

They Found Success

A Story With A Sequel

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THE STORY

The slim white ship stuck its sharp nose sniffingly into the warm, heavily-flowing gulf current and a first flying fish scooted along its side. The sun poured down upon the open boat deck that yesterday had been coated with thin sleet, and the ship's officers blossomed forth in starched white uniforms. The swimming pool on the front hatch was filled with white, slightly creamy. water that boiled up through a fire hose out of a deep blue sea, and sailors off duty sprawled out on the after-deck, polishing their mahogany skins to a still deeper shade of the reddish brown that was a perfect background for proud tattooing.

And the passengers of the S.S. Tallamares shed their winter coats and appeared in the spring and summer outfits that had seemed so absurdly inappropriate when they packed them in suit-cases three days before in New York.

Even fat Billy Holden wandered away from his pet table in the bar and picked up a shuffle-board stick with a slightly unsteady hand. But the tourist passengers were comfortably sitting in the sun or dressing for the pool or playing deck tennis on the boat deck. So, plainly relieved, he laid down the stick, sighed in resignation, took a squinty look at the sun, decided it was too bright, and gravitated back to the bar and a fresh whisky sour.

Tom and Isabel Henderson watched his progress with amusement. They were leaning shoulder to shoulder against the rail on the promenade deck, the wind playing happily in their hair, a slight flick of spray hitting their cheeks as the ship dipped its prow into a slow, foamy roller. Their left hands were locked tight, discreetly covered with his otherwise useless hat.

Not that anybody aboard ship minded the Hendersons holding hands. In fact, the other tourists would have lifted cynical eyebrows if they hadn't, for Tom and Isabel Henderson had boarded the Tallamares still dripping rice (despite the thousand-mile drive from the altar) and carrying the brand-new baggage of honey-mooners. Their first night aboard, as they entered the dining saloon, the ship's orchestra struck up "Here Comes the Bride!" and the passengers all smiled their approval as the dining steward placed them at a remote table for two near a large porthole in the far wall.

"Good morning!" cried bluff Clayton Gibbs, as he paused for a second near their rail. "How are the young love birds this morning?"

"Billing and cooing as usual," replied Tom over his shoulder.

"I coo and he pays the bills," explained Isabel. "Such a nice combination." And Clayton Gibbs, who with his wife occupied Suite A and the two best seats at the captain's table, and who bragged that they were celebrating their thirty-fifth anniversary, laughed and continued his walk about the deck.

"For a man who probably never walks farther than from the president's desk to a limousine in front of the bank, he's not a bad old deck athlete," Tom commented.

"His wife takes her exercise shuffling cards," replied Isabel, and they linked arms and walked toward the pool, where young and quite lovely Phyllis Hales was defying ship's regulations and the laws of gravity by diving recklessly with Seth McDowell into the ship's tank. She waved wet hands at the honeymooners on the deck above her and cried, "Watch this!" as she climbed up the ship's ladder and dived into what was, luckily, six feet of water. A half-second before and after, the motion a: the ship made the six feet about two. She bobbed up and hurled a defiant challenge at Seth, who followed in the same foolhardy fashion.

"Two heads without a single thought," sighed Isabel.

"If you've never seen anybody break his neck, we'll all stick around." Kenneth Wilton leaned familiarly against Tom's shoulder. He was heading for Panama. as he told everyone in strictest lack of confidence, to do another novel. His last three had gone with a bang on the famous Wilton formula of Sex-Seduction-Satire-Success. Panama, he announced, had some interesting extra-marital relationships, great material for a book. Now he watched the girl in the tank and soliloquized: "Beautiful and more brainless! What a perfect combination in a woman."

He strolled on, pleased with himself and his cynicism.

"Nice, happy-hearted sort of chap," said Tom ironically, and they walked, too.

The Jewish group were clustered in self-protection on the lee of the ship. Swarthy, hefty Mrs. Finklestein, quite as typed as her name, was talking food with Mrs. Bloom and Mrs. Levine. Mr. Finklestein was telling Mr. Bloom and young Mr. Abrahams why he had taken his vacation right now, "in spite of the fact that the fur market is knocking the roof off Seventh Avenue." Good-looking Irving Ratoff, very like a master of ceremonies in a middle-class night club, was talking in a low, throaty voice to dark and slightly Egyptian Norma Kleinfield, who wore all day, except at meals, a play suit that suggested she was at any minute about to go into her tap routine, which she never quite did.

The Hendersons bowed to the ultra-heartiness of their collective greetings, and paused at the deck chairs of old Professor and Mrs. Lodge, who were celebrating his retirement from the university's physics department with six months in the tropics.

"Take a tour and see the world," said Tom, as they meandered on again.

"The whole world right on your ship," supplemented Isabel; "the whole of mankind - banker, scientist, fur merchant, author, leisure class, rich man, poor man--"

"Must you talk about me like that?"

"Rich in love, darling, if poor in cash."

They passed along an empty stretch of deck.

"I wonder just where they, all these people, place us."

"Probably as the idle rich," Tom answered. "We'll not confess you married a young doctor, who had to take the cool thousand his dad left him and blow it all in on an extravagant holiday for a new bride. Poor doctor with poor sense, they'd all decide."

"But what about his taste?"

He squeezed her arm affectionately. "Ah, that is beyond question."

She walked silently for a moment, and then, "Don't let's think about the thousand. It's invested, my darling, invested in happiness that can't be lost."

