

GUY MURMOIT

NOVEL BY BOOTH TARKINGTON

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Sheridan's attempt to make a business man of his son Bibbs by starting him in the machine shop ends in Bibbs going to a sanitarium, a nervous wreck.

CHAPTER II—On his return Bibbs is met at the station by his sister Edith.

CHAPTER III—He finds himself an inconsiderate and unconsidered figure in the 'New House' of the Sheridans. He sees Mary Vertrees looking at him from a summer house next door.

CHAPTER IV—The Vertreeses, old town family and impoverished, call on the Sheridans, newly-rich, and afterward discuss them. Mary puts into words her parents' unspoken wish that she marry one of the Sheridan boys.

CHAPTER V—At the Sheridan house-warming banquet Sheridan spreads himself. Mary frankly encourages Jim Sheridan's attention, and Bibbs hears he is to be sent back to the machine shop.

CHAPTER VI—Mary tells her mother about the banquet and shocks her mother by talking of Jim as a matrimonial possibility.

CHAPTER VII—Jim tells Mary Bibbs is not a lunatic—"Just queer." He proposes to Mary, who half accepts him.

CHAPTER VIII—Sheridan tells Bibbs he must go back to the machine shop as soon as he is strong enough, in spite of Bibbs' plea to be allowed to write.

CHAPTER IX—Edith and Sibly, Roscoe Sheridan's wife, quarrel over Bobby Lamhorn; Sibly goes to Mary for help to keep Lamhorn from marrying Edith, and Mary leaves her in the room alone.

CHAPTER X—Bibbs has to break to his father the news of Jim's sudden death.

CHAPTER XI—All the rest of the family helpless in their grief, Bibbs becomes temporary master of the house. At the funeral he meets Mary and rides home with her.

CHAPTER XII—Mrs. Sheridan pleads with Bibbs to return to the machine shop for his father's sake, and he consents.

CHAPTER XIII—Bibbs purposely interrupts a tete-a-tete between Edith and Lamhorn. He tells Edith that he overheard Lamhorn making love to Roscoe's wife.

CHAPTER XIV—Mutual love of music arouses an intimate friendship between Bibbs and Mary.

CHAPTER XV—Mary sells her piano to help out the finances of the Vertrees family.

CHAPTER XVI—Roscoe and his wife quarrel over Lamhorn.

CHAPTER XVII—Sheridan finds Roscoe in an intoxicated condition during office hours and takes him home.

CHAPTER XVIII—Friendship between Bibbs and Mary ripens into a more intimate relation, and under Mary's influence Bibbs decides to return to the machine shop.

CHAPTER XIX—Sheridan finds his son Roscoe's affairs in a muddled condition, owing to his intemperate habit.

CHAPTER XX—Bibbs, under the inspiration of Mary's friendship, makes good in the machine shop. Sheridan is injured while attempting to show the boy how to do his work.

CHAPTER XXI—Sibly, insanely jealous over Lamhorn's attentions to Edith, makes a scene in the Sheridan home, and Lamhorn is ordered out of the house by Sheridan.

"I can't stand any more!" Sheridan burst out. "If it's come to Bibbs advising me how to run this house I better resign. Mamma, where's that pianer George? Maybe he's got some plan how I better manage my family. Bibbs, for God's sake go and lay down! Let her see him all she wants!" Oh, Lord! Here's wisdom; here's—

"Bibbs," said Mrs. Sheridan, "if you haven't got anything to do, you might step over and take Sibly's wraps home—she left 'em in the hall. I don't think you seem to quiet your poor father very much just now."

"All right." And Bibbs bore Sibly's wraps across the street and delivered them to Roscoe, who met him at the door. Bibbs said only, "Forgot these," and, "Good night, Roscoe," cordially and cheerfully, and returned to the new house. His mother and father were still talking in the library, but with discretion he passed rapidly on and upward to his own room, and there he proceeded to write in his notebook.

There seems to be another curious thing about love (Bibbs wrote). Love is blind while it lives and only opens its eyes and becomes very wide awake when it dies. Let it alone until then.

