Easter Morning

By Edith L. Smith

O garden blossoms wet with dew,
Shed fragrance sweet;
The Flower of Mary blooms anew,—
Bend at His feet.
True Bud of Jesse's vine,
Earth-rooted, Bloom Divine,
Swing, flowers, each censer high,—
The God of Nature smiles at you
In passing by.

Darkness, born of an Eastern night,
Cast off your gloom.
Behold, here walks the King of Light
Come from the tomb!
Living—the Holy Dead—
Glories around His head
Which lend the dawn a grace.
Darkness, born of an Eastern night,
Lift up your face!

Humanity of weak despair,
With Mary come
Unto Hope's garden, mystic-fair
About Doubt's tomb.
Feeling but earthly woe,
Like her of long ago
Who sought her lifeless God,
May we have, also, faith to know
The Risen Lord.

The Little Still

By Margaret Sutton Briscoe

"So you claim that you have no sentiment, sir," said Judge Wells, laughing.

"I haven't any," asserted Mr. Ai, stolidly. "I've been a plain, hard-fisted man, when I wasn't a hard-fisted boy—nothing sentimental about me now or later."

"What is our little dinner to-night but a concession to sentiment?" persisted Judge Wells. "You come to me to say frankly, 'I want you to do something for me. I want you to invite soand-so and so-and-so to a dinner, not at the club, but at your own home.' You wanted the mellowing and confidential atmosphere of a home—of sentiment—for whatever purpose you had in mind; which purpose, in passing, you have not yet confided to me. You can't ignore sentiment. As a matter of fact, you see, you don't ignore it. I tell you, sir, sentiment is structural. It

'rules the court, the camp, the grove, And men below, and saints above '-"

He quoted the familiar lines with a charming feeling and appreciation, with exquisite emphasis and exact enunciation, an old-fashioned fire and moving deliberation that lifted the well-worn phrases above the commonplace.

"That's mighty pretty," said Mr. Ai, interestedly.

The Judge laughed aloud, his young, flashing laugh; his shrewd eyes watching his guest's innocently pleased countenance.

They were an odd contrast—the tall, slight, courtly old lawyer, with his keen, high-bred face, his grace and dignity, and the heavily built, powerfully framed politician, with his stolid, coarse face, his remarkable eyes—large, crafty, magnetic, perfectly controlled; but their understanding of each other, their mutual respect, was equally marked.

"I call the Governor sentimental," said Mr. Ai, abruptly. "I never saw

the reformer that wasn't."

"This is not the first time to-night that you have drawn Governor Worden's name into our conversation, Mr. Ai," said Judge Wells, concisely. "What is

it you are working up to?"

"Nothing. But sooner or later we have got to be talking about him—and talking business. Here's the Presidential nomination coming along. How's that going? Is Worden strong enough to carry the ticket? He'll draw the reform vote, of course, but he's got to be able to lead the regular party; hold it together. These young fellows due here to-night are, so they tell me, the key-men of the young blood of the party. It's pretty important to know just where they stand, what they think, what they want, who they want."

Judge Wells leaned back in his chair, his shrewd old face turned up to the ceiling, his eyes intent upon a quaint, gayly colored flask set on a high bracket

upon his drawing-room wall.

"So," he said, dryly, and apparently addressing the flask. "This innocent little dinner to-night may become a small and early and informal Presidential caucus directed against the possible candidacy of my good friend George Worden. I am a stanch party man, as you well know, but if this is what you have arrived early to break to me—I'm not sure I like it. I'm not sure I'd stand it. As a rule, I am ready to assist in breaking any eggs for your various little omelets, but this time—"

Mr. Ai laughed his deep, good-hu-

mored laugh, that shook all of his huge person.

"You used not to trust me, your Honor," he said. "I thought you knew me better now. All I want to-night is to find out where these young men rank the Governor. I want to hear them talk. I want to find out what they want, not to make them want anything. That's all I'm after—to-night."

The Judge gazed keenly at his guest, then, in appearance at least, convinced,

he rose from his chair.

"Suppose we go out into the diningroom and look at the table," he said. "I am as foolish as a woman over the last little touches."

