

him with my hand out and getting off something about the weather or his health — I don't know what. His hand came into mine as if he didn't know it. 'I'm in hell,' said that specter standing there under the green maples; 'I'm in hell.'

"Fellow sinners, there didn't seem to be any small-talk answer to that in my repertoire. The kids he'd murdered had been peacefully buried these many years, and Tollytown had a new crop now, was alive with 'em, like any other town. And the mourners were comforted, all of them more or less, for that's the way the world's built. Only Herod couldn't taste his victuals and prowled the streets with burning eyes, and told chance enemies more than he'd ever meant to tell his own soul. I passed it up; I think I wrung his hand as if he were a suffering brother, and then tried to get out from under. He blocked me a minute, and began to say something. 'Tell your father —' Then he gave it up and went on. I can't prove it, but he was going to say, 'Tell your father Peyton's better off' — that's what he was going to say.

"This isn't a story of reform, of character building, the dead self a stepping-stone to higher things, and all that kind of cheerfulness. That's the right road, of course, but it didn't seem to be the point that interested Carson. He'd gotten knocked out beyond that. If he ever got a fresh start, it must have been in another world, for the next morning they found him dead — drowned,

face down, in eight inches of water in his own bath-tub. It took a long time, but he'd come around to making a rhyme for Peyton's passing. It strikes me as a hard way to die, but it was considerate. The family could run a bluff about some kind of seizure. The doctors did not help them out much, but they had influence and money, and the papers let it go at that. So the girls could go on with their fool heads up, and their mother could continue to play the sphinx the way she'd been doing ever since disgrace first came upon her husband. She and Carson had married when they were poor and in love, and she must have thought then that he was a regular fortress of a man and a husband. Whatever she knew or didn't know about the railroad president, she'd seen the fake fortress crumble, had found out that it was a fake, sure; trust a life-long loving wife for knowing bottom facts about a man's character.

"She had a text put on his monument, just the name and date and this: 'Why hast thou not considered this thing that is to come, rather than that which is present.' That was all right enough for a tombstone, but it has a Delphic sound, too, above that last corpse of the great Tollytown disaster.

"Hand me a match. Doubtless there is a real moral moral to be drawn from this yarn, but I'm avoiding the conventional. All I say is that staking too much on the stability of your own wickedness may be taking long odds in a mighty wild game."