"I know. And because I'm so blissfully happy, my dear, I'll go back to the old office in the good old town and make you a fortune."

And during the time it takes the fortune to accumulate, I'll tend your flat and patch your clothes and be jealous of all your women patients."

"And both of us will remember these days and be glad."

They laughed. But under the laughter they had felt that quick heart-compression that lack of money causes. He had been practising in their small midwestern town for three years. ever since his internship, brilliant but without direct results in patients. He'd not done too badly, but perhaps he felt the field was too limited. Perhaps their town of less than a hundred thousand had too many doctors already. "One doctor to every family even if they have twins," he often thought. Perhaps he would do better if he specialized more, cut off for a bigger town and bigger hospitals. . . .

Instead he had married Isabel, just out of college. She was a combination of practical good sense and romance that appealed to his head and quickened his heart. They married and he took the thousand dollars insurance and staked it on a honeymoon and happiness.

And neither of them was sorry; though, when they stopped to think about the future, they were just a bit afraid.

"Hey, you down there!"

They looked up. Sam Waters and his young wife were leaning far and dangerously out over the rail of the boat deck.

"Come up and join the old married people." They were all of 29 and 27, but they had been married five year,, which gave them the right to patronize.

"We've got our block cards and a fresh bottle of Scotch. Come aloft and we'll show Culbertson some tricks he never thought of."

Sam and Sally Waters were, as they themselves admitted, just about close to being idle rich. He did practise law in his uncle's office, but not hard enough to bring about a breakdown. And she had a new evening gown for each night of the trip and showed them all to Isabel the first day out. Nice couple and amusing, and they had quite adopted the Hendersons.

So Tom and Isabel wandered aloft and played bridge and they all kept the lock deck steward busy getting ice that melted almost as soon as it splashed into their tall, amber-coloured glasses.

Just one new passenger got on at Havana. He was out pacing the deck with long, vigorous, well-tailored strides after an early breakfast.

The tourist passengers were sleeping late, or trying to. Havana had proved a gay stop-over, and the morning light filtered through curtained portholes upon reluctant risers. Queer tastes wrapped their tongues, tastes that Havana's 'W.K. Sloppy Joe' could have analysed. Sam and Sally Waters groaned in duet as a sunbeam prodded them merrily and mercilessly. Breakfast was forgone by many an uncomfortable tourist.

Tom and Isabel were feeling quite normal, but a little disillusioned. They had loved the soft, half-tropical beauty of Havana, a bit of old Spain and Paris embedded in the bluest of seas. They were more than a little ashamed of Havana by night; a night to all seeming, fashioned to dent the pocketbooks of Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Finklestein, to excite the bawdy cynicism of Kenneth Wilton, to rouse Phyllis Hales to unexpected vulgarity, and shroud Billy Holden's bloodshot eyes with alcohol and animal desire.

The honeymooners sought the deck, glad of the fresh breeze and the clean sun after Havana's heavy night and faked gaiety set in motion for the tourist (and sucker) trade.

"Sorry we went," said Isabel. "Didn't like it either," said Tom. "I suppose it's seeing life."

"Pretty smelly for something that's still alive." And they almost bumped into the one tourist who had embarked at Havana.

Both of them saw him at the same moment. They looked at him with the faint hostility with which the regular cruise tourists regard any newcomer on the ship. By what right does a stranger intrude on their already-sealed circles?

But this stranger smiled and their resentment evaporated. They smiled in a response that was involuntary. He had that kind of compelling smile. And as he walked past them, they both rudely turned to look at him over their shoulder.

"Bond Street!" said she, with an eye to his perfectly-cut flannels.

"Olympics!" said he, with an eye to his broad shoulders and slim waist.

"Looks all tanned and handsome-like," said she.

"Darling, not so darn much enthusiasm," he growled, in mock jealousy.

"Almost as good-looking as my husband, whom I should like to have you meet," said Tom's wife.

"That's better," said her husband.

They saw the newcomer later playing deck tennis with little Walter and Phoebe Wheeler. He looked a young thirty-five, but he kept the two youngsters racing for the ring as if he were in his early twenties.

They saw him at dinner sitting alone at a small table, very smart in a white mess jacket and softly starched linen. He had strong, competent-looking hands wearing the seal ring of a big university.

He spoke to them later as they were standing together looking at the moon.

"Glad it gets your approval," he said, indicating, the vast silver drum that was spilling its contents lavishly over the sea. "I guessed it was something very special - your moon really, isn't it?"

They made a place for him at the rail and talked in easy, desultory fashion. His name, he told them, though they had long since learned it from the accommodating purser, was Emmet Deane. He had

been in Havana for about a month. Finishing the cruise and then settling down in his home town, name not mentioned.

Later still he danced in the lounge with Isabel and sat over an extremely leisurely highball at their table. He talked a little about Havana.

"Lovely city, but gang-ridden. Politicos with graft in their pockets and guns in their hands. Hard on the people. But nobody is ever over interested in the people. I suppose, except," and he smiled wryly, "fanatics like me."

And with that he moved off to talk cheerfully to old Professor and Mrs. Lodge.

The next morning he and Tom played deck tennis, with Isabel on the sidelines, and he gave Tom a good, sportsmanlike beating, rather surprising that quite competent young athlete. Then they swam together, the three of them - odd that three people can be said to swim together in a ship's pool pre-empted and surrounded by about twenty energetic young humans. Phyllis Hales made eyes at him and risked her neck and other people's lives as she tried to attract his attention by foolhardy, if graceful, dives.