As he spoke he was moving across the drawing-room to the bracket towards which he had been glancing. From it he lifted down the gay little flask, and, carrying it in his hand, he led the way from the room.

In the long, handsome dining-room at the back of the house a banquet board was spread, and upon its careful and beautiful decorations the attendants were still working. The master of the house looked critically down the table, then nodded approval to his waiting butler.

"Very good, James, very good indeed. This little bright flask over there now, in that dull corner. One rose in it. Yes. What is that, Mr. Ai? The little flask? Hand it me again, James. It's an old-fashioned little affair, a perfume-bottle. You see the decoration, roses, has been drawn on paper, tinted, cut out carefully, and then pasted on the outside of the flask. It was given me by a friend as a curiosity. By the way, he's an acquaintance of yours, isn't he? Mr. Courtney? "Cart-tail—Courtney?"

"'Cart-tail Courtney,' eh? No, I haven't met him yet. He's that fresh youngster who's been trapesing around in a cart taking away my character, isn't he? What was it he called me? Regular newspaper stuff! Wasn't a reform organ didn't grab at it."

"'The sordid hireling of an organization corrupt and senile,'" quoted the Judge, laughing.

"That's it," agreed Mr. Ai.

"I don't do it justice. You ought to

have heard it said. I did. Mr. Courtney was hanging out from his cart-tail, waving a pair of trousers over the heads of the crowd, and discoursing upon the scandalous price of that same article of raiment with other such necessities of life. He had just switched on to the municipal question at the moment when I arrived on the scene, and was polishing off your characteristics, as you have heard. He had his crowd with him, too, right or wrong. They were roaring with laughter. He's a magnetic speaker, and the most good-natured, impulsive, kindhearted young fellow. All that tells for a stump speaker. The crowd feels it, somehow. And then he's so amazingly good-looking—a tall, handsome young-Those blue eyes of his! Altogether I think he's a rather formidable cart-load—on the other side."

"I hear he is," said Mr. Ai, indifferently. "Where did he get this little old bottle, anyhow?"

"I don't know. Have you seen it before?"

Mr. Ai was turning the little flask over and over in his large hands, looking at it with an odd smile on his puckered lips. He shook his head.

"Don't know that I've seen this one. I had one something like it once on a time. A young lady gave it to me about a thousand years ago, when I was a boy. She made little perfume-bottles just like this. She had a queer little still she worked with—for something to do. She filled up the bottles with the same perfumes as the flowers she pasted on the outsides. I lost mine somehow. It was pink; wild honeysuckle it was. Yours here is red roses. I wonder now where this did come from."

"Mr. Courtney told me where he bought it, I think. I forget—I can ask him if you like."

"No, no. It makes n' odds."

Mr. Ai set the bottle down on the table, but still stood looking at it.

"Queer," he said, ruminatingly, "how a boy n-e-ver does forget his first. I felt as bad when I lost that little pink honeysuckle-bottle! And it wasn't so long ago I lost it either. This little rose-bottle here—why it gave me quite a turn! She was a beauty, I tell you!

Great big blue eyes-you know that Always wore two shawls, one white, one blue, one on top of the other, and always on crooked. 'Angels' wings,' the boys called them. Lord! I can see them now. She hadn't been well. Her folks sent her down to the country-to rest. I don't know when she rested. She kept us on the jump. While she was there she made herself pleasant. Name was Delia. Pretty name. sir, I'll never forget the day she took me down to the stream-side back of the farm-house she stayed at, to show me a be-u-tiful, blooming bluebell." He paused in pleasing reverie.

"Was the bluebell so blue?" ventured the Judge, sympathetically.

Mr. Ai looked up seriously.

"There wasn't any bluebell," he said solemnly, then shook with silent laughter.

"Oh! ah!" murmured the Judge. "I beg your pardon." Then he too laughed,

but cautiously.

"Anything was grist to her mill," volunteered Mr. Ai further. "She was made that way. Yes, I left those parts sun-up the next day, and she was gone when I came back. I never saw her again. Guess she took a crooked stick in the end. That kind usually does."