A MOUNTAIN VIGIL

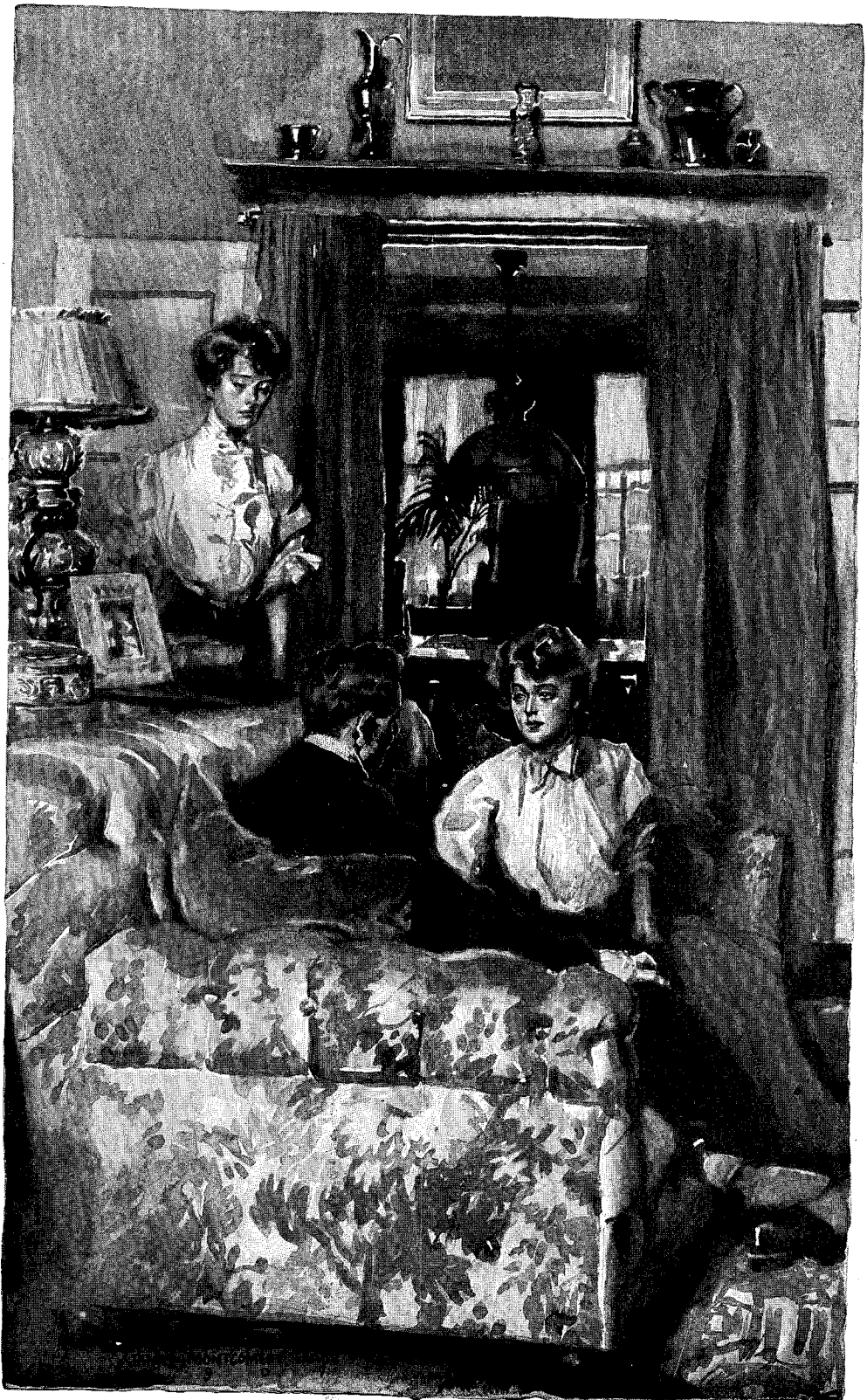
BY

HOMER E. WOODBRIDGE

THE birds are hushed in the tree-tops,
The firelight falls to gray,
And the tents gleam white in the pale starligh
As I wait for thee and the day.

Thou wilt come with the flush of the morning,
The woods shall stir and wake,
And the daystar rise to greet thine eyes,
And the thrush her silence break.

O, dark are the hills, my sweetheart,
They are dreaming of dawn and thee;
And the tall pines sleep in the stillness deep,
None watch but the stars and me.



"HIS WHOLE ASPECT WAS OF ONE ABSORBED TO THE POINT OF OBLIVION REGARDING ALL OTHER OBJECTS"

A BROTHER IN ARMS

BY

GRACE S. RICHMOND

AUTHOR OF "KILBRETH OF BALLYRAGGAN," "BILLY'S ORGY," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED FROM A DRAWING BY JAMES MONTGOMERY FLAGG



"UD —" said Julius, looking in at the nursery door. He spoke so gently and with hesitation so unusual that his sister turned to glance at him. He came in slowly, with his eyes on the floor.

"Could I bother you a few minutes?" he asked in a half-whisper.

"Of course," said Mrs. Jack cordially. "Come and sit here by me in the window. Only don't talk loud, or Billy may waken. I want him to sleep an hour at least."

Julius flung two pillows from the couch to the floor at Mrs. Jack's feet and made as if to cast himself upon them. Then he looked about him, selected a small, straight chair, and pulled it to face her. "Guess I can begin better here," he said solemnly. "I'll reserve the pillows for the moment when I need to throw myself at your feet."

Mrs. Jack looked at him suspiciously, holding her needle suspended above the tear she was mending in one of Billy's skirts.

"No — it's not money," said the Yale sophomore. "I told you I'd make what father let me have at Christmas last till June. I'm not going to howl for more now at Easter."

His face wore a virtuous expression which Mrs. Jack vaguely distrusted. But at the next instant the virtuous look had changed to one which denoted extreme admiration for Mrs. Jack herself.

"Say, but you look foxy this morning," he declared. "Where did you get that blouse? It's a stunner."

Mrs. Jack turned to her sewing. "I see," she said. "It's something you want of me."

"I never can disguise my feelings," murmured Julius. "I admit that I do. But

the blouse took me off my feet, by the way. I didn't start out to jolly you — but you looked so awfully pretty I had to turn aside to tell you so."

Mrs. Jack smiled in spite of herself: Julius' tone was the essence of sincerity. "It is a beauty," she owned. "I know that myself. But this is the third time I've worn it since you've been here."

Julius ignored the implication. "When you come up next year to Junior prom," he said, "if you leave Jack and Billy at home and let me introduce you as Miss Broughton, you'll have a gang around you so thick you can't be found."

Mrs. Jack leaned forward and tapped his head with her thimble. "That's enough," she said. "What is it you are after? Must I entertain for you?"

Julius looked at her with an air of relief. "Would you do it?" he asked eagerly.

"Oh, I suppose so," agreed Mrs. Jack, with an indulgent smile. "Whom do you want? Every Yale man who is home, of course, and enough girls to go round?"

"That's just awfully good of you," declared Julius gratefully. "But — er — if I let you off from something that would be so much trouble as that, perhaps you wouldn't mind doing a much simpler thing."

He had such a guileless air that Mrs. Jack at once put up her guard.

"That depends on what you call a simpler thing. Your ideas and mine —"

"This isn't much," explained Julius modestly. "It's just — you see — a girl I know in New Haven is starting West to be gone some time. She's going through town, and she'd have just about time to come out here for — that is — for luncheon. If you would meet her —"

"Julius! — who is she?"

"She's a dream," said Julius.