He looked at her just long enough to say: "Careful, Miss Hales. Burial at sea is a very lovely ceremonial, but not much fun if you're the chief participant." Whereupon Phyllis dived recklessly just as the boat careened slightly, and she scraped her lovely nose on the bottom of the tank.

In Panama they saw the canal and went shopping in a fivesome - the two young couples, Hendersons and Waterses, and Deane. They flew across to Panama City and strolled through what Henry Morgan, buccaneer, had left of old Panama's ancient capital. But when the young folks planned to do Colon by night, he shook his head.

"Dull stuff, really. New York's vaudeville failures, when they die, come to the Colon night clubs. The clubs are strong on drink, weak on talent, and long on dirt - all kinds. Naughtiness for the tourists' sake always seems such cheap naughtiness."

They resented this faintly and went anyhow, only to find that he had been understating the facts.

Before reaching Honduras the Hendersons had asked him to forsake his pleasantly solitary little table and sit at theirs, and he had accepted. Sam and Sally Waters were a bit huffy. "You declined to sit with us," they reminded the Hendersons, but the huff blew over.

All of them had long since reached the stage of first names, and the Hendersons found that they were seeing less and less of Sam and Sally and more and more of Emmet Deane. Hardly knowing that they talked of themselves, Tom and Isabel found his attentive ear most flattering; they talked of Tom's profession and his hopes as a doctor, slightly wilted by the monotony of three not too successful years; they admitted the sheer recklessness of their honeymoon plunge; they confessed to a vagueness about what the future might hold. The old home town seemed less attractive as they talked. They could from this distance see its clogging mists and fogs of conservatism, its insurmountable walls of prejudice and pettiness.

The ship turned its prow out of Nicaragua for the last leg of the sea trip homeward. The crowd in the lounge was very gay and very noisy. Tom and Isabel stood it for a time and then, with a nod to Sam and Sally, pushed out into the fresh air.

Deane was standing against the forward deck rail smoking.

"Like all this?" he asked suddenly.

"All of what?" asked Tom, and then somehow knew. Fat Billy Holden lurched against them, breathing profuse and sweaty apologies in a sopping voice. Phyllis and Seth sat, her light cloak about them both, in the shadow of the stairway. Kenneth Wilton walked out of the lounge smiling his unpleasant smile. He paused near the group for just a second.

"The trip to Panama was a washout," he volunteered. "For fresh and diversified vice, Harlem or Park Avenue could teach Colon the whole volume."

Mr. Gibbs walked past, patiently listening while Mr. Finklestein told him why banks were not getting the results they should out of their loans to smart business men.

"All this?" echoed Tom. "Not particularly."

"Let's go up top," said Deane.

They sat on the boat deck, the brilliant stars of the southern sky leaning close enough to pluck. The Southern Cross could, with a little effort, Tom thought, in a sudden poetic flight, be made into a pin for Isabel, and then blushed a bit at his romanticism. The deck steward below beat a gong for the horse-racing; mellowed by the soft night, it might have been a gong calling oriental worshippers to prayer.

They had found a skylight with an easy slant, and rested back against it, their eyes on the stars, grey smoke from their cigarettes floating like soft haze into the currents of the night.

Then Deane began to talk.

"My last holiday, this," he said. "The next one, who knows? Not for a time, that's sure. And, frankly, I'm glad:"

This was evidently an offhand prelude. To what? They waited. Clearly this Emmet Deane had something he wanted to discuss. He went on,

"I'm on my way back to do a job. Frankly again, I can hardly wait. It's something I've been planning all my life. I like to think it is something big, maybe important. May I tell you about it? It may interest you. If it does, there's something else that I want to talk over with you, something that concerns you."

Their answer was quiet, but left him no doubt. "Did you ever hear, you two youngsters, of Grandville Deane?"

Who hadn't? The almost fabulously rich oil pioneer who had rocked the money market and made oil history and died leaving the country's third largest fortune. All this had happened when they were very young, but the legends of Grandville Deane were seemingly immortal, a sort of Paul Bunyan of the financial world.

"Well," said Deane, "I happen to be his only son. Dad married when he was well on in years. Mother died at my birth. Dad hired a publicity expert just to keep my name out of the papers. I still keep him on the salary roll."

If, thought Tom and Isabel, quickly and in the secret of their minds, if this is the son of Grandville Dean, why, he's incredibly rich. Who would have thought this matter-of-fact person

"Dad tied up his money, except a moderate income, until I was thirty-three. That was two years ago. You can imagine the money is plentiful, embarrassingly so. It was a temptation just to start spending it. A lot of fun in all that money."

"Rather!" breathed Tom, feelingly.

"But I've a bigger dream than just being a rich man's prodigal son. I've seen too many prodigals. Nobody likes them, and they end by not liking themselves. So for two years I've been studying and travelling and visiting the people who could help me with my dreams- blueprinting the whole thing in my mind. Now I'm going back and I'm putting dad's money and my dream together."

"Oil?" asked Tom, thinking at once in terms of the source of Grandville Deane's money. "It must be an exciting game, producing oil." Deane shook his head.

"Not oil, Tom. Men. I'm going to see if I can't produce men."