The two gray-haired men of affairs stood looking at the little flask, laughing

together.

"If you are interested, you might follow up this clue—No? Well, I dare say you are right. It has been a few years back. Remember her as when her wings were blue, eh? I think I hear our guests arriving, sir. Shall we go back to the drawing-room?"

Catharine Ireland was tired, so tired as to be discouraged, so tired that her soft, pretty gray eyes filled with tears of irritated shame as she suddenly realized that she had been looking up longingly at the softly cushioned carriages sweeping past her as she walked wearily home from her work.

"And not long ago," she said to herself reprovingly, "you were terrified at the thought that work might not be found. Now it is found and here you are again complaining!"

Then, dropping her listless step at

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once, she moved on quickly, in her renewed strength of purpose even deciding to lengthen the day's work by a little shopping; for she well knew the saving it would mean if she thus forestalled her Aunt Delia's ambitious purchasing of these same necessities. lived together, the young girl and her widowed aunt, in a kind of semi-boarding, semi-housekeeping way on the third floor of a cheap lodging-house; but, simple as that living was, its cost was the ceaseless question of Miss Ireland's days, and too often of her nights as well. On this afternoon the young girl's first and most difficult errand led her to a little corner grocery near their lodgings, kept by a shifty-eyed Hebrew proprietor who came smilingly forward to meet his customer on her entrance. To her surprise, he interrupted her first diffident words, which were to tell him that in a few days her salary would be paid her and then his last month's bill would be at once settled. There was, as he spoke, something significant and familiar in his manner, which she at once resented and shrank from more than from his previous rough, sharp dunning. It was all right, he told her, whisperingly, the little bill might wait; it was, in fact, practically The home-made perfumes her aunt was making, he said, were selling well now. People seemed to fancy them. Nó, he didn't believe he did need any more of the little bottles just now; he would tell Mrs. Bryant when he did. He and she had talked it over. had just been there, in fact, and taken home some sausages for supper, which he hoped might be liked.

Catharine glanced over at the shelf of familiar, gay-colored perfume flasks with the bright flowers on them—her aunt's handiwork-and it seemed to her that they had not diminished in quantity. She left the store with two new troubles on her mind. How had her Aunt Delia contrived to satisfy this ever-pressing creditor ? And why, why would she persist in cooking sausages, when the strict rule of the house was that there should be no cooking in the lodgers' rooms! It was a rule discreetly disregarded by most of the inmates, who could by no means afford to visit restaurants

for three meals each day, and who cooked smugglingly over their open grates, whence the odors were wafted up the chimneys. But sausages! What draft could carry off on its wings the penetrating odor of frying sausages? Mrs. Bryant liked them, and what she liked, as her niece had long since discovered, she would at least try to have.

Miss Ireland was weary enough as she traveled on her way from store to store, her gray eyes troubled, her pretty, fair head drooping. She bought carefully, frugally, and only what could not possibly be done without, but her resummoned courage was sinking at the rapid dwindling of the purse in her hand. Theirs seemed, indeed, a little household, but what a ravenous mouth it had eating against their slender combined incomes! Buried in her thoughts and calculations, her soft brow knit, she was walking home in the gathering dusk, and, passing again near the little corner grocery, failed to see or hear the proprietor of the store, who was leaning out from his door over his high-piled boxes, cautiously trying to attract her atten-He was calling to her repeatedly and sharply, so sharply at last that when his stealthy, irritated cry reached her ear she stood still, looking up in amazement at the man's twisted, impatient He beckoned to her, with an agitated, hurried glance up and down the street.

"Come in here," he whispered, shrilly. "Come in here—quick!"

But when, in her surprise, she mechanically drew nearer, he changed his orders.

"Don't stop! Go on. Go home quick! Tell your aunt to hide everything. They may be at your place now."

"How dare you speak so to me! What do you mean?" cried Miss Ireland, indignantly. "Don't touch me!"

The man drew back the hand he had almost laid on her arm, and peered into her flushed, offended face. His manner changed.

