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SYNOPSIS.

Once more the forces beyond the power of human control are at work confounding and thwarting the mighty business man and city builder, Sheridan. He fights blindly, valiantly and feels sure he can win. How the fates laugh at his efforts; how love and hate show their great strength-is all told with great fluency by the author in this installment.

Bibbs' father has announced that sition would be?" hereafter Bibbs will be an official in will take up a big business career. The shouldn't mind at all." son has refused. The father has just angrily demanded an explanation of a week?" the refusal.

CHAPTER XXIV .-- Continued.

instinctively; he felt himself at every few months, I'm sure. I'd rather have another line over. The first time I possible disadvantage. He was a a trade than be in business-I should, ever saw you, Bibbs, you were looksleeper clinging to a dream-a rough infinitely!" hand stretched to shake him and waken him. He went to a table and made and as he spoke he kept his eyes lowapprehensively. Sheridan stood facing ing-or-you can go to plumbing!" him, expressionless, and made no attempt to interrupt. "That's difficult to explain." Bibbs continued, lowering don't want to live a business life-I don't want to be drawn into it. I don't think it is living-and now I am living. I have the healthful toil-and I can think. In business as important as yours I couldn't think anything but business. I don't--- I don't think making money is worth while."

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bring up my average."

1-13—
The Sheridan family, "self-made" rich, have moved into a magnificent home in the fashionable part of a Middle West if the the ibolin. And there's another you probably couldn't see, but I'll take the libble manore, aristocratic rake, who waits for a holler, like you are to be asset the old may busines header to be kind of a holler, like you are to be asset the old may busines header to be weny didn't have to lay down and do what I said. But go on the Sheridan live the Vertrees, broke and wanted to marry Part loads in how—and yet I can't seem to remember once when you didn't have to lay down and do what I said. But go on to the Sheridan live the Vertrees, broke and do what I said. But go on the business of this country. Go on!"
Hibss are almost in love. Young Jim has drift or marks about our city and bus net to keep to myself, and I'm doing of the wart to keep to myself, and I'm doing part to be her habit to look at him
Hother the west fashionable part of the firm until he was out of sight, how is now it to keep to myself, and I'm doing part to be her habit to look at him

and a glimpse of him under there with you. I'd be swallowed into whenever there was an opportunity, the street lamp that stood between the it. I don't care for money enough It may be said, in truth, that while two houses, and saw that he turned to to----

> "No," his father interrupted, still she looked at him all the time. to earn a living. Anybody could tell dine and Palomides" they were silent good bed; you're eatin' pretty fair said: clothes. Just suppose one o' these over. This: noisy housekeepers-me, for instancedecided to let you do your own housekeepin'. May I ask what your propo-

"I'm earning nine dollars a week." the various Sheridan enterprises and said Bibbs, sturdily. "It's enough. I

"Who's payin' you that nine dollars

"My work!" Bibbs answered. "And clearly, 've done so well on that clipping machine I believe I could work up to fif- true-especially my knees!" teen or even twenty a week at another Perturbed and distressed, Bibbs rose job. I could be a fair plumber in a blushing charmingly. "You might read

"You better set about learnin' one pretty dam' quick!" But Sheridan you: 'A little Greek slave that came vague drawings upon it with a finger, struggled with his temper and again from the heart of Arcady!" " was partially successful in controlling ered. "You weren't altogether right it. "You better learn a trade over Sunabout the shop-that is, in one way day, because you're either goin' down you weren't, "father." He glanced up with me to my office .Monday morn-"All right," said Bibbs, gently. "I love and want what's beautiful and

can get along Sheridan raised his hands sardonhis eyes again, to follow the tracings leally, as in prayer. "O God," he said, wanted. You seemed to me, from the of his finger. "I-I believe the shop "this boy was crazy enough before first, the most wistful person I had might have done for me this time if he began to earn nine dollars a week. I hadn't-if something hadn't helped and now his money's gone to his head! me to-oh, not only to bear it, but to Can't you do nothin' for him?" Then be happy in it. Well, I am happy in he flung his hands apart, palms outit. I want to go on just as I am. And ward, in a furious gesture of dismisof all things on earth that I don't want, sal. "Get out o' this room! You got

to suppose something would be due to | nor that other which so imminently her thought of him; a symbol of her threatened him held place in the con- self and of her ineffable kindness.

they were together, and it was light, look back again. Then, and not before she looked at the upper windows of dangerously quiet. "You've never had | When he came to the end of "Alla- Roscoe's house across the street. They were dark. Mary waited, but after a that by what you say. Now, let me a little while, considering together; little while she closed the front door remind you; you're sleepin' in a pretty then he turned back the pages and and returned to her window. A moment later two of the upper winfood; you're wearin' pretty fine "There's something I want to read dows of Roscoe's house flashed into light and a hand lowered the shade of one of them. Mary felt the cold then

You would think I threw a window open on the dawn....She has a soul that can be seen around her-that takes you in its arms like an alling child and without saying anything to you consoles you for everything....I shall never un-derstand it all. I do not know how it can all be, but my kness bend in spike of me when I speak of it.... -it was the third night she had seen those windows lighted and that shade lowered, just after Bibbs had gone. A stricken George, muttering hoarse-

ly, admitted him, and Bibbs became aware of a paroxysm within the house. Terrible sounds came from the library: Sheridan cursing as never be-"You boy!" said Mary, not very fore; his wife sobbing, her voice rising to an agonized squeal of protest upon "Oh, yes," he returned. "But it's each of a series of muffled detonations -the outrageous thumping of a bandaged hand upon wood; then Gurney, sharply imperious, "Keep your hand in that sling! Keep your hand in that sling, I say!"

ing into a mirror. Do it again. But "Look!" George gasped, delighted to you needn't read it-I can give it to play herald for so important a tragedy: and he renewed upon his face the ghastly expression with which he had "I! I'm one of the hands at the first beheld the ruins his calamitous Pump works-and going to stay one. gesture laid before the eyes of Bibbs. unless I have to decide to study "Look at 'a lamidal statue!"

Gazing down the hall, Bibbs saw "No." She shook her head. "You heroic wreckage, seemingly Byzantine -painted colossal fragments of a shattered torso, appallingly human; and gilded and silvered heaps of magnificence strewn among ruinous palms oasis-the Moor had been hurled from

"You were sittin' up there tellin' me "Your son Bibbs," said the doctor, You sat up there and told me I got kind and quantity of 'gray matter' that 'hysterical' over nothin'! You sat up will make him a success in anythingknew. I just want you to hear this. lead aren't fit to do much with the Now listen!" He swung toward the life he ought to lead. Bifndly, he's quiet figure waiting in the doorway. been fighting for the chance to lead me Monday morning and let me start to stay alive within him; and, blindiy, you with two vice-presidencies, a di- he knows you'll crush it out. You've rectorship, stock and salaries? I ask set your will to do it. Let me tell you you.'

"No, father," said Bibbs, gently. aced his son once more. "And I'd like the doctor to hear: What 'll you do if I decide you're too

"Find other work," said Bibbs. "There! You hear him for yourself!" Sheridan cried. "You hear what--" "Keep your hand in that sling! Yes. I hear him."

Sheridan leaned over Gurney and shouted, in a voice that cracked and broke, piping into faisetto: "He thinks of bein' a plumber !He wants to be a plumber so he can think!"

He fell back a step, wiping his forehead with the back of his left hand. only son I got now! That's my chance to live," he cried, with a bitterness



got 'hysterical'-'hysterical,' oh Lord! composedly, "Bibbