

He had been on his way back to Ada with \$10 in his pocket. Just one more coup and he could go to her with money enough to start their married life, and a lie on his lips. Why not? She had sent him into the world to make a man of himself, as his father had done. Good people always turned down the responsibility like that and then wondered that he was base.

He shook his thought from him and crept nearer. As he watched at the foot of the garden the light went out.

Five minutes later Jim's hand was on the handle of the door. He was sure that it was bolted. Still, he wished to make sure before trying the windows. To his astonishment it was unfastened. In a moment he had slipped quietly inside and stood listening.

No sound came from the interior. No doubt the old man was already upstairs in his bedroom, preparing for sleep. It might have been safer to wait longer, but Jim was not afraid of an old man.

He had learned that the safe stood in the living room. It would be an easy matter to force it. There would be an unavoidable noise — but that was where Jim excelled, in the get-away.

He stood in complete silence and darkness. He waited a moment, then he stretched out his hand toward the door of the dining room. He found the handle, turned it noiselessly, and entered. He closed the door behind him.

Suddenly the light was turned on. It had been one of those episodes common to country towns. The electric lights had been put out of commission for a few minutes by some accident. The lights had gone out, they had never been turned out.

Jim was confronting the old man, who had fallen asleep in his chair before a table. Upon the table were a number of papers, pens and an ink bottle.

The old man started to his feet and stood, confronting him. Jim, taken aback, remained motionless. He had not had time to make up his mind whether to flee or strike the old man over the head. He had never descended to violence.

The old man peered at him intently. And suddenly Jim realized that he was blind! The sightless eyes were looking into his own with a puzzled expression.

Then, with a look of charming benignity, the old man advanced toward him, one hand outstretched, the other guiding him by the table edge.

"I am glad you have come, Mr.— Mr. Jennings," he said. "You wrote me that you didn't think you could get away to draw up my will, and that I had better wait till I was in town, but now you have come I am very glad."

Jim took the outstretched hand and muttered something.

"Sit down," said the old man. "I want you to read over my will and tell me whether it has been drawn up correctly. I see very badly, you know. I can manage to write, but reading is beyond me. I hope everything is correct."

Jim took the will in his hand and began to scan it. At the first sentence he startled violently and stared into the old man's face.

"You see, I have left all to my son James," said the old man. "I did him a great wrong. You know why I had to leave the home town? I told you?"

"Because—of James," murmured Jim.

"Yes. Everybody knew about his theft from the bank, as they supposed, and I couldn't hold up my head. We had always been honored among the community. I couldn't go on living there, with the sneers on people's faces. I would go down the street and fancy I heard them saying, 'There goes old Melton, whose son is a thief.' So I came here.

"It was not until a week ago that I