"Come in here," he said, more civilly. "I thought you knew. Come in here, and I'll tell you. Didn't you know your aunt's been making whisky with that

You know the per-

little still of hers?

live—Don't you give me all the sausage,

fumes don't sell. She's been bringing me the whisky, and I've sold it to cover her bill. I thought I'd never get it if I didn't. Your landlady's mad with your aunt about something, and she's right on the track of the whisky. She's called up the officers on the telephone, and she's told 'em they'd find the stuff made in her house, and sold here at my store. Her cook's my niece. She heard her, and she's just been here, on the run, to tell me. I've hid the whisky. You go hide the still and things. It's so, I tell What? Why should I lie to If you don't believe me, go home and ask your aunt-if you can get there before they catch her. She ought to have told you, anyhow. Yes, you'd better hurry. I guess you believe me now!"

Up the three flights of stairs, dimly lit, ill ventilated, that belonged to their lodgings, Miss Ireland ran, breathless and stumbling. The door of the first room opened close by the head of the stair, and at the last step, her breath or her courage failing, she halted, her hand pressed, poor child! on her noisy, frightened heart. If the worst had befallen, what could she do? And yet, not to hold herself responsible never occurred to her. Leaning against the wall, she held her breath to listen. There were voices in the room, one a strange voice—a man's. Mrs. Bryant's familiar plaintive tones were responding. Miss Ireland crept softly up the last step to the door, and laid her ear close to the panel. There, through a halfopened seam in the old wood, she could hear plainly all that went on in the

"Now you see, my dear lady," said a deep, laughing voice, "I can't possibly keep up that big apartment of mine by myself. I am expecting every day the health inspectors will raid me. I can't keep a house clean. My chum used to see to that, and I swear the place looked like a pig-sty the day after he deserted me. I thought there was nothing for it but giving up my apartment and boarding. I was taking advice and addresses from every one I met. That's how I stumbled in here-just at the right moment! I'll never forget it while I

Mrs. Bryant. I wish you could have seen your landlady when she smelled this sausage. First flight up she sniffed the air like a bloodhound. 'Co-o-king! Co-o-king again?' says she. And she put her nose to the ground, and when she struck the scent she bayed—on my life she did-a deep, bell-like note, and broke into a run. Isn't that the way the dog stories have it? Well, she did something mighty like it, anyhow, and why in the world I set off trotting after her I don't know. Wouldn't have missed it, I suppose. Didn't she slap your door open, though? Bang! No with your leave or by it. And there—you, Madam, cooking these incomparable sausages. Most dramatic thing I ever assisted at! Haw! haw! ho! 'You can have these rooms to-night, sir, if they suit you,' says Mrs. Landlady, and downstairs I slunk after her, and upstairs I sneaked as soon as I got quit of the old Gorgon. It had occurred to me before that if I could get just the right person-some kind soul who could be persuaded into the rear rooms of my apartment and put up with my living in the front rooms, and take care of me and the whole business-no, now I don't want you to accept my offer before you understand all you are contracting for. Just hear me out. George! what good tea this is! I need somebody in those rooms the worst way, and you haven't, you say, any present plan. shouldn't we take up together? you think you could move out of here now, Mrs. Bryant, if I help you pack? I'm a shark at packing, if I can't keep house. I'll tell you once more just what my offer is-"

Miss Ireland could stand it no longer. She opened the door and walked into the room. There, seated at the teatable with Mrs. Bryant, was a blue-eyed, pleasant-faced, good looking stranger, young and tall, and with a certain easy air of prosperity, eating bread and sausages and drinking tea as comfortably and confidentially as if used to no richer diet, and as if he were the tested friend of the family. He rose instantly as Miss Ireland entered, and stood waiting for his formal introduction.

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"Oh, Catharine, what made you so late!" cried Mrs. Bryant, rising also.