It sounded just a little daft. Too much tropics or too much money. Tom and Isabel wrinkled their foreheads in puzzlement.

"Sounds - well, sounds screwy, doesn't it?" Deane was laughing a little at himself. "Maybe it is. That's why I haven't told anyone, except a few choice spirits, about my dream. But maybe it's not as mad as it sounds. Maybe I can turn my dream into a blessed reality and make potential little gangsters and promising little prostitutes into men and women with happy, sound lives."

Isabel sat erect on the skylight, her alert face a single intelligent question.

"Tell us about it, won't you?" she asked. Deane tossed his cigarette, a tiny shooting star that parabolaed out into the night. He twined his fingers tight and talked.

"Money means very little to me. really. Perhaps that's because I've always had it. And I'd feel rotten if I took all dad's money and spent it on myself. I believe that dad was an honest old chap, as far as he saw the light; but nobody has a right to as much money as he made. He had the Midas touch, I guess, and seemed to make money flow right out of the ground. Even so, I don't want the stuff for myself, at least I can't imagine a duller life than a life devoted to spending the money somebody else made.

"Yet money can do this job for me, make this dream come true. Here's the scheme:

"First, I'm going back to my own city. Do you know it, that town of mine?"

He mentioned it, and they nodded. Really it was just a vivid name to them, since they had never visited it; but it was a name for the vast, sprawling, noisy, half-primitive, part-civilised Goliath of a town that sprawled along some twenty miles of river-front, spawning the nation's chief crop of gangsters and racketeers and loose women, and in sharp contrast giving birth to great artists and mighty men of business and powerful writers and a surprising crop of priests and nuns; a city of graft-ridden politics and magnificent hotels, of the country's finest public library and park system and its most atrocious slums and fabulous rackets. The whole nation knew the city. They did, too.

"Well," continued Deane, "while I've been away, my agents have been buying up almost three square blocks of tenements and dumps and old, ratty warehouses in the centre of the town. They just buy them and hold them. Nobody knows they've been sold. The section is the very centre of the city's worst slums. The city's? Maybe there's a worse slum somewhere in the heart of China; I'm not sure.

"When I get back, we start. We're tearing the whole thing down flat to the ground. The youngsters are going to think it's just another big capitalistic warehouse going up. Those poor little kids!" His voice was suddenly soft with emotion. "Trained to be gangsters as soon as their fingers can pull the trigger of a toy gun; corrupted before they know what the meaning of sin is; children without a chance, young people beaten down by poverty and disease before life has started.

"Oh, yes, I know; out of the tenements come cardinals and governors, great artists and actors, big men in politics and business. I'm not thinking of geniuses, though even genius has a tough time against the blight of that slum.

"Well, once we've torn down the rotten tenements and shacks, we're going to start to build. I've put aside half my father's fortune for that. The other half is for endowment. I'm going to build - what was it that Mark Twain's Yankee called it? - a man factory."

The young couple sat in tensest interest.

"What's it to be like?" asked Isabel.

"Well," said Deane slowly, "I'm not quite sure. I'm not going to rush things. We'll start, I know that, with a recreational centre and a clinic. Recreation comes first. I want a place where these kids can play, a gymnasium, a big swimming pool, a hall for their kid plays, parlours that are decent places for youngsters to meet their friends, hobby rooms. It's just the youngsters I'm thinking of. Let someone else take care of the oldsters. I want a place where they can dance without going to the devil, and sing without paying some tavern-keeper for the privilege, and be together without having some pervert leaning over their shoulder.

"Then the clinic with a hospital attached. It's not to be a place to cure broken-down humans, but a place to teach young humans how to avoid breaking down. Most clinics think of the sick; I want my clinic to care for the well. We need to prescribe milk and good food and sunlight for these poor kids. We want to teach them how to live right, so that they won't die of the slum diseases.

"Slum diseases? Why, we send doctors off into the jungle to study tropical diseases. I want my doctors to study the diseases that make the tenements and slums of our cities worse than jungles.

"We'll add as we develop. I think one of the first things I'll need is a corps of young lawyers, who don't think of law as the rich man's insurance but as the poor man's protection. I want lawyers who'll fight for the parents of these kids against the racketeers who make life horrible for them. I want lawyers who'll stand between my small gangster kids or their unlucky sisters and the penitentiary and the reform school; lawyers who'll be big brothers to the poor.

"Of course, we'll put in a humane social-service department. I've got a grand old ex-pugilist with a heart of platinum who'll round up my kids as no trained social worker could do. I'm building a lovely chapel there, and if I can get the Archbishop to lend me a young priest, I want him for the kids' confessions and religious training.

"Do you know" (he looked far out to sea), "if this thing goes as I hope, maybe I can teach other chaps with money that the biggest buy in the world for their money is youngsters. What investment could possibly equal an investment in human beings, decent citizens, clean, upstanding men and women?"

He turned sharply and looked at them a little embarrassed. He had been talking with an ever-increasing tempo, until his words fairly rushed out as if beyond the control even of his enthusiasm. Now he was a little ashamed of his display of feeling.

"Sounds crazy to you?" he asked.

"It sounds marvellous!" cried Isabel.

"Grand!" said Tom, briefly but sincerely.