You cannot reason with love or with any other passion. The wise will not wish for love—nor for ambition. These are passions and bring others in their train—hatreds and jealousies—all blind. Friendship and a quiet heart for the wise.

What a turbulence is love! It is dangerous for a blind thing to be turbulent; there are precipices in life. One would not cross a mountain-pass with a thick cloth over his eyes. Lovers do. Friendship walks gently and with open eyes.

To walk to church with a friend! To sit beside her there! To rise when she rises, and to touch with one's thumb and fingers the other half of the hymn book that she holds! What lover, with his

hence ways, could know this transcendent happiness?

Friendship brings everything that heaven could bring. There is no labor that cannot become a living rapture if you know that a friend is thinking of you as you labor. So you sing at your work. For the work is part of the thoughts of your friend; so you love it!

Love is demanding and claiming and insistent. Friendship is all kindness—it makes the world glorious with kindness. What color you see when you walk with a friend! You see that the gray sky is brilliant and shimmering; you see that the smoke has warm browns and is marvelously sculptured—the air becomes iridescent. You see the gold in brown hair. Light floods everything.

When you walk to church with a friend you know that life can give you nothing richer. You pray that there will be no change in anything forever.

What an adorable thing it is to discover a little fellow in your friend, a bit of vanity that gives you one thing more about her to adore! On a cold morning she will perhaps walk to church with you without her furs, and she will blush and return an evasive answer when you ask her why she does not wear them. You will say no more, because you understand. She looks beautiful in her furs; you love their darkness against her cheek; but you comprehend that they conceal the ugliness of her throat and the fine line of her chin, and that she also has comprehended this, and, wishing to look still more bewitching, discards her furs at the risk of taking cold. So you hold your peace, and try to look as if you had not thought of it.

This theory is satisfactory except that it does not account for the absence of the muff. Ah, well, there must always be a mystery somewhere! Mystery is a part of enchantment.

Manual labor is best. Your heart can sing and your mind can dream while your hands are working. You could not have a singing heart and a dreaming mind all day if you had to scheme out dollars, or if you had to add columns of figures. Those things take your attention. You cannot be thinking of your friend while you write letters beginning, "Yours of the 17th inst. received and contents duly noted." But to work with your hands all day, thinking and singing, and then, after midnight, to hear the ineffable kindness of your friend's greeting—always there for you! Who would wake from such a dream as this?

Dawn and the sea—music in moonlight gardens—nightingales serenading through almond groves in bloom—what could bring such things into the city's turmoil? Yet they are here, and roses blossom in the field. This is what it means not to be alone! That is what a friend gives you!

CHAPTER XXII.

Bibbs was the only Sheridan to sleep soundly through the night and to wake at dawn with a light heart. His cheerfulness was vaguely diminished by the troubled state of affairs in his family. Bibbs was a sympathetic person, easily touched, and he was indeed living in a dream, and all things outside of it were veiled and remote—for that is the way of youth in a dream. And Bibbs, who had never before been of any age, either old or young, had come to his youth at last.

He went whistling from the house before even his father had come up stairs. There was a fog outdoors, saturated with a fine powder of soot, and though Bibbs noticed absentmindedly the dim shape of an automobile at the curb before Roscoe's house, he did not recognize it as Doctor Gurney's but went cheerily on his way through the dingy mist. And when he was once more in stalled beside his faithful zinc eater he whistled and sang to it, as other workmen did to their own machines sometimes, when things went well. His comrades in the shop glanced at him amusedly now and then. They liked him, and he ate his lunch at noon with a group of socialists who approved of his ideas and talked of electing him to their association.

The short days of the year had come and it was dark before the whistles blew. When the signal came, Bibbs went to his office, where he divested himself of his overalls—his single divergence from the routine of his fellow workmen—and after that he used soap and water copiously. This was his transformation scene; he passed into the office a rather frail young workman noticeably begrimed, and passed out of it to the pavement a cheerfully preoccupied sample of gen try, fastidious to the point of elegance.