As she stood, it was apparent that she wore about her shoulders two faded, shabby shawls, one white, the other blue, one flung carelessly over the other. her faded face had been that of a beautiful woman, and some of the beauty still clung there, heightened by her excited blue eyes, her air of fluttered

authority, of brief importance. "Catharine, my dear!" Her manner had an odd and plainly unwonted dignity. "I want to present to you my friend, Mr. Courtney. There has been trouble with our landlady. very insolent. We are to move out at once, but it's all right. I have engaged the rear rooms of Mr. Courtney's apartment, furnished. We are going there This is my young niece, Mr. to-night. Courtney, Catharine Ireland. I hope you may be very good friends. Now, Catharine, please sit right down and eat your supper. We've finished. We have a quantity to do to move out so soon. Mr. Courtney offers to help, and I really don't see how I can help accepting.

"Aunt Delia, I-I must speak to you—at once."

What is it, Catharine?"

But Mrs. Bryant swept her niece aside. "My dear child, do eat your supper. Let me settle a few things, won't you? I am not quite an idiot. One would think I was the niece and you the aunt. I've accepted the offer, and all we have to do now is pack and go. Mr. Courtney, if you really mean that you will help—the hardest things to move will be my little laboratory fixings—here, in this closet. There's so much glass about them—this little still, you see, and all these glass pipes and funnels and flasks and things. They are sure to be broken! You carry them around? Oh, no! No, I couldn't let you do that, I really couldn't. Of course it would get a lot out of the way—ever so much off Catharine says I always talk my mind. of getting things off my mind as if it Well, I've had were a sore spot. troubles enough to make it sore-and my heart too-Heaven knows! Mr. Courtney, you mustn't. I can't let

you. Of course it would be the safest

The still is little enough, but way. You will! Well, it is a great relief. The flasks in your pockets? Oh, dear no! Well, if you will, you will, I suppose. Yes, they do fit in nicely. You see I make home-made perfumes with my little still, and then I fill these flasks with them, and the grocer at the corner—You have bought some there? You don't say so? I do hope you liked it. Oh, but you do look so funny! If you walk fast, Mr. Courtney, maybe nobody will notice. And it is just around the square. You'll drop everything if you laugh like that! Don't let anybody bang into you, for I'll throw this tablemercy's sake l cover over the still. Now you don't look so dreadfully bad. And if you'll just stop at the express office at the corner and tell the man to call here for our trunks in about an hour—Catharine, you go downstairs with Mr. Courtney and open the front door for him. His

arms are full." The laden, laughing stranger looked down with difficulty from over the highpiled packages in his arms at Miss Ire-She had not gone to the suppertable as bidden, but was still standing near the door, half leaning against it as if for support, and with the strangest, hunted, frightened look of doubt and of entreaty on her white face. She started forward as she saw herself observed, but, as if afraid to protest, mechanically, uncertainly, led the way down the stairs to the front door. At the door, with the same shrinking, unwilling motions, she half lifted the latch, but as she did so paused again, glancing up fearfully into the laughing face bending down towards her.

"You don't like any of this, do you?" said Courtney, kindly and frankly. don't blame you. What do you know about me? I am all right. I can give you any references, but how can you know that to-night? It is a crazy thing But it's all right, for your aunt to do. as it happens. On my honor, it's all I wish I knew how to convince right. you."

She looked up intently into his gay, laughing eyes, his open, handsome; earnest face, hers changing rapidly from doubt to doubt.

"I am all right," he repeated, persuasively.

The tears rushed into the soft, frightened eyes and fell on her blanched cheeks. The kindly voice, the manner of sincerity, seemed somehow more than she could endure.

"But you don't know us," she gasped. "Wait a little, just a little. Let me speak to my aunt—"

There were steps on the stair behind them, and Courtney spoke quickly, still

half laughing but half annoyed.

"I'll tell you what we'll do," he said. "You move into my apartment to-night. You can't stay here, the Gorgon won't have it. She told me she wouldn't, and, what's more, she vowed she'd be even with your aunt. I really think you'd better move at once. To-morrow, if you don't think well of staying, if you don't like it, I'll move you out again. This is the easy thing to do, and, really, it is the only thing left to do—to-night. I guess it's the best plan. Now unlatch the door for me, won't you? I don't want the Gorgon and this houseful of people catching me. Here they come. Do let me out! That's right. you. Don't you worry. Everything's all right."