Both the young people could somehow see a sort of fairy city rising there in the midst of the city's slums. They could feel the man's enthusiasm kindling their imagination: Little boys caught up from a life of crime and turned to useful citizenship; little girls, sweet and dangerous in their innocence, rescued to become wives and mothers and the makers of homes. They could see these children of the slums at play. They could see their wan, undernourished bodies developed to full health. It was a dream -yes, but a dream made possible by the money of this young man, who could take the Deane oil millions and use them for the making of men.

"You're good to have told us," said Isabel softly. And then, like a woman, "Why?"

Deane turned to them smiling.

"Because I've been slowly assembling my staff -men and women who could catch fire at the spark of my dream. I'll need a good many to work with me, people who prefer doing good to making money. I'll need a lot of them. Of course, I'll pay them well, at least as well as most of them would be paid in any other line of work. I'm going to live down there in the slums myself."

"In the slums?"

"Why not? I couldn't see myself rolling up to the door of my centre every day in an expensive car and leaving it at night to go back to a home in the country-club grounds. Could you? Wouldn't seem right. No, I'm going to live there, and most of my staff will live with me. After all, I fancy that even the slums can be attractive when you love the people in them. The fashionable sector's of town are often pretty sad to the people who haven't love for anyone in their hearts."

He spoke emphatically.

"For a few years, I guess, it's going to be tough sledding. We'll have the spade work to do. A lot of the kids will trick us. They'll probably rob and fool us right and left; they've been taught to do that sort of thing. We can't stop them overnight. A good many people are going to think we are fanatics, call us nutty. We'll run afoul of the grafting politicians, who won't want their wards messed up. We may have a bomb or two from the racketeers. They 'toss 'em easy' down there. And we'll probably have to stick close to the job. But" (he shrugged all the difficulties off with a lift of his broad shoulders) "that's part of the game. You can't have a great adventure without work and peril. No fun, really, without those things. Yes, we're in for work, but we're in for the work of a lifetime."

We?

Tom had been thinking fast. During the days of the trip he had grown vastly to admire Emmet Deane. He felt the man's strength under the easy fit of his beautifully-cut clothes, under the quiet leisureliness of his vacation manners. He saw him slip in among the tourists, well liked, talked to by everyone, yet never becoming just one of the crowd. He had actually got soggy Holden from his whisky sour into a game of cribbage, where, under the excitement of continuous good cards, the

cruise's habitual souse almost sobered up for an evening. He had danced with Phyllis and quenched her high-powered technique under a stream of gently ironic laughter. He got Mr. Finklestein away from furs and finance long enough to find that once on a distant day the old merchant had longed to be a concert violinist and still followed the careers of young violinists with a vicarious joy. He even had Kenneth Wilton confessing that he hoped some day to write a narrative poem with St. Francis for its hero.

Tom had felt Emmet's power with people. He had guessed there must be something to this man that now he saw clearly as he talked of his dream.

And a staff? We?

Oh, with his millions, Deane could assemble a group of the most highly-trained experts and specialists. His money could claim their services. His plan would enlist lawyers and doctors and young people with high-type training simply because of its limitless possibilities. Why, for a doctor, what could any other practice possibly be compared with the field opened through this centre?

Tom hesitated. How could he hope that he, a routine young doctor from a small, unimportant town would be able to get into a scheme like this, even. . . .

Yet he dared it.

"Is your staff chosen and completed as yet?" he asked.

"Oh - is it?" echoed Isabel.

Deane slipped off the skylight and, turning, faced them seriously.

"No," he said. "It's not. And that's why. . . ,

"Oh, so that's where you've been hiding yourself, getting moonstruck up on the boat deck!" Sam and Sally Waters came hurrying up, a little breathless from the stairs and much, much drinking, and just on a knife's edge between being very gay and very, very angry with all the world.

Deane turned imperturbably.

"Hello!" he said. "Lovely and fresh up here. It got so stuffy in the lounge."

"What in hell," demanded Sam, belligerently, are you three gassing about? We don't see a thing of you any more. Gone high-hat or something?"

"No," said Deane, quietly. "I was just talking over a plan of mine with Tom and Isabel."

"What kind of plan?" demanded Sally, sharing her husband's plunge into bellicose resentment.

"Oh, a plan that may interest them both. I hope it does." He looked up sharply. "A crack-brained idea, maybe. Perhaps I'm all wrong. I shouldn't want you, Tom, to consider the offer I'm making unless you were sure. . . ."

He nodded briefly towards the Waters couple. "Talk it over with Sam and Sally before you give me a decision."

"Do you mean that?" demanded Isabel, a little puzzled.

"Emphatically," Deane replied, and walked quietly off into the dark and down the companionway.

Sam and Sally both wiggled up on to the skylight.

"Strikes me sometimes that that guy is n little daft. I shouldn't wonder if he were a reformer." Sam was resentful. "Makes me a little bit tired. Not a wet blanket exactly, but a trace of a moist sheet."

But Sally's curiosity had been aroused.

"What's his big scheme? What's his offer? What are you three cooking up? Don't try to hold out on your dear Aunt Sally, or your dear old Aunt Sally will get mad and pinch elbows."

"Yes," Sam demanded, echoing his wife. What's the big idea?"

"Tell them," said Isabel.

And there, while the eyes of the two others grew wider and wider with astonishment, Tom told the plan which Deane had just sketched out for them. He did it well, for the enthusiasm he had felt remained, and even the growing wonder of the Waters- did not make him self-conscious as he talked.