The sidewalk was crowded with the bearers of dinner pails, men and boys and women and girls from the work rooms that closed at five. Many hurried and some loitered; they went both east and west, jostling one another and Bibbs, turning his face homeward, was forced to go slowly.

Coming toward him, as slowly, through the crowd, a tall girl caught sight of his long, thin figure and stood still until he had almost passed her. In the thick crowd and the thicker gloom he did not recognize her, though his shoulder actually touched hers. He would have gone by, but she laughed startledly, and he stopped short, dazed. Two boys, one chasing the other, swept between them, and Bibbs stood still, peering about him in deep perplexity. She leaned toward him.

"I knew you!" she said.

"Good heavens!" cried Bibbs. "I thought it was your voice coming out of a star!"

"There's only smoke overhead," said

Mary, and laughed again. "aren't any stars."

"Oh, yes, there were—when you laughed!"

She took his arm, and they went on. "I've come to walk home with you, Bibbs. I wanted to."

"But were you here in the—"

"In the dark? Yes! Waiting? Yes!"

Bibbs was radiant; he felt suffocated with happiness. He began to scold her.

"But it's not safe, and I'm not worth it. You shouldn't have— You ought to know better. What did—"

"I was in this part of town already," she said. "At least, I was only seven or eight blocks away, and it was dark when I came out, and I'd have had to go home alone—and I preferred going home with you."

"It's pretty beautiful for me," said Bibbs, with a deep breath. "You'll never know what it was to hear your laugh in the darkness—and then to— to see you standing there! Oh, it was like— it was like— How can I tell you what it was like?" They had passed beyond the crowd now, and a crossing lamp shone upon them, which revealed the fact that she was without her furs. Here was a puzzle. However, allowing it to stand, his solicitude for her took another turn. "I think you ought to have a car," he said, "especially when you want to be out after dark. You need one in winter, anyhow. Have you ever asked your father for one?"

"No," said Mary. "I don't think I'd care for one particularly."

"But my mother tried to insist on sending one over here every afternoon for me. I wouldn't let her, because I like to walk, but a girl—"

"A girl likes to walk, too," said Mary. "Let me tell you where I've been this afternoon and how I happened to be near enough to make you take me home. I've been to see a little old man who makes pictures of the world. He has a sort of warehouse for a studio, and he lives there with his mother and his wife and their seven children, and he's gloriously happy. I'd seen one of his pictures at an exhibition, and I wanted to see more of them, so he showed them to me. He has almost everything he ever painted; I don't suppose he's sold more than four or five pictures in his life. He gives drawing lessons to keep alive."

"How do you mean he paints the smoke?" Bibbs asked.

"Literally. He paints from his studio window and from the street—anywhere. He just paints what's around him—and it's beautiful."

"The smoke?"

"Wonderful! He sees the sky through it, somehow. He does the ugly roofs of cheap houses through a haze of smoke, and he does smoky sunsets and smoky sunrises, and he has other things with the heavy, solid, slow columns of smoke going far out and growing more ethereal and mixing with the hazy light in the distance; and he has others with the broken skyline of downtown, all misted with the smoke and with puffs and jets of vapor that

you called me your friend. The city is only a rumble on the horizon for me. It can't come any closer than the horizon so long as you let me see you standing by my old zinc eater all day long, helping me, Mary—" He stopped with a gasp. "That's the first time I've called you 'Mary!'"

"Yes," she laughed, a little tremulously. "Though I wanted you to!"

"I said it without thinking. It must be because you came there to walk home with me. That must be it."

"Women like to have things said," Mary informed him, her tremulous laughter continuing. "Were you glad I came for you?"

"No—not 'glad.' I felt as if I were being carried straight up and up and up—over the clouds. I feel like that still. I think I'm that way most of the time. I wonder what it was like before I knew you. The person I was then seems to have been somebody else, not Bibbs Sheridan at all. It seems long, long ago. I was gloomy and sickly—somebody else—somebody I don't understand now, a coward afraid of shadows—afraid of things that didn't exist—afraid of my old zinc eater! And now I'm only afraid of what might change anything."

