After Death—What

William Hamilton Osborne

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Part 1

As Spalding — superannuated, possibly, but jaunty still — trotted nimbly down the aisle between the rows of desks, glances of welcome, murmurs of surprise, greeted him. He had become a stranger; the office force had not seen him for full two years. He nodded right and left, chuckled, as was his wont, and here and there stretched out a hand. Plainly he was glad to greet the Interstate Company once again, and that concern returned the compliment.

There were exceptions. Here and there a thirty−dollar−a−week man eyed the former manager with sour and savage glance. One of these turned to his neighbor.

"Cocky as ever, ain't he?" he queried.

His neighbor was a new man.

"Who is he?"

"A has−been so far as we're concerned — was fired months ago; but look at him! Red necktie−swell gray suit−gaiters! Boy, when do we get the chance at some real money? Look at Spalding! Retired — rich and retired. All he's got to do is to draw a check."

Quite unconscious of these remarks and of the envious glances bestowed upon him, Spalding, the former manager of the Interstate Company, entered the private office of Ephraim T. Ogilvie.

Ogilvie was a man of fifty — lean, healthy, well set up. His hair was grizzled, his mustache just turning gray. He was well dressed, but not so scrupulously neat as Spalding. He strode forward and held out his hand — a bit shamefacedly, perhaps. Spalding retreated before him. Ogilvie was worried.

"No hard feelings, Mr. Spalding?" he exclaimed.

Spalding vigorously shook his head.

"I just wanted to shut the door — I want to talk to you."

He closed the door, and came back and took a seat. Despite his red tie, his gaiters, his natty suit of clothes, all his cockiness forsook him. Of a sudden he seemed old — very old. He leaned forward on his cane and touched Ogilvie upon the arm.

"Eph," he began, "it's almost four o'clock. I left the house at eight o'clock this morning; and when I left I told Mrs. Spalding — I told Sally that I'd bring home forty dollars with me. I — I can't go home without it!" His lower lip trembled. "Eph," he cried, "honest to goodness, I haven't got a dollar in the world. I don't know what to do!"

Ogilvie, as if the other man had struck him, sprang from his seat and paced the floor.

"Good Lord!" he groaned.

Quite as suddenly he came back to his seat. He tossed a sheet of paper to his visitor.

"Mr. Spalding," he returned, "I don't have to ask you to believe me. I — I never lied to you in my life."

"I know you didn't, Eph," returned the elder man.

"My bank balance — there it is," said Ogilvie. "Look at it! It's less than ten dollars — see for yourself. Less than ten dollars at the present moment." He held up his hand at the other man's look of surprise. "Wait! I know what you're going to say — that I am getting twenty−five thousand a year. Don't I know it? And don't I know that I've overdrawn my salary account to the tune of five thousand? And don't I know that I don't own a dollar's worth of stock — not a bond or mortgage, not an inch of real estate? Look here!" He tossed another paper toward his visitor. "The premium on my life−insurance policy became due yesterday. I can't pay it — I daren't draw another cent from the office till the middle of next month. All that I've got between myself and starvation is my ability — and my life."

Spalding had been watching him — wondering. He knew that Ogilvie had told the truth. He wiped his forehead.

"Great guns, Eph!" said Spalding. I thought all you had to do was to draw a check!"

He had unconsciously echoed the exact words of the supernumerary in the outer office; but in reality the phrase was his own — one with which the office had become familiar during Spalding's incumbency as manager.

"All you've got to do is to draw a check!"

"Mr. Spalding," went on Ogilvie, "if ever one man felt grateful to another, my gratitude is due to you. You — you brought me up in this plant; you taught me all I know. I know the business well, too. I couldn't help their putting me in your place."

The old man held up his hand.

"No offense — no offense, Eph," he protested. "It had to come — it was inevitable. And I'd rather it had been you than — well, Grierson, for instance. There was only one thing that hurt. They used to pay me fifteen thousand, and they jacked you up to twenty−five. Why didn't they pay me twenty−five?" he went on savagely. "If they had, I wouldn't have been bumming around now for a measly forty dollars!"

Ogilvie paced the floor again.