He finished and lapsed into silence.

Sam and Sally looked at each other and slowly shook their heads.

"Well, of all the cock-eyed schemes!" cried Sam.

"Crazy as a coot!" Sally agreed.

"Imagine having all that money and then going off and living in the slums."

"Why, the man needs a guardian. What a time Sam and I could have for ourselves on just about a tenth of that money. Oh, Sam's got plenty, but alongside of old man Deane, Sam's dad didn't have the price of a local stamp."

Then it dawned on Sam's still not too clear mind.

"Great guns, man! He wasn't trying to interest you in going in with him, was he?"

Tom nodded slowly.

"Oh, my ancient uncle!" cried Sam.

"The big stiff!" shouted Sally.

And then they both started to talk at once.

"Listen, you poor sap. It's a darn good thing we came along right when we did. You're just sap enough to let him talk you into it. Isn't it lucky for you and Isabel that Sam and I arrived on time, just like the Marines. Give up your good practice and go with that loon? Go down and live in the slums? Spend your life among smelly kids and dirty little ungrateful ragamuffins instead of the people in the country clubs? Give up your theatre and night clubs and friends to hang around with a lot of nutty reformers jerking out tonsils and untying complexes. Oh, for heaven's sake, don't be the two biggest fools in the world!"

Tom waited until they had paused.

"Maybe I'm wrong," he said, "but I don't think Deane would have suggested my mentioning this to you if he hadn't a vague sort of hope you might be interested. might even join him."

Sam and Sally lay flat back on the skylight and laughed and laughed.

"Oh. Tom, you old kidder! You're making fun of us!"

Sam sat up and touched Tom's white shirt front with a finger soiled with cigarette ash and still sticky with the last 'cordial'.

"Listen! I've got money, but not enough. I've not been talking about it, Tom, but when I get back I've something sweet and soft ahead. There's big money in the law if you know where to get it. And soft money, too. Prohibition days taught us that. So did the labour rackets and the other rackets, too. A big combine is opening gambling houses all over New York; not the cheap joints where they take the milk money away from fire-escape-flat wives, but the swell joints where they crack the customers for ten thousand and up a night. I've got the social connections. I know the right people. I'm the new counsel who tends to their law. It's not less than two thousand a week for just speaking the right word and leaving the right money in the right places. And you're talking about me defending a lot of dirty-faced kids that haven't got money for lollipops."

Sally caught Isabel's hand and held on to it earnestly.

"Darling, don't let Tom do it. Why, how would you feel living down there in the slums? You couldn't stand it. That's no place for a girl like you, that ought to be eating in the best restaurants and making the right men's eyes go pop. Darling, you're going to stay on with me for two weeks in New York until Tom goes back and clears up and joins you. Darling, we'll see what's worth seeing in New York, the new clubs, the new plays, the new roofs. And Tom? Sam, talk to Tom. He shouldn't be hid away in that dump of an old town."

Tom felt Sam gripping his arm in warm, if slightly stimulated, friendliness.

"Listen, old man. There's big money in New York for the kind of doctor you ought to make. There's rich dames with neuroses that need a good-looking doctor like you. There's 10,000 dollars for taking out some gin-fed rounder's appendix. Look wise and join the right clubs, and you'll be paying the government a fat income tax. Don't let that loon of a Deane fill your head full of nonsense."

"Who does he think you are?" demanded Sally. "Mr, and Mrs. Don J. Quixote?" Isabel slipped to the deck and reached out her hand for Tom.

"Let's all go and get a nightcap. Tom and I are both tired."

The others eagerly agreed.

"Now that's sense. That's smart. A nightcap for each." Sam paused, looked at his friends, and seemed convinced. "That's right. Don't give that moonstruck Deane another thought. Eat, drink, and make money. That's the slogan. Learn wisdom from the well-known family of Waters! Brains of the first Waters, so to speak."

And he led the way down toward the stairway and the lounge, that still overflowed with merry-makers.

Though they saw Deane regularly during the next two days of the homeward voyage, he never mentioned his dream or their part in it. He played cards and shuffleboard with them, sat at their table and talked over all the subjects that make up a civilized man's conversation, walked the deck at night, reminded them to get out their overcoats as winter again descended on them, but said nothing of the plan that he had broached under the southern stars - until they had nosed into New York harbour and swung to, waiting for the port officials to finish their limitless paper work.

Then, as they stood at the rail, collars up around their ears, their eyes fixed on the incredible ramparts that are the outlines of New York, he stood beside them.

"Have you," he asked, "by any chance, thought again of my slightly crackpot dream?"

"Yes!" they answered in a breath.

"I take it that the Waterses, Sam and Sally, did not precisely rise and cheer when you mentioned it to them."

"Well," apologized Isabel. "they have such different interests."

"A new farm or a yoke of oxen?" asked Deane.

"Eh?" asked Tom.

"Exactly," replied Isabel.

Deane looked far off toward the Empire State Building, its finger lifted in vague, perpetual warning to heedless Manhattan.

"You don't need to be told, surely, that I like you both tremendously. I do. I was making you an offer the other night. It still holds. I didn't want to let you be swept off your feet by perhaps a pet idea of mine. But I need young married couples on my staff. I want fine, unselfish young doctors. Tom, if your present practice doesn't mean too much to you, would you consider joining me? Isabel, we'll need the woman's hand and the woman's sympathetic inspiration there. I want you both.