He moved out hurriedly and clumsily with his burdens. The door was closed quickly behind him, he thought from the outside, and, turning to see who stood in the dim vestibule, he caught a glimpse of a uniformed figure which lurched against him, as if by accident. The glass in his pockets clashed together, the pipes rattled, and the cover fell from off the little still.

"Confound you," said Courtney, angrily. "Get out of my way, can't you!"

"I guess not," said the uniformed one. "That's the game, is it? You're just a minute too late, my man. We've got them, Mr. Rivers, with the goods on. Look at him, will you? The whole outfit."

A second figure, in plain clothes, stepped forward, as he did so throwing open his coat and displaying a badge.

"I guess we have got you —" he began, then fell back with an exclamation.

"Mr. Courtney! What the— There's something all wrong here, sir. Take your hands off him, officer. Where in

the eternal did you get this stuff, Mr. Courtney? There's been whisky made and sold from this house. The landlady put us on the track—called us up herself, not an hour ago. She's been suspecting it for some time. But what in the world— How have you got mixed up in it?"

There was silence for a moment, then Mr. Courtney spoke, at first with an emphasis as well omitted.

"You're crazy, Rivers," he ended.
"There's been no whisky made here—
not with this outfit. It's a lady that
owns it. She has been making perfumes
with it. I've bought some of them myself. You'll find them on sale at the
corner store. The grocer there has been
selling them for her."

"I am perfectly sure of the case, sir," said the detective, firmly. "The man that keeps the corner grocery has just confessed that he sold the whisky for the lady to cover a back bill. We soon showed him it was his best way out. Have you known her long, sir? I'm sorry if they are friends of yours, but—aren't you being used to cart the stuff off?"

Again the detective waited, respectful but unvielding.

"What do you want done, sir?" he sked. "Take that still, officer."

"I think we will go around to my rooms, if you please, Rivers," said Mr. Courtney, briefly. "You can tell me more as we go. I have just rented the rear rooms of my apartment to the owners of this still. They are to move in in about an hour. You can wait there for them and then make the arrest quietlyif you don't mind. I suppose you will take my word for all this. I want to see it through myself, and I want to find out exactly what's at the bottom of it, and just who is responsible for this convenient use of my services. If what you claim is true, it looks as if somebody had been a cool hand."

"I should say so!" said the detective, with a smothered laugh. "Wouldn't you rather have this done here, Mr. Courtney? You don't want it to happen on your premises—do you? You being, in a way, in politics—"

"Yes," said the young man, shortly. "I want it just as I said. I don't under-

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"We-ell, Judge-"

stand this affair, and I mean to very

exactly understand all of it. That's

"In your ear, Mr. Ai, and on your

"I am answered, sir. Look down this

table. All young men-young enough

to be your sons and my grandsons, and

every man of them absorbed in serious

discussion with his next-seat neighbor.

The fact is, we don't have young men

nowadays. They are all too old for me."

like this will go off, your Honor. Better

luck next time—that's all. And they may wake up yet. You never can tell."

"You ne-e-ver can tell how a thing

"It's just a very dull dinner—nothing

more," said the Judge, looking down the

table, and there was a certain significant

satisfaction in the tone of his last words.

his butler bent down to whisper near

his ear. The man repeated his message

doubtfully and apologetically, while his

master listened with raised evebrows.

"Did you tell him I was at dinner with

guests? Indeed! Well, that's exactly

like him. Nothing in this world is so important as what Mr. Courtney is after.

There is a young man I ought to have

excepted from my statement, Mr. Ai.

Mr. Courtney, at twenty-five or so, is as

young as you or I. He'd have waked

up this table. He has the laugh of the

great god Pan. To tell the truth, I

almost asked him here to-night. If it hadn't been for his cart-tail speeches-"

him in here now if you want to. Makes n' odds to 'the sordid hireling of an

organization corrupt and senile," he

"That was his analysis," said the

Judge as he rose, laughing. "If you

will excuse me, I'll see what my young

quoted the phrase haltingly.

"'Cart-tail Courtney,' is it? Fetch

"What's that?" he asked sharply, as

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man wants. He's just the type that stays the coronation-chariot to petition the king. What's more, he's the kind that interests the king, while the next

right?"

petitioner gets himself in trouble."