She was silent a moment, and then, "You're happy, Bibbs?" she asked.

"Ah, don't you see?" he cried. "I want it to last for a thousand, thousand years, just as it is! You've made me so rich, I'm a miser. I wouldn't have one thing different—nothing, nothing!"

"Dear Bibbs!" she said, and laughed happily.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Bibbs continued to live in the shelter of his dream. These were turbulent days in the new house, but Bibbs had no part whatever in the turbulence—he seemed an absent-minded stranger, indifferent by accident and not wholly aware that he was present. He would sit, faintly smiling over pleasant imaginings and dear reminiscences of his own, while battle raged between Edith and her father, or while Sheridan unloosed jeremiads upon the sullen Roscoe, who drank heavily to endure them. He was sorry for his father and for Roscoe, and for Edith and for Sibly, but their sufferings and outcries seemed far away.

Sibly was under Gurney's care. Roscoe had sent for him on Sunday night, not long after Bibbs returned the abandoned wraps; and during the first days of Sibly's illness the doctor found it necessary to be with her frequently, and to install a muscular nurse. And whether he would or no, Gurney received from his hysterical patient a variety of pungent information which would have staggered anybody but a family physician. Among other things he was given to comprehend the change in Bibbs, and why the zinc eater was not putting a lump in its operator's gizzard as of yore.

Sibly was not delicious—she was a thin little egg writhing and shrieking in pain. Life had hurt her, and had driven her into hurting herself; her condition was only the adult's terrible exaggeration of that of a child after a bad bruise—there must be screaming and telling mother all about the hurt and how it happened. Sibly babbled herself hoarse when Gurney withheld morphine. She went from the beginning to the end in a breath. No protest stopped her; nothing stopped her.

"You ought to let me die!" she wailed. "What harm have I ever done to anybody that you want to keep me alive? Just look at my life! I only married Roscoe to get away from home, and look what it got me into! . . . I wanted to have a good time—and how could I? Where's any good time among these Sheridans? They never even had wine on the table! I thought I was marrying into a rich family, where I'd meet attractive people I'd read about, and travel, and go to dances—and, oh, my Lord! all I got was these Sheridans! I did the best I could; I just tried to live. . . . Things were just beginning to look brighter, and then I saw how Edith was getting him away from me. And what could I do? What can any woman do in my fix? I couldn't stand it! I went to that icicle—that Vertrees girl—and she could have helped me a little, and it wouldn't have hurt her. Let her wait!" Sibly's voice, hoarse from babbling, became no more than a husky whisper, though she strove to make it louder. She struggled half upright, and the nurse restrained her. "I'd get up out of this bed to show her she can't do such things to me! I was absolutely ladylike, and she walked out and left me there alone! She'll see! She started after Bibbs before Jim's casket was fairly underground and she thinks she's landed that poor loon—but she'll see! She'll see! An' Edith needn't have told what she told Roscoe—it wouldn't have hurt her to let me alone. And he told her I bore him—telephoning him I wanted to see him. He needn't have done it. He needn't—needn't—" Her voice grew fainter, for that while, with exhaustion, though she would go over it all again as soon as her strength returned. She lay panting. Then, seeing her husband standing disheveled in the doorway, "Don't come in, Roscoe," she murmured. "I don't want to see you." And as he turned away she added, "My kind of sorry for you, Roscoe."

"I'm kind of sorry for you, too," her antagonist, Edith, was not more coherent in her own walling, and she had the advantage of a mother for listener. She had also the disadvantage of a mother for duenna, and Mrs. Sheridan, under her husband's sharp tutelage, proved an effective one. Edith was reduced to telephoning Lamhorn from shops whenever she could juggle her mother into a momentary distraction over a counter.

Edith was incomparably more in love than before Lamhorn's expulsion. Her whole being was nothing but the determination to hurdle everything that separated her from him. She was in a state that could be altered by only the lightest and most delicate diplomacy of suggestion, but Sheridan, like legions of other parents, intensified her passion and fed it hourly fuel by opposing to it an intolerable force. He swore she should cool, and thus set her on fire.