"I don't promise you an easy time. I just promise you adventure and achievement. You'll never have to do anything that I don't do first, you know. And in the end, maybe we shall have made a ghastly section of this world (a section that's dirty and sad now with vice and crime and sin) into a little section of God's kingdom upon earth.

"Most of these aboard wouldn't be interested. They are too busy with too many things. But you -- well, you're different. Will you join me and help me to do this job as I think it can be done?"

They found themselves facing him, their shoulders squared and touching, their hands out-stretched toward his.

"I should think it the greatest compliment of life," said Tom.

"You're very sweet to want us," said Isabel.

"Then I can count on you both?"

"I don't know why you think we rate at all. I've not done too well on my own account," said Tom.

"But if you think I'll fit into your plan, if you can find a place for both of us in what you are dreaming of, count on us."

"Us both," said Isabel.

"Thank you," said Deane. He took a hand of each in his firm grip, "Just ahead of us, then, the great adventure. It's going to be tough sledding for a time. I don't think we'll have a lot of what the world calls fun. But we'll have so much more than fun. And when we see the lives we've influenced, the little boys we've made into fine men, and the little girls we've made into fine women, I don't think we'll ever envy any person his career. I think that our way lies success."

And the sun came out from behind a grey bank of clouds as they smiled out toward a future that was beyond their wildest dreams.

THE SEQUEL

Dear Reader, this sequel is for you.

Perhaps you've read this story with the feeling that it was a fairy tale. Young honeymooners who go on trips like that do not ordinarily find their destiny in a gallant and almost perfect person offering them success in an adventure that has for its purpose the happiness of mankind.

It's a fable, you say.

Anyhow, the Hendersons were certainly taking, even from the worldly point of view, the safest of risks. They were doing nothing very heroic or risky in accepting an offer like that.

Right you are, in both cases. They were taking no risk at all. That is what makes their case so particularly like yours.

For you're right, too, about its being a fable, a particular kind of fable. It's the sort of fable we call a parable.

What's a parable? Well, in Our Lord's use of that form of narrative, it is a story told about some individual which is true of a whole group of people. The parable of the Good Samaritan is true of all men who for the love of God are kind to their fallen neighbours. The parable of the Prodigal Son is true, not of one youth who squandered his inheritance in a far country, but of all men and women who have ever strayed after sin and returned to find God's merciful arms awaiting them.

And the story of Tom and Isabel Henderson is a parable feebly imitating Christ's beautiful narrative form.

For you are Tom.

You are Isabel.

Young or old, slightly or exceedingly successful. a failure in whole or part, fumbling or grasping vigorously at what life offers, you still, if you are human, often face life with hesitant eyes. And if you are really young, the future must often seem a dubious, even a terrifying thing.

What lies ahead for any of us? What assurance have we that we can make our lives successful?

Shall we go down into the scrap heap reserved for failures?

Or, perhaps more terrible, shall we be what the world calls a success, only to find at the end of life's struggle for power and money that we must pronounce our life in all that is essential (and in anticipation of God's exact verdict) a sad failure?

How can we insure life's success?

This much we know: It is hard to fight alone. It is difficult to struggle on toward success without brave, inspiring companionship.

And how difficult, too, it is to judge just what makes for ultimate success. Some men may work with intense energy and high resolve after some great objective. only to find, once they attain their purpose, that it is not worth achieving.

And others rub away their life in grinding monotony, with no glimmer of success to relieve the drabness of their days.

All of which makes it extremely important for you to remember that--

You are Tom.

You are Isabel.

And there is an "Emmet Deane" who holds out his hand offering you a share in the glorious adventure that engrosses his splendid life. Even from a purely human point of view you will be wise to accept his offer, wise as Tom and Isabel were when they accepted the offer of Emmet Deane. It is an offer that is linked with certain success. It is humanly prudent, for his way is the way to happiness. It is wise with a divine wisdom, for with him, whatever your life's career, all possibility of failure is ended.

No one fails in his great enterprise. All who partake in his work are successes, and he lifts them to a place beside himself.

That Person Who offers you His friendship and His partnership is Christ Jesus, the Saviour, the God-man.

Even a brief reflection brings back vividly a realization of the work Christ came to earth to do. He wanted to clean away the slums of sin. He aimed at tearing down those ugly places where criminals spawn and sorry sinners stagger into life's dirty alleys. He longed to save children from evil and to bring them to full and splendid maturity. He wanted, above all else, to make men reach their full, happy, successful completeness. He wanted to lead little girls beautifully into strong, pure, happy womanhood.

For this splendid purpose He lived His exquisite life and died His tortured death. With work-calloused hands He laboured to build centres of happiness where once there had been sin and shadow. With blood-stained hands He tore down the brutal power that had ruled men's souls and He stopped the grotesque dances of vice. A whole lifetime He gave to the building of His Father's kingdom on earth.

All this He could have done alone. But He determined that He would share with men and women this glorious task of establishing the kingdom of virtue and peace and happiness. He would ask men and women to join with Him in His work of raising men to their full dignity and women to the heights of their truest beauty.

"Come, follow Me!" He cried, and He stretched out His hands in generous offer of partnership to the Toms and Isabels of all the ages.

He stretches them out to-day to you, whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever you do.

