you clean

up that picture? It's that dirty you couldn't hardly tell it was a woman—let alone Justice."

The janitor suspended his labours, put his head sideways, and examined the picture critically.

"Is that Justice?" he inquired. "That's one on me! I always thought it was supposed to be the Goddess of Liberty."

Hugh and Moira, their footsteps lipping upon the marble flags, crossed the great hall of the rotunda, whose corridors rose tier on tier into a vast obscurity like the balconies of an empty opera-house. A chauffeur, warming himself within the revolving doors of the Lafayette Street entrance, hurried out ahead of them to a gleaming cabriolet, where he stood at attention, one hand on the door-handle, with a mink robe draped over his right arm. They paused beside him.

"I wonder if you appreciate the drama of your life!" said Moira. "I suppose you don't. People never do. You work in the midst of a *Comédie Humaine*—you run the gamut of the emotions every hour in the day."

To the west, up Franklin Street, beyond Broadway, the sky was a riot of gold, scarlet, and saffron. Behind them the black bulk of the Tombs rose like a grim stage donjon against a back-drop of pale blue sprinkled with gold dust. A motorized hook-and-ladder, clanging an intermittent warning, backed snorting into the engine-house on the corner, like a fire-breathing Fafner retreating into his cavern.

Moira put one foot on the running-board, then glanced over her shoulder. He had made no accompanying movement. The wind flipped her boa against his cheek.

"Come along!" she urged.

"Sorry," he answered, still distrustful, "but I have to go to the office. I've no end of work to do."

She replaced her foot on the sidewalk and faced him.

"But I want you to ride uptown with me—escort me home!"

"Look here!" he said suddenly and not altogether gently, "I'd like to know what this is all about! Suppose I do ride

uptown with you—what then!”

“Get in and I’ll tell you!—Don’t be a goose!” And she gave a little chuckling laugh—tantalizing, irresistible. For some reason the acuteness of his resentment against her softened.

“Oh, all right, then!” he protested, getting into the car and sinking into the seat beside her. There was no harm in seeing what she was up to.

“You act as if you thought I were trying to kidnap you!” she declared as they glided off. “Most men would feel complimented.”

“Would they?”

“Aren’t you pleased that I want to make friends with you?” she demanded provocatively. “Don’t you want to be friends?”

He looked ahead through the plate glass. He had no intention of letting himself be vamped, but, on the other hand, he did not wish to misjudge her. Anyhow, she was worth being frank with.

“Look here, Miss Devens!” he said. “I have no idea of what you really want of me, but, to be frank with you, I can’t say I think much of your coming down the way you did this afternoon, as if the place were a zoo and you wanted to look at the animals!”

“But I am planning to do work in the Tombs, and I wanted to learn all about everything—so as to be of more service.”

“Service!”

“Yes—why not?”

“Good God!” he exclaimed. “What possible service do you think a girl like yourself could be to anybody in the Tombs?”

She looked at him for a moment as if doubtful whether or not to resent his remark. Then she laughed.

“You *are* frank!—Why couldn’t I—why couldn’t anybody—be of service to an unfortunate prisoner?”

“Because the trouble isn’t in the Tombs. That’s the last act of the tragedy. You’ve got to start earlier—with the prologue. When a fellow gets into jail he needs a lawyer, not a social-service worker. He doesn’t want perfumery, or flowers, or eclairs, or a Bible. He wants somebody to fight for him.”

They were passing Police Headquarters. A platoon of officers was just descending the steps.

“And fight like hell!” he growled through his teeth.

“Good!” she echoed. “I like that. I like people who do things that way—your way.”

“How do you know it’s my way?”

“Because that was the way you fought for poor Renig.”

“Oh, that was just luck! Redmond pulled a bone. Fasset, the assistant assigned to Part I, happens to have a retainer from the gas company and has to do what Ganz says. He was afraid to antagonize him, and so he sidestepped it—dumped it on Redmond. It would have been a walkout in any event!”

“What is going to become of Renig now?”

“Shoot himself, maybe.” He spoke quietly.

“Oh!” her breath came sharp through her teeth. “Don’t let him! You mustn’t!”

“He’s part of that melodrama of yours!” he retorted. “I should have thought what you saw and heard to-day would have given you a jar. How can you girls from uptown know anything about life? Look at this car! It’s like riding in a feather bed! You live in cotton wool. What can you possibly know about how to help people? How can you help them? All you do is dance and dine at restaurants and go to the opera.”

“I don’t blame you much for thinking so,” she admitted. “But I’m sick of the kind of thing you speak of! I’m tired of the men I meet out everywhere. They’re all the same! I prefer somebody real!”

She did not vocally append the words “like you,” and he was too absorbed in his diatribe against her class to notice her look or her intonation.

“Let me tell you something else!” he swept on. “It’s the rich people uptown that need the missionaries—not the folks below Fourteenth Street. Why should you assume that because a family lives east of the Bowery its members are any less intelligent, or less moral, or even less cultured than if they lived on Fifth Avenue? They aren’t! I tell you the poor people of the East Side are better than the rich who look down on them. Don’t you know that only their money keeps a lot of millionaires out of jail?”

“Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! Woe unto thee, Chorazin!” she mocked.

He gave her a savage glance.

“I mean it! I tell you the morals, the ideals, the education are to be found downtown, not up! There’s more rough stuff on Broadway than there is in Chatham Square!”

“Why don’t you tell me I’m like the lady who said: ‘I live in the tents of the Philistines, where the conversation wears rubbers, and the people only *do* disreputable things. They draw the line at talking about them!’?”

“Just so! You live among a bunch of hypocrites!”

“Thank you!”

“Well, you know you do. They’re a lot worse than the poor because they have no temptations except those they invite themselves. They’re protected by the bulwark of their money. The rich woman never has to use her fists to defend herself. She’s never in any physical danger. It’s no credit to her if she keeps straight! If she’s afraid to cross the street all she has to do is to beckon to a cop. She makes use of the law as something she has paid for. She regards a policeman as a sort of servant, a little higher than a chore man and a little lower than her butler.”

He did not see her smile.

“How did you guess it!”

“And a criminal lawyer as a cross between a stool pigeon and a confidence man.”

“Not quite. Some of them are rather nice. What a fire-eater you are! A sort of Savonarola!—And you make me think of Jack Barrymore in ‘Hamlet,’ too!”

“Thanks!” he grunted. “I suppose you mean that as a compliment!”

“No—not exactly! On the whole I think I prefer Mr. Hugh Dillon, barrister-at-law!”

Her tone was mollifying.

“I’m sorry to have shot off my mouth this way,” he apologized. “But these fashionable women who think they can show other people how they ought to live get my goat! When I think how they waste their opportunities, it makes me mad. Compare the life of a smart woman in society with that of one of these East Side girls who is trying to make the most of herself! Look at how she works and studies and saves to hear some good music or to buy a few books. And look at what she does make of herself! No! No! Keep your social welfare work uptown. Do it among your swell friends!”

“Aren’t you a little hard on us?”

He shook his head.

“Not a bit!”

“Well,” she assured him, “I do want to help, and I don’t care whether I work in the Tombs or outside. I can’t see myself trying to convert any of my fashionable friends into the idealists you have been describing. I think they would get bored very quickly. But I’m sure there must be things I could do in any part of the city—of any city. I want to do something, and—I want somebody to show me how.”

It dawned on him that she might mean it.

“Is that true?”

“Certainly!”

He looked at her doubtfully, pondering her face under the winking electric glare of Fourteenth Street. Its expression was enigmatic, still—