



"Madam," said Paul, with as much dignity as he could find in the circumstances, "do you know whom you are hugging in this public manner?"

Held up by the traffic, he turned and smiled at the middle-aged man and his wife who had evidently worked hard and who were just as evidently buying their first car. "Like Margaret and I might be doing in another twenty years," thought Paul. "I wonder how I can be human with them? If that was Margaret, I wonder what would tickle her more than anything else?"

He thought quickly. "I'm going to take you down Fifth Avenue," he said. "If madam has any shopping that wouldn't take long, I can stop at one of the stores a few minutes." "I do need a pair of gloves," hesitated the woman. "Do you think you could stop at Bolberg's?"

When they drew up at the glove shop, Paul noticed how proudly his passengers stepped out and crossed the sidewalk.

"Everybody's human, if we only know how to get at them," he thought.

However that may be, Paul's first prospects ordered a car, and before the month was over he had sold two more.

"Son," said Mr. Martin, hiding his natural shrewdness behind his naturally paternal manner, "it seems to me we're going to raise your wages five dollars a week. When a man gives satisfaction here, I like him to know it."

"Quick on the jump—quick on the jump," thought Paul, and aloud he said: "Thanks, Mr. Martin, but I've got a better scheme than that—better for you and better for me. I want a job as salesman." "We have salesmen enough," objected the other, slightly frowning. "I only offer you the raise because good demonstrators happen to be scarce."

"So do good salesmen," said Paul, searching his wits for something to clear the frown from Mr. Martin's face. "And so do good bosses, too," he smilingly added. "That's why I'd rather work for you than any one else I know."

Mr. Martin smiled at that, and Paul earnestly continued:

"Now listen, Mr. Martin. You know we have an awful lot of people who come in here and go away without buying a car. Well, they're the ones I want to handle. Give me a job as salesman—on a commission basis—and then turn all the hard nuts over to me. After everybody else has given them up, let me have a try!"

Mr. Martin looked at his watch. "I'm going to Detroit on the four o'clock train and can't talk any more now. I shall be back on Saturday. Do you think that will give you time to show results?"

"Plenty!" cried Paul. "But first I want an order on the Service Station to rig up a working model to show to my customers. I know exactly what I want, and it won't take you a minute to write the order. And then, if you'll tell Mr. Gunter to turn all the hard nuts over to me—"

MR. GUNTER was the head salesman of the Imperial Company—a handsome, striking figure with a drooping mustache, who looked like a matinee idol and was sometimes called the Great Gunter because of the volume of his sales.

"Mr. Gunter," said Mr. Martin, calling him in, "this young man has an idea he can sell cars. I think we may as well humor him a little and see if he can get results. So, until further notice, whenever you have a prospect who is walking out cold, I want you to introduce him to our young friend here. Please instruct the other salesmen accordingly."

"And this young man will do the rest?" asked the Great Gunter, with a patronizing smile behind his drooping mustache.

"You'll soon see," said Paul, his color rising a little.

His first chance came the next morning. Mr. Gunter had been working on a prospect for more than half an hour—a hard-faced business man who talked in

grunts and showed as much enthusiasm as a paving block on a wet, wintry day.

"Before you go," said Mr. Gunter, when this difficult customer began edging toward the door, "I want to introduce you to our Mr. Manion. You'll enjoy him immensely. We all do. Oh, Mr. Manion, this is Mr. Barker. Don't you want to see if you can interest him in the Imperial car?"

Whereupon the Great Gunter retired.

Meanwhile Paul was shaking hands with the chilly Mr. Barker.

"I've got something to show you over at the Service Station," he whispered. "It won't take a minute, and it's well worth seeing."

They left the sales-room together, and nearly an hour later Paul came back alone, hoarse and unhappy.

"Sell him?" asked Gunter. "No, sir," said Paul, and again he colored a little. "He was too much for me."

At this the Great Gunter and the other salesmen laughed with rare delight.

"My boy," said Mr. Gunter, stroking his drooping mustache, "when you've lived a little longer you'll know a little more."

Whereat the other salesmen laughed again, and became quite eager to find other hard nuts for Paul to crack.

"Never mind," thought the latter, when he had cooled off. "I got a lot of practice out of that old bird, and I can't expect to sell a car to every man I tackle. If I sell only one a week it's twenty-five dollars for little Paul, and that's more money than I've ever made yet."

In his second attempt he was equally unsuccessful. But when Paul piloted his third party around to the Service Station—a middle-aged man with a high forehead—he probably had a premonition of victory. In any event, he made his demonstration with such enthusiasm that in less than fifteen minutes he was back at the sales-room, and the order was grudgingly O. K.'d by Mr. Gunter.