Thousands, millions, heard His invitation, saw His hand outstretched in offer of partnership, and accepted the offer with grateful hearts. It was a splendid opportunity. Even from a human point of view partnership with Jesus Christ means partnership with the world's most important Personage and a part in the most inspiring task that ever was set to human courage and lawful ambition.

Millions accepted. It was not important what their work was. Christ could use them all in His plan. They could all, little and great, brilliant and mediocre, in exalted position or in obscurity, help Him in His plan of making the world a happy, wholesome, blessed place. Some of them decided to do

the work to the full, and became priests and religious. Others knew that they could do His work as mothers and fathers, as wives and husbands; their little homes or their great mansions became centres of influence and sinlessness and happiness.

Doctors came, and their healing hands grew tender as they worked in imitation of the Divine Physician. Lawyers pleaded for justice because they had learned that the law was made for man. Labouring men worked at their benches with honest sweat and generous labour, because they had seen the village Carpenter in His workshop of Nazareth.

And women knew that as wives, as nurses, as teachers, or as social workers, in business or in their kitchens, married or single, they could share the glorious work that brought God down from heaven, the work of advancing human happiness and spreading virtue; the glorious heroism of standing between little children and the sin-red hands stretched out to grasp them.

Gloriously enough, Christ did not ask great deeds for success in His cause. Great deeds were unimportant. He asked for pure deeds, unselfish deeds, deeds that came from a real love and a sincere desire to serve, deeds that in some way matched His own. He accepted the services of great men and turned them to the advancement of His kingdom; but He was glad when a child offered his small service, or a poor woman loved Him and laboured with Him, or an obscure unknown wrote his name large in the record of God's saints by his devoted service to the top-bent of his small powers.

Alone in all the world, Christ does not ask success as the world understands success. He only asks that in His company and with His motives we do our little or our much, our significant deeds or our unnoticed ones, exercise our influence upon a multitude via radio or the handful who sit about us in a tiny room, out of His devotion to His Father's cause and the happiness of our brother men.

A stenographer can look up from her type-writer and see Christ smile approvingly. A workman can lift his eyes from His bench and feel that it is shared by the Workman of Galilee. A mother can feel His hand resting upon the head of her baby. A young husband can love his wife more truly because he loves Christ's blessed cause.

Christ and His cause deserve great accomplishments. Luckily for us, Christ and His cause are advanced by every man and woman who, generously and out of love of God and men, do the tasks God sends them.

But there were and are others (sometimes one feels they are the greater number) who laugh at His great plan as Sam did and Sally. They are much too busy with their own affairs. The pleasures they see just ahead of them are too, too enticing. They regard Christ as not quite sane when He dares ask them to share His hard work undertaken in the cause of human happiness. They watch with pitying eyes those who accept Christ's partnership; poor fools, they say, who give up their good times and their chance to make money because of some crackbrained idea of serving humanity!

The plain fact is that even from the human, sane viewpoint they are terribly wrong. They are so busy winning success that they miss success. They are so anxious to make the right contacts that they fail to make the one essential contact which dignifies all life and gives the drabest days in the dullest life all the dash of romance and all the dignity of high purpose. They are so greedy for joy that they miss happiness. They are so anxious to achieve that they do endless unimportant things.

They decline this partnership with the world's Supreme Man. They turn away from the plan of God Incarnate. So busy are they with their own transient concerns that they miss the eternal purposes of

the Saviour. They could be great; they become merely notorious. They could make the world happy; they merely fill it full of fuss.

And, most important to remember, in the plan of Emmet Deane there is place for everyone. Porters are there and scrub-women, alongside of physicians and lawyers, and in their way quite as important.

Great work moves forward because men and women are willing to do small jobs as well as big ones. The plan for the advancement of human happiness, the plan of Jesus Christ, demands all sorts of men and women doing all sorts of that varied work which makes up the world.

A man does not need to be great nor a woman to be beautiful or brilliant in order to carry forward Christ's plan. They only need to be Christlike. And that comes to anyone who accepts a partnership with the God-man.

You are another Tom.

You are another Isabel.

But you can be another Sam.

Or another Sally.

You can decline the offer of Jesus Christ, an offer in accepting which you risk nothing and are assured of certain success.

The splendid Christ, with all the attraction of His personality, holds out His hand.

Will you take it?

No one, even the man who rejects Christ's divinity or His law, can doubt the glorious sweep of His plan. There is no question what it would mean to the world if children were saved from sin and young people raised to stalwart virtue, the slums of sin and crime levelled and replaced by centres of sinlessness and noble living. What a world this would be if men spiked their own guns and threw away their papers all signed and sealed for fresh lawsuits; if children could play safely and young people dance beautifully and without danger of sin; if men turned from the brute in their nature and looked up at the Divine Man; if women used love to inspire themselves and theirs to a greater devotion and a purer unselfishness.

All that He wants. All that is part of His plan.

But all that waits upon the willingness of men to co-operate.

Can anyone fail, then, to see what harm is done by all men and women who refuse Christ's partnership, reject His plan, crush, through passion or greed or hate, a fellow-man and exalt self-love or self-interest above Christ's hope of divine love and human service?

It is all so clear! All except how men can possibly refuse His partnership and turn away in scorn from His plan and cause. That will always remain the mystery of mysteries, the one incredible thing in all the universe. Your choice, then, my reader, is very simple. Christ's hand is extended and waiting. Have you the courage to take it? Rather, could you possibly be so foolish as to reject it?