"Yes, you would, Mr. Spalding," he returned. "There's just the point. They pay me ten thousand more than they paid you — and I'm flat broke. What's the reason? Do we have to spend all we make? Does the Interstate ask me

to cut a wide swath? Is there an implied suggestion that I ought to do it? Or do I merely want to do it? Or do I drift into it? What does it mean? Why, look here, Mr. Spalding," he went on, seating himself again and drawing his chair up close to the other man's. "When I was a boy, there were men who earned five thousand a year, year in and year out. Those men were considered rich. They lived on half their earnings and salted down the other half — and they died rich. Why can't we do it, Mr. Spalding? You, with ten thousand — fifteen thousand a year, for years; I, with twenty−five. What's the trouble, Mr. Spalding? That's what I want to know."

Spalding hopelessly shook his head.

"We belong to the new school, I suppose," he returned. "Live and let live — eat, drink, and be merry, for to−morrow — "

The younger man interrupted him. "Ah!" exclaimed Ogilvie. "That's what bothers me. When I'm dead — when my life and my ability no longer earn thousands of dollars — what's going to become of my family? If I left them a hundred thousand dollars — which I can't — they couldn't live on the income of it, at the rate we're going now. That's what bothers me. After death — what? That's the question, Mr. Spalding; and it's got me going, too!"

Spalding had regained his spirits.

"Godfrey!" he exclaimed. "I thought I was pretty badly off, but — "

"We're all in the same boat," said Ogilvie. "Come, I'll drive you to your house; and you tell Mrs. Spalding just how the matter stands."

Part 2

Ogilvie, an active man himself, possessed a family always busily engaged. His daughter, Irene, and his son, Tod, seemed to have inherited their father's restlessness. Like him, they had to do things all the time. Their mother had been dead for several years.

At the very moment when Ogilvie and Spalding stepped into the former's limousine, Irene was busily engaged. She was gambling — in the highly respectable and reputable way sanctioned by the present fashion — at her own bridge−whist in her own home.

Irene Ogilvie was a pretty girl just out of her teens. She was interesting. She had a quick, nervous, attractive way about her, a vivid smile, and fine teeth and eyes. Her great social ambition was to keep herself constantly interested.

To this end she avoided the fish, the crabs, the muckers. She rouged a bit, smoked a bit, and wore abbreviated frocks; but she did these things unconsciously, as it were — did them as a matter of course. The stare of a roue at her bare shoulder embarrassed her not a jot nor tittle; nor did the flush of clean−hearted youth at the same seductive sight cause her any thrill.

To her, styles and manners were quite a matter of course — as little worthy of remark as daily food. Had fashion dictated nun's garb for a change, she would have assumed it. If taking snuff had come into style, she would have sneezed with all the rest.

But these were not the interesting things. The mob lived to do these things; Irene lived for something else. Innocently, but eagerly, she sought the spice of life and found it — the unique in men and women. Not fish — not crabs. Spice — that was the point!

She had learned early what few New Yorkers know — that regularity and respectability do not afford the real entertainment — that there is but little of the dramatic to be found in a flock of sheep. Unconsciously, unerringly, she picked the crowd that pleased her — the irregulars, those tinged with a bit of mystery. Not, the Bohemians — they are all alike. Some of her friends were rich, some poor, many of them prominent, some quite unknown; but all were gay, all were interesting.

The most interesting of them all was Blandy, soldier of fortune.

As his car turned into the long, straight stretch that led to his home, Ogilvie was thinking about Irene.

"After death — what?"

He couldn't shake it off. What would become of Irene? She might marry, but she hadn't married yet. What in the world would she do, if —

Tod, who was now in his junior year at Yale, could get along; he could surely earn some sort of a living for himself. Hard−pan was all right for Tod. But Irene —

Like a flash, a flying gray object speeded down the long stretch, swerved slightly, and crashed into the limousine. Ogilvie's car skidded against the curb, balanced for an instant on its two right−hand wheels, and then toppled heavily on its side.

Two blocks down the avenue the gray car shrieked as if in agony, as its driver furiously applied the brakes. Then it turned slowly and came back.

The chauffeur of the limousine had leaped at the psychological moment, had silenced his engine, and now was struggling with the side door of the overturned car. In the far corner a huddled heap lay silent. This heap was Ephraim T. Ogilvie.

The gray car crept back to the scene of the accident, like some culprit fearful of the lash — a dog, its tail between its legs. The chauffeur of the limousine beckoned frantically. The driver of the gray car sprang to the ground. He removed his goggles. The chauffeur started.

"My great, Mr. Tod, it's you!" he cried.

"Good Lord, Andy!" returned the driver of the gray car. "I almost did for you! Are you hurt? It's my new car, and she bucks a bit. No bones — eh? What?"

The chauffeur pointed into the recesses of the limousine. Tod Ogilvie wasted no further words. He saw what had happened — he saw that hunched−up heap inside.

Tod got busy. He was a thorough−going Johnny−on−the−spot, this Tod Ogilvie. In his own way he was as efficient as his father; and motor−car accidents were in his line. He was worth three of Andy in an emergency. In the twinkling of an eye he had Ephraim T. Ogilvie out of the limousine, had him lying on the sidewalk, with a cushion underneath his head, and had him revived.

"Pop," he cried contritely, "it's me, Tod! It's my new car! I brought it all the way from New Haven just to show it to you, and see what I've done! Almost killed you — that's what I've done! How do you feel?"

Ephraim T. Ogilvie lifted his left arm — and dropped it. He groaned. The bone was broken. He placed his right hand upon his chest.

"Something there!" he moaned. "Oh, the pain!"

Tenderly they bundled him into the gray racer and took him home.

As they bore him through the wide hall, some of Irene Ogilvie's guests shrieked. Some of the women lit fresh cigarettes, some of them pushed card−tables out of the way. Others merely shivered and sought the dressing−room. The whist was broken up. The players stood not on the order of their going, but went at once.

Irene issued curt orders through the telephone. Inside of half an hour Pliny, the operating surgeon at the Riverside, who had answered her call, tucked his stethoscope into his bag.

"His heart seems O. K.," he said. "I'll have to give him ether, I'm afraid."

"You'll have to," moaned Ephraim. "Oh, the pain!"

Twenty minutes later Pliny's assistant held a cone over the face of Ephraim T. Ogilvie. The patient, obeying instructions, drew a deep, deep breath.

He wondered vaguely if it was to be his last.

Part 3

A year after Ogilvie's death, Irene and Tod were confronted with a fact, appalling and inevitable.

Ogilvie had died penniless. Even his insurance policy had lapsed, for an obvious reason — he hadn't paid the premiums. All that they knew immediately upon his demise; and now they were confronted with a worse condition. They had exhausted the few thousand dollars generously given to them by the Interstate Company; they were well in debt, and their credit was about exhausted.

Over Tod Ogilvie hung the cloud — perpetual, with no silver lining — of responsibility for his father's death; upon him was the keen and bitter disappointment of his lopped−off university career. These things despoiled him of his former cheeriness, and rendered him desperate.

"Hang it all, Rene!" he complained to his sister. "I'm efficient in my line. I know it — you know it — everybody else knows it. There's not a man in New York that knows cars better than I do. Even Faurot asks my opinion on anything that's new; and yet I can't get a look in anywhere. What's an offer of a commission when everybody's selling cars? If I've picked up two hundred in six months, I've been doing well. What am I going to do?"

Tod was indefatigable in his search — he was restless — he wanted to be employed; and at the same time he wanted easy money. From the "regular fellows" in the trade he descended to the pikers, the cheap−car men — and from thence to the made−over dealers.

It was Rookers, one of the latter, who sent for Tod one day.

"Mr. Ogilvie," he said, "I want you, as a judge, to take a squint at this made−over Reno. You know a car — take a look at this!"

Tod looked the Reno over.

"What did you say this is?" he queried.

"A Reno, of course."

"No, no," returned Tod. "You said it was a made−over car, didn't you?"

"Sure I did," returned Rookers.

Tod snorted.

"Nothing of the kind, Mr. Rookers! That's a new car. Nothing made over about that — perhaps it's had a coat of paint."

Rookers smiled.

"I was waiting for you to say it was a new car," he returned, rubbing his hands together. "I wanted your opinion, and you've given it. Well, let me tell you that that is a made−over car. It's not new — it's old. Your opinion clinches my idea that we've done the trick. We've taken an old car and made it over so that even you believe it's new. So far so good! "

He sidled up to Tod.

"Mr. Ogilvie, the car's a bargain. Do you want to buy it? You can make money on it, believe me."

Buy?" echoed Tod. "I couldn't buy a tin lizzie. I'm flat broke!"

Rookers tapped him on the shoulder.

Mr. Ogilvie," he went on, "will you — will you sell it, then — for me?"

Ogilvie shook his head.

What is there in selling a made−over Reno" he queried.

Rookers held up his hand.

"There is something in selling this particular Reno," he returned. "We have fooled you. You believed the car to be new. It is not new. Dealers will buy this car. You do not have to lie to them; you do not have to represent it as a new car. All that you need do is to go to Boston — "

"Boston?" echoed Tod. "Why Boston?"