AT the end of the week Paul had sold four machines. The Great Gunter himself, suffering from an off week, had sold only six.

Mr. Martin returned from Detroit on Saturday morning, and Mr. Gunter followed him into his private office. When the head salesman came out, Mr. Martin sent for Paul.

"Well, son," he began, "what have you done for yourself this week?"

"Sold four machines!" "M-m-m. Maybe so. Mr. Gunter claims commission on one of those sales. He says the man would have come back anyhow."

"No, sir!" exclaimed Paul. "He was going out cold. Any of the salesmen will tell you! Why, Mr. Gunter only introduced him to me as a sort of joke."

"We'll forget that," said Mr. Martin. "I want to see this model that you've got at the Service Station."

Paul jumped for his hat, and a few minutes later he was showing his demonstrating car to Mr. Martin. The top of the engine had been removed, showing the pistons and the valves. The front of the crankshaft was coupled to an electric motor, and when Paul threw the switch the crankshaft turned, the pistons rose and fell, the valves opened and shut, and the engine went through its regular performance in full view. But the crowning point of the demonstration was the arrangement of the spark-plugs. These had been mounted in place with wire, and,

when the engine turned, fat sparks jumped over the ends of the plugs, adding fireworks to the movements of the engine.

"Great work!" exclaimed Mr. Martin. "How did you get the idea?"

"Trying to think of something human," said Paul. "What I mean is this," he hastily added. "I've often noticed how men like to watch machinery going round—it's human nature, I suppose, or they wouldn't all be that way. And, because this was a new idea, it took hold good and hard. Then, you see, I have the back wheels jacked up. If a man comes in with his wife, I'm nearly sure to get them. I let him spin the back wheels with his hands, and then I put the lady in the seat and show her how to step on the brake. Then I let her husband try to turn the back wheels while she applies the brakes."

"It tickles 'em both, somehow—a sort of tug of war, I guess. And after they've tried that a few times, and have had another look at the engine, and seen the sparks, and listened to my demonstration—why, Mr. Martin, it's just as easy!"

"A great idea!" repeated Mr. Martin thoughtfully. "I'm going to take this model and put it in the Broadway window."

"I don't know what Mr. Gunter will think about it," smiled Paul. "He calls it a baby trick, and—"

"Son, don't you worry about Mr. Gunter. I'm afraid he's going to leave us after I've had another talk with him. Look here. How'd you like to have his job? Try it for a month, and then, if you make good—well, there you are: five thousand a year and commissions. Do you think you can hold it down?"

Paul silently shook hands—silently because he couldn't trust himself to speak just then. But when he had swallowed hard a few times he said: "I'll go right down and find a machinist. I'd like to get this car moved over as soon as I can, because I want to run up to Massachusetts over Sunday."

NEXT morning at half past nine, Paul got off the train at East Hampton and inquired the way to Mrs. Spencer's. As he drew near, he saw his two children playing in the grass at the back of the house. He called them, and they ran up the pleasant road to meet him, crying shrilly with excitement. Margaret looked out of the back door to see what they were shouting about, and the next moment she too had joined the charge, her arms twined around his neck.

"Madam," said Paul, speaking with as much dignity as he could find in the circumstances, "do you know whom you are hugging in this public manner?"

"Why, no," she cried, laughing and crying together. "I always run out this way when I see a strange man!"

"Madam," said Paul, "you are hugging the future sales manager of the Imperial Car Company. And if his income isn't fifteen thousand dollars next year, I shall divorce you and marry an older and uglier woman!"

"Oh, Paul!" she gasped. "Is it true?" "Sure," he said. "The Little Wonder's going to college, after all. But let's go in. I've got a present for you in my valise. How's your aunt?"

"Oh, Paul!" gasped Margaret, again. "I—I never thought you'd come—this way. I—I—Mrs. Spencer isn't my aunt," she desperately added. "I—I'm working here."

This time it was Paul's turn to gasp. "Working here?"

"Don't—don't be angry, Paul. But when I saw how fast you were tied, I advertised in the paper—and I'm working here for my board and the children's—so you could have a real chance—to break loose—"

THAT night, after the children had gone to bed, Paul and Margaret strolled along the pleasant road in the moonlight.

"Paul—you aren't angry at me?" she whispered.

Even in the moonlight she saw the tears in his eyes—saw them and understood.

"Oh, Paul, Paul!" she breathed. "If you only knew how proud and happy I feel!"