Edith planned neatly. She fought hard, every other evening, with her father, and kept her bed between times to let him see what his violence had done to her. Then, when the mere sight of her set him to breathing fast, she said pitifully that she might bear her trouble if she went away; it was impossible to be in the same town with Lamhorn and not think always of him. Perhaps in New York she might forget a little. She had written to a school friend, established quietly with an aunt in apartments—and a month or so of theaters and restaurants might bring peace. Sheridan shouted with relief; he gave her a copious check, and she left upon a Monday morning, wearing violets with her mourning, and having kissed everybody goodly except Sibly and Bibbs. She might have kissed Bibbs, but he failed to realize that the day of her departure had arrived, and was surprised, on returning from his zinc eater that evening, to find her gone. "I suppose they'll be married there," he said, casually.

Sheridan, warming his stockings feet at the fire, jumped up, fuming. "Either you go out of here, or I will, Bibbs!" he snorted. "I don't want to be in the same room with the particular kind of idiot you are! She's through with that riffraff; all she needed was to be kept away from him a few weeks, and I kept her away, and it did the business. For heaven's sake, go on out of here!"

Bibbs obeyed the gesture of a hand still bandaged. And the black silk sling was still round Sheridan's neck, but no word of Gurney's and no excuriating twinge of pain could keep Sheridan's hand in the sling. The wounds, slight enough originally, had become infected; the first time he had dislodged the bandages, and healing was long delayed. Sheridan had the habit of gesture; he could not "take time to remember," he said, that he must be careful, and he had also a curious indignation with his hurt; he refused to

and murmurous, and Gurney hastened in. His guess was correct; Sheridan had been thumping the desk with his right hand. The physician scolded warmly, making good the fresh damage as best he might; and then he said what he had to say on the subject of Roscoe and Sibly, his opinion meeting, as he expected, a warmly hostile reception. But the result of this conversation was that by telephonic command Roscoe awaited his father, an hour later, in the library at the new house.

"Gurney says your wife's able to travel," Sheridan said brusquely, as he came in.

"Yes," Roscoe occupied a deep chair and sat in the dejected attitude which had become his habit. "Yes, she is."

"Edith had to leave town, and so Sibly thinks she'll have to, too?"

"Oh, I wouldn't put it that way," Roscoe protested, dreadingly.

"No, I hear you wouldn't!" There was a bitter gibe in the father's voice, and he added: "It's a good thing she's going abroad—if she'll stay there. I shouldn't think any of us want her here any more—you least of all!"

"It's no use your talking that way," said Roscoe. "You won't do any good."

"Well, when you come back to your office?" Sheridan used a brisker, kinder tone. "Three weeks since you showed up there at all. When you got to be ready to cut out whisky and all the rest of the foolishness and start in again? You ought to be able to make up for a lot of lost time and a lot of split milk when that woman takes herself out of the way and lets you and all the rest of us alone."

"It's no use, father. I tell you. I know what Gurney was going to say to you. I'm not going back to the office. I'm done!"

"Wait a minute before you talk that way!" Sheridan began his sentry-go up and down the room. "I suppose you know it's taken two pretty good men about sixteen hours a day to set things straight and get 'em running' right again, down in your office?"

"They must be good men," Roscoe added indifferently. "I thought I was doing about eight men's work. I'm glad you found two that could handle it."

"Look here! If I worked you it was for your own good. There are plenty of men drive harder than I do, and—"

"Yes. There are some that break down all the other men that work with em. They either die, or go crazy, or have to quit, and are no use the rest of their lives. The last's my case, I guess—complicated by domestic difficulties."

"You set there and tell me you give up?" Sheridan's voice shook, and he did the gesticulating hand which he extended appealingly toward the despondent figure. "Don't do it, Roscoe! Don't say it! Say you'll come down there again and be a man! This woman ain't goin' to trouble you any more. The work ain't got to hurt you, and you haven't got to worry you, and you can get shut of this nasty whisky-guzzlin'; it ain't fastened on you yet. Don't say—"

"It's no use on earth," Roscoe mumbled. "No use on earth."