"Because," said Rookers, "in Boston there is a market. You take this car to Boston. You offer it for sale — to dealers, if you please. I can give you half a dozen names. You offer this nine−thousand−dollar Reno for twenty−five hundred dollars. Try it on!"

"And if I sell it?" queried Tod doubtfully.

Rookers pulled out a roll of bills and peeled off two or three.

"Expenses, anyway," he said; "and when you come back, we shall see. If you sell, you will have the money, and you can deduct a liberal commission. Try it on!"

Tod tried it on. He took the car to Boston, peddled it among certain dealers, and sold it that same day for twenty−seven hundred.

He came back to Rookers.

"You win!" he exclaimed. "What about seven hundred off that for my little commish?"

"Seven hundred is all right," said Rookers.

Tod took out seven hundred and handed over two thousand dollars in bills. From this latter sum Rookers peeled off three hundred and handed it to Tod.

"Yours," he said. "Don't rob yourself."

Tod stared at him.

A thousand dollars," he exclaimed, "for selling a twenty−seven−hundred−dollar car! Where do you come in?"

"I come in," returned Rookers, "by getting a good salesman who knows his business. Suppose we try again!"

Easy money!" echoed Tod. "Suppose we try again!"

He went home to the apartment where he lived with his sister. Necessity had kept them together.

"Rene," he exclaimed, " I made a thou to−day! Here's your half. Catch hold!

Irene Ogilvie shook her head. Her face was flushed, her eyes unnaturally bright.

"I don't want your money, Tod," she answered a bit disdainfully. "I've made more than that to−day myself!"

She produced a check.

"You did?" he cried. "From whom?"

"From Mrs. Orleans, the multimillionairess," laughed Irene gaily.

Tod pondered a moment over this intelligence. Then he shook his head.

"She's Blandy's friend," he said at length. "I don't like it. I don't like her and I don't like Blandy. I don't like your having anything to do with them!"

Irene's eyes glittered.

"Go on, Tod," she returned coldly. "They don't like you; and they do like me. You are living your own life — let me live mine!"

"If father — " began Tod; but she cut him short.

"Father," she returned in even tones, "would have been here to−day but for an accident that happened to him."

She stopped. She had gone far enough. Tod flushed, strode to the window and looked out.

"Here comes Blandy now," he exclaimed angrily. "I'm going to beat it!" He looked her full in the face. "You'll keep the maid in while Blandy's here," he blurted out, "in case — "

The girl drew herself up.

"You don't seem to realize," she returned, "that I'm an Ogilvie!"

And so am I," said Tod, looking at his roll of bills. "And yet I'm selling for the muckers. Easy money!" he repeated. "We're both getting it — just now; but how long is it going to last?"

As he went out, he brushed against Blandy, and gave him a surly greeting. Blandy laughed as he confronted Irene.

"Br−r−r−r! " he shivered. "I struck an iceberg in the hall."

Irene held out a welcoming hand.

"Let me warm you up a bit," she said.

"I've got tea with rum and red sugar, and everything you like."

Blandy followed her with his glance, wondering, wondering when the time would come — if it would ever come — when he could set foot over that mysterious and invisible line which Irene Ogilvie had drawn about herself. He was infatuated with her, mad about her, and she knew it; yet he had never dared to tell her so. Blandy was not a marrying man. Moreover, he was married; and Irene knew it. Her knowledge of that fact held him well in check.

But she liked him. Out of all that crowd of interesting idlers and celebrities she had picked Blandy, and he had picked her.

But she held him at arm's length — and quite successfully.

The rest of her crowd she took to her arms quite impersonally. She made frank love to the men she didn't care about; she held the women with her frank, innocent, good−natured friendliness. They liked her and stuck to her for the reason that she was the most interesting woman among them, just as Blandy was the most attractive of the men. Penniless as she was, Irene was able to hold her place.

"I've got to," she told herself. "It's the only thing in life. And I've got to gamble." She found herself repeating her brother's phrase. "Easy money! Why not — why not?"

"Suppose," said Blandy in his free and easy way, "we go to Claremont and have dinner?"

"The one best bet!" assented Irene.

While they rolled northward, Blandy touched her on the arm.

"I want to show you the very best thing about this car," he said.

He leaned forward. Attached to the upholstered partition were pockets, kits, flasks, cigar−holders.

"This," said Blandy, feeling for a little button hidden somewhere underneath the cushioned furnishing, "is something nobody knows anything about. "There's 'not a car in the world but mine that has it. Look!"

A little secret pocket slid into view, from which Blandy drew a piece of thick cardboard.