When, a few moments later, Judge Wells returned to the room, he was still

laughing, and as he entered the door he beckoned confidentially to Mr. Ai, who rose and joined him in the doorway, bending his great head to listen to his host's whispered story.

"Well, what do you think of that?" the Judge ended.

Mr. Ai drew back and looked at him. "Moonshining!" he said. " Moonshining in his back parlor?" He burst into his great resounding laugh. "Well, that's the best I've heard yet. I guess that youngster's made his last cart-tail speech, eh? The Reformer-Moonshiner. How does that sound? What's that? Well, give me a dyed-in-the-wool reformer

for beating the devil round the bush!" He had lifted his heavy voice, and the guests about the table were looking up. "Come in here," said the Judge. "I

want to talk to you a little further about this." He led the way into the small anteroom that separated the drawingroom from the back of the house. They sat down together at the same side of one of the small tables scattered about the room, Mr. Ai talking the while with uninterrupted gusto.

"Yes, sir, that's a reformer to the marrow! Wants the Commissioner to find that the prisoners did make the stuff, did sell it, but without felonious intent-and nobody must be hauled up for it. I guess this is one of those times when it's better to know the Judge than the Law, eh? Wants the whole affair kept quiet. Well, I don't blame him! What? Don't want it to come to trial? Exactly. I understand, your Honor. I understand. He wants to protect the women. It's a nominal case, of course. Yes, I guess the Commissioner would see it as a joke—properly presented to him. I hardly think he'd look on them as dangerous moonshiners-but you never can tell. What's that? You don't know the Commissioner? You told Mr. Courtney-Who, me? The sordid hireling? No, sir. Not on his life, sir, I won't! Yes, I guess a word from me might fix it with the Commissioner, but why isn't this my chance to show how

incorruptible I am?" He brought his fist down on the table suddenly and softly.

"I tell you what I will do, Judge. I'll

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strike a bargain with that young man. You tell him I'll meet him and the prisoners at the Commissioner's office the first thing in the morning. I guess I can manage to have the case called first, and in the regular way it can be dismissed, with a warning. But I want Mr. Courtney to fetch that little still right in there to that dinner-table, and tell this tale on himself—'fess up to those boys there. He's had his dig at most of us from his saucy cart-tail. We're all machine men here-corrupt and senile. He can't get something from me for nothing. That's business. We won't be too hard on him. I don't care how he tells his story. He can make up anything he chooses to protect the ladies, but we're going to nail this grind on him-out of his own mouth. Yes, sir. You tell him we're good company, and we've got some stuff in there on the sideboard that wasn't made in your back parlor—no, sir. I guess our dinner is saved, Judge! After that young reformer has run the gauntlet we'll have those lads in there waked up and thawed out. Mr. Courtney might take a line to Rivers from me. will call him off for to-night."

He tore out a leaf from his note-book, scribbled a line on it, and handed the note to Judge Wells, who took it without enthusiasm.

"I warn you," he said, "that if Mr. Courtney agrees to do this he will do it as per agreement and well, but he is also entirely capable of coming in, with all the odds against him, and somehow turning the laugh on us."

"So he gets those men to laughing, I don't care who they laugh at," said Mr. Ai.

Judge Wells still sat with the note held in his fingers.

"Mr. Courtney's object in this matter is to arrange that the ladies shall not have to appear at all before the Commissioner. The girl is a working woman. It would injure her to have her name published as connected with a charge of this nature."

Mr. Ai's jaw set.

"Now see here, your Honor. The case must come up in the regular way; but, in the regular way, I tell you, I'll

see that it's dismissed. We can't be making sentimental exceptions. You know the law better than I do."

The Judge half lifted his satiric gray eyebrows, but seemed to think better of whatever reply he was about to make. He spoke simply and with gravity.