"Look here! If you want another month's vacation—"

"I know Gurney told you, so what's the use talking about 'vacations'?"

"Gurney?" Sheridan vociferated the name savagely. "It's Gurney, Gurney, Gurney! Always Gurney! I don't know what the world's comin' to, with everybody runnin' around squealin'. 'The doctor says this,' and 'The doctor says that!' It makes me sick! How's this country expect to get its work done if Gurney and all the other old many-goats keep up this blatin' induced by overwork and emotional strain? They always got to stick the work in if they see a chance! I reckon you did have the 'emotional strain, and that's all's the matter with you. You'll be over it soon's this woman's gone, and work's the very thing to make you quit frettin' about her."

"Did Gurney tell you I was fit to work?"

"Shut up!" Sheridan bellowed. "I'm so sick of that man's name I feel like shootin' anybody that says it to me! He fumed and chafed, swearing indistinctly, then came and stood before his son. "Look here; do you think you're doin' the square thing by me? Do you? How much you worth?"

"I've got between seven and eight thousand a year clear of my own, out side the salary. That much is mine whether I work or not."

"It is? You could 'a' pulled it out without me, I suppose you think, a your age?"

"No. But it's mine, and it's enough."

"My Lord! It's about what a congressman gets, and you want to quit there! I suppose you think you'll get the rest when I kick the bucket, and all you have to do is lay back and wait! You let me tell you right here you'll never see one cent of it. You go out o' business now, and what would you know about landin' it? Be you ten or twenty years from now? Because I intend to stay here a little while yet, my boy! They'd either get it away from you or you'd sell for a nickel and let it be split up and—"

He whirled about, marched to the other end of the room, and stood silent a moment. Then he said, solemnly: "Listen. If you go out now, you leave me in the lurch, with nothin' on God's green earth to depend on but your brother—and you know what he is. I've depended on you for it all since I've died. Now you've listened to that dam' doctor, and he says maybe you won't ever be as good a man as you were, and that certainly you won't be for a year or so—probably more. Now that's all a lie. Men don't break down that way at your age. Look at me!



"Good-by."

And I tell you, you can shake this thing off. All you need is a little get up and a little gumption. Men don't go away for years and then come back into moving businesses like ours—they lose the strings. And if you could, I won't let you—if you lay down on me now, I won't—and that's because if you lay down you prove you ain't the man I thought you were." He cleared his throat and finished quietly: "Roscoe, will you take a month's vacation and come back and go to it?"

"No," said Roscoe, listlessly. "I'm through."

"All right," said Sheridan. He picked up the evening paper from a table, went to a chair by the fire and sat down, his back to his son. "Goodby."

Roscoe rose, his head hanging, but there was a dull relief in his eyes. "Best I can do," he muttered, seeming about to depart, yet lingering. "I figure it out a good deal like this," he said. "I didn't know my job was any strain, and I managed all right, but from what Gur—from what I hear, I was just up to the limit of my nerves from overwork, and the—the trouble at home was the extra strain that's fixed me the way I am. I tried to brace, so I could stand the work and the trouble too, on whisky—and that put the finish to me! I—I'm not hitting it as hard as I was for a while and I reckon pretty soon if I can get to feeling a little more energy, I better try to quit entirely—I don't know. I'm all in—and the doctor says so. I thought I was running along fine up to a few months ago, but all the time I was ready to bust, and didn't know it. Now, then, I don't want you to blame Sibly, and if I were you I wouldn't speak of her as 'that woman,' because she's your daughter-in-law and going to stay that way. She didn't do anything wicked. It was a shock to me, and I don't deny it, to find what she had done—encouraging that fellow to hang around her after he began trying to flirt with her, and losing her head over him the way she did. I don't deny it was a shock and that it'll always be a hurt 'inside of me' I'll never get over. But it was my fault; I didn't understand a woman's nature." Poor Roscoe spoke in the most profound and desolate earnest. "A woman craves society, and gaiety and meeting attractive people, and traveling. Well, I can't give her the other things, but I can give her the traveling—real traveling, not just going to Atlantic City or New Orleans the way she has, two, three times. A woman has to have something in her life besides a business man. And that's all I was. I never understood till I heard her talking when she was sick, and I believe if you'd heard her then you wouldn't speak so hard heartedly about her; I believe you might have forgiven her like I have that's all. I never cared anything for any girl but her in my life, but I was so busy with business I put it ahead of her. I never thought about her. I was so busy thinking business. Well, this is where it's brought us to—and now when you talk about 'business' to me I feel the way you do when anybody talks about Gurney to you. The word 'business' makes me dizzy—it makes me honestly sick at the stomach. I believe if I had to go downtown and step inside that office door I'd fall down on the floor, deathly sick. You talk about a 'month's vacation'—and I get just as sick. I'm rattled—I can't explain—I haven't got any plans—can't make any, except to take my girl and get just as far away from that office as I can—and stay. We're going to Japan first, and if we—"