"The only car in the world that has it," he repeated. "The picture of a queen!"

He showed it to her. It was her own photograph. She snatched at it eagerly and angrily, but in a trice he had returned it to the pocket, and it disappeared.

"I'm entitled to it," he said, looking her full in the face. "It's safer there than anywhere else. Nobody knows about it but myself, and now you. And there it's going to stay, without your consent or with it, as you please!"

That night three cars were stolen from the Claremont garage the while their owners wined and dined within. One of them was a new and up−to−date Torrenza — a big blue machine worth eighty−five hundred dollars. It belonged to Blandy. He sent out an alarm as soon as he discovered the theft. New York was scoured, but the car completely disappeared.

Part 4

In the next few weeks Tod sold another car for Rookers, and another, and another. Almost steadily, these days, he was out of town — in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington — then Pittsburgh — then Boston once again. Irene saw little of him, and he saw little of Irene; but she saw much of Blandy. Blandy saw to that.

One evening, late, Blandy called on her. Her maid was out, and she was alone — he had made sure of that. He was as cool and debonair as ever, and quite as gentlemanly; but he was clearly worried.

"I — I don't want to hurt you," he began, "and yet I don't know how to say this without offending you."

He drew forth a crumpled piece of paper, crushed it into her hand, and then turned his back upon her without another word.

Irene unfolded the paper and stared at it speechlessly. It was her own I. O. U. for seven hundred dollars.

"I — I gave this to Mrs, Orleans today," she stammered, rising. "How did you get it?"

He turned back to her.

"I met her in the nick of time," he said.

"She was on the point of deserting you — breaking her friendship with you. She was on the point of breaking up all the friendships you have. She justified herself. You owed her seven hundred dollars, and she didn't see how you could ever pay her. I showed her."

He stopped. Irene's breath came quick and fast.

"I showed her," he repeated calmly. "I paid the debt myself."

Irene caught at the back of a chair. Her face was livid with anger.

"You — you didn't dare!" she cried.

Blandy waited until the storm was over. Then he bowed gravely to Irene and took his hat and overcoat. He

stepped to her side.

"My queen," he said gravely, slowly, "remember this — life is well worth living. You've got to live, you know!"

Within the next few months Irene realized this. She needed the life she was living, she needed her friends, and she needed easy money.

Within the next few months Blandy had paid another gambling debt of hers, and had received her haughty thanks. Haughty or otherwise, her thanks were something. He had made a distinct advance.

Part 5

Six months later Rookers slapped Tod Ogilvie on the shoulder.

"That dark−red car came in from the works this morning, Tod," he said. "I know a man in Trenton who wants to buy a car, and maybe he'll stand for this one. You can hold out for your price. It's a big, flashy−looking thing, and that's his style."

"I'll try my luck," said Tod.

"And oh, by the way, Tod," said Rookers carelessly, "steer clear of the main streets — just my advice. Of course, I'm all right, and you're all right, and this car's all right; but the central office is raising thunder over these here stolen cars. They're suspectin' everybody. There's lots of crooks in this made−over business, and they're watchin' all of us. Careful — that's all. You understand!"

Tod looked Rookers in the eye. Tod understood. He had understood for some time now, but he had asked no questions. That wasn't his business. He had nothing to do with the history of a car. He was selling made−over cars — that's all — at fair prices.

Easy money! What were the odds?

He wheeled into the side street where he lived with his sister. It was after dark, of course. He wanted to tell her that he was off again for a two−days' trip. Halfway down the block he saw her come out of the apartment−house — with a man. He stopped his car, descended, and stole forward on foot.

The man was Blandy. Blandy and Irene entered a taxi and drove off. Tod heard their destination — Rector's.

There was something about Blandy's manner that Tod didn't like — something too familiar in the way he handed the girl down the steps of the house and into the cab. He knew men of Blandy's type; and he knew Irene — the luxurious, the self−willed, the impulsive — Irene, who always wanted something different — who clamored for excitement.

He followed them to Rector's. When they left, he was ready for them. The night air was keen. He wore a long coat, and the collar was turned up. His huge racing−goggles covered his face.

He solicited their trade. Blandy was about to refuse when the car and its size and general appearance caught his eye. He started, and glanced keenly at the closely muffled figure of the driver.

He helped Irene into the machine.

"The Crooked Crag Inn, New Rochelle," he said.

Tod threw in the clutch and tore across country with the speed of a projectile. it was a magnificent machine. The Trenton man was sure to get a bargain when he bought it. But even the powerful car could not keep pace with Tod's thoughts, or with the swift vengeance that he planned.

At length he drew up at the hostelry — a low, gabled inn, well hidden from the road by shrubbery. Blandy and his sister entered its portals, side by side. Tod followed them. He had not yet been paid. He wondered at this, for he had expected Blandy to dismiss him at once.

Blandy ushered Irene into a cosy little waiting−room, where a fire was burning.

"My dear," he exclaimed quite audibly, "excuse me for just one moment, if you please."

As he withdrew Tod caught him by the arm — a bit roughly.

"Mr. Blandy," he choked, "I'd like to see you — outside — for a moment!"

"With pleasure, driver," returned Blandy, holding Tod's arm in his grasp. "I hope you didn't think that I'd forgotten you."

Tod drew him in front of the office window, where the light shone out to the veranda. He tore off his goggles, threw back his coat−collar, and stood bareheaded before Blandy.

"I don't think," said Tod, his anger rising, "that you'll soon forget me!"

Blandy started as if shot.

"Good Lord!" he cried. " You?"

"Ah," returned Tod, "you hardly expected to see me!"

"Right!" said Blandy. "I didn't think you'd got that far."

"Oh," returned Tod, "I'm no detective. I didn't intend to track you. It happened quite by accident, and by good luck, to−night — just in the nick of time!"

Blandy nodded.

"Just in the nick of time," he returned.

He caught Tod by the shoulders and marched him to the near−by car. He threw open the door, entered, and switched on the lights.

"Ogilvie," he said, "look here! There are some things that you fellows know about cars and some you don't. Now watch!"

Tod, his head and body thrust well within the car, looked on. Blandy pushed a hidden button, and a little pocket slid out into view. From it Blandy took a photograph and exhibited it to Tod.

Tod started back.

"Irene!" he cried.

There was deep silence for a moment. Finally Blandy nodded.

"Now, Ogilvie," he said, "you can take your choice. You can go back to New York safe and sound — and free; or you can go in and confront your sister, and have me telephone the bulls that I've rounded up the fellow who's selling stolen cars. It's up to you — not me!"

Part 6

Pliny, of the Riverside, watched carefully. Twice he applied his stethoscope. He snapped his fingers joyfully — a habit of his own.

"Just for an instant," he exclaimed,

"I was the least bit anxious, but he's coming out of it all right!"

Ephraim T. Ogilvie began to come out of it. He gurgled, shrieked, struggled like mad. He called out wildly for Irene — Irene!

Then he opened his eyes and looked about him. He was a quick−witted man — he had a head on his shoulders.

"Doctor," he queried, "how long did it take?"

A nurse consulted her wrist−watch.

"About five minutes for the operation," she returned, "but you've been under the influence of ether for maybe half an hour."

Ephraim T. Ogilvie waved his good arm.

"I want everybody out of this room except my son and daughter!" he cried. "Sorry to be rude to you, doctor, but it's a matter of life and death. I want my son and daughter. I want to talk to them alone!"

There was something in his voice that commanded obedience.

"Look here," he gasped, when the three of them were alone, "I've had a bad dream — a damnably bad dream. I've got to tell it to you now!"

They listened in frightened silence. His glance — his words — ate into them.

"We've got to cut down — we've got to retrench — while I'm still Ogilvie, and alive, instead of being Spalding, and dead, or practically dead. We've got to trim sail before — before you — "

Irene placed a cold hand upon his forehead.

"Agreed!" she cried. "We're game. Why didn't you say so before? I'll do my little bit."

Tod's face loomed up before his father's vision. Tod gulped; he had passed a bad hour or so since the accident.

"Look here, pop," he exclaimed, "it's a dead sure thing that I don't drive that gray devil any more! And I'm not built for a university." The young man rolled up his sleeves. "Take me down to the works," he added. "Let me start in at the bottom. As for the gray car, I know a chap in Boston who would give his eyes to get her — "

"Not in Boston!" said his father feebly. "That's where Rookers sold his cars — where you — "

There was a knock at the door. Irene answered it. A maid beckoned her into the hall.

"Mr. Blandy's down−stairs," she announced. "He'd like to speak to you for a moment."

Irene paled.

"Tell Mr. Blandy that I'm not at home!" she said.

— —

TRIUMPH

THE race is won! As victor I am hailed With deafening cheers from eager throats; and yet More glad the victory, could I forget The strained, white faces of the ones that failed.

Owen E. McGillicuddy