"It seems to me a rather unusual The whole story was a moving one as Mr. Courtney told it to me. came here thinking I knew the Commissioner and might be willing to speak to him. He did not know of your being in the house until I offered to mention this to you. It seems that when the arrest was made in his apartment there was a rather dramatic and pathetic scene. The young girl stepped forward to claim the She insisted that it was she who made the whisky, she who had sold it, and she held firmly to her story. Mr. Courtney then made Rivers crossexamine her as to the working of the still. She broke down only when it became plain that she did not know one end of it from the other. The aunt, though hysterical and terror-stricken, had all through urged that the niece knew nothing about the whisky-making. When she in turn was examined, she proved at once that she knew very exactly all about the working of the still, what should go into it to make whisky, and very exactly what came out. Her plea is that she was ignoraut of the law. The buyer, she insists, taught her how to make the stuff from potatoes and sugar in mash, and urged her to do so as being more profitable than the use to which she was putting her still. She had kept her enterprise a secret from her niece because, she says, she was brought up to believe that 'young ladies should not know everything,' and from others, solely because she feared that it might be commented upon—a lady, old or young, distilling and selling whis-

"It's an interesting story, your Honor, but I don't seem to find it moving me. Law's law, and it doesn't allow for ignorance. I told you I wasn't sentimental."

"Of course," said the Judge, deliberately, "this is all a question of sentiment. It is what is moving Mr. Court-

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ney in the case, nothing else; though he doesn't quite know that. He is sorry for the young girl."

"Somebody made that whisky, your .Honor. And somebody sold it—didn't

they?"

"The aunt. She pleads guilty. But Mr. Courtney says, without a doubt she did not know that she was a lawbreaker. She had a tiny, little, old-fashioned still, no bigger than a bit of bric-à-brac. As I told you, Mr. Courtney has it in there with him. He brought it to show me because it was such a pathetically inadequate, innocent-looking little affair. She had been distilling from it home-made perfumes and bottling them for sale. Mr. Courtney also had in his pockets some of her flasks of perfume. I selected one to show to you."

The Judge drew out from his pocket a little flask and set it by Mr. Ai's hand, on the table before him. It was a small glass bottle, covered with delicately tinted pink honeysuckle bloom, painted on paper, cut out, and pasted over the glass. Mr. Ai sat staring at it as at a rising ghost. Judge Wells went on

quietly, his voice lowered.

"Mr. Courtney tells me that the aunt is the most inconsequent, the most helpless lady. He thinks she has once been beautiful and perhaps wealthy—a spoiled beauty. But undoubtedly she is now almost in want. She wears two shawls, he says, one white, the other a faded blue, all eight ends pointing different ways. He says there is no harm in herthere could be no harm in her, that he answers for it she will never offend Her niece calls her 'Aunt again. Delia."

Mr. Ai had lifted the little flask into his hand. He was turning it over and over, his heavy face altering to an un-

accustomed expression, shocked and strangely helpless.

"Delia"—he said, incredulously. "Delia—in want! Selling whisky!" He looked up at Judge Wells almost piteously. "No, no! I can't have this. No—nor nothing like it."

His own words seemed to rouse him, to recall to him his power. He drew himself together.

"Tell Mr. Courtney," he said briefly, "to go back there at once and tell them it's all right. Rivers can come to see me early in the morning, and before he sees the Commissioner. Understand—before he sees the Commissioner. I'll attend to it all then, and—some other things."

The Judge waited a moment as if for further instruction, but none following—

"And the little still?" he asked, evenly.
"You don't now wish Mr. Courtney to bring it in there to wake up our dinner? You give this up as—as a—er—ah—little Presidential caucus?"

"Confound the caucus !" said Mr. Ai,

testily.

"My precise sentiment from the first,"

agreed the Judge, suavely.

He sat looking at the huge, relaxed, uncouth figure of his silent guest, his gray eyebrows lifted over his young eyes with a kind of wonder in them, and a touch of delicate triumph.

"It 'rules the court, the camp, the grove,'" he murmured, with the same exquisite and moving emphasis of his earlier rendering.

But Mr. Ai did not hear him. He was still scowling down at the little flask with its charming decoration of wild pink honeysuckle, its faint, sweet perfume of flowers, of a distant past; his host rose unheeded from his side and softly left the room.