(To be Continued)

Statistics of Blindness.

The 12 countries having the fewest blindness are as follows: Belgium (before the great war) had 43 blind persons to every 100,000 of the population; Canada, 44; Netherlands, 46; Saxony, 47; New Zealand, 47; western Australia, 50; Hongkong, 51; Prussia, 52; Denmark, 52; Germany, 60; New South Wales, 60, and the United States, 62.

In Much the Same Class.

The man who keeps kicking for the old times has about as much standing as the horse that refuses to quit shying at automobiles.



"I've Come to Walk Home With You Bibbs."

have colors like an orchard in mid April. I'm going to take you there some Sunday afternoon, Bibbs."

"You're showing me the town," he said. "I didn't know what was in it at all."

"There are workers in beauty here," she told him, gently. "There are other painters more prosperous than my friend. There are all sorts of things."

"I didn't know."

"No. Since the town began growin' so great that it called itself 'greater,' one could live here all one's life and know only the side of it that shows."

"The beauty workers seem buried very deep," said Bibbs. "And I imagine that your friend who makes the smoke beautiful must be buried deep of all. My father loves the smoke, but I can't imagine his buying one of your friend's pictures. He'd buy the 'Bay of Naples,' but he wouldn't get one of those. He'd think smoke in a picture was horrible—unless he could use it for an advertisement."

"Yes," she said, thoughtfully. "And really he's the town. They are buried pretty deep. It seems, sometimes, Bibbs."

"And yet it's all wonderful," he said. "You wonderful to me."

"You mean the town is wonderful to you?"

"Yes, because everything is, since



"Don't Come in, Roscoe," She Murmured.

pay it the compliment of admitting its existence.

The Saturday following Edith's departure Gurney came to the Sheridan building to dress the wounds and to have a talk with Sheridan which the doctor felt had become necessary. But he was a little before the appointed time and was obliged to wait a few minutes in an anteroom—there was a directors' meeting of some sort in Sheridan's office. The door was slightly ajar, leaking clear smoke and oratory, the latter all Sheridan's, and Gurney listened.

"No, sir, no, sir, no, sir!" he heard the big voice rumbling, and then, breaking into thunder, "I tell you NO! Some of you men make me sick! You'd lose your confidence in Almighty God if a doodlebug flipped his hind leg at you! You say money's tight all over the country. Well, what if it is! There's no reason for it to be tight, and it's not 'goin' to keep our money tight! You're always runnin' in the woodshed to hide your nickels in a crack because some fool newspaper says the market's a little skerry! You listen to every street-corner croaker and then come and set here and try to scare me out of a big thing. We're in on this—understand? I tell you there never was better times. These are good times and big times, and I won't stand for any other kind of talk. This country's on its feet as it never was before, and this city's on its feet and goin' to stay there!"

And Gurney heard a series of whacks and thumps upon the desk. "Bad times!" Sheridan vociferated, with accompanying thumps. "Rabbit talk! These times are glorious, I tell you! We're in the promised land, and we're goin' to stay there! That's all, gentlemen. The loan goes!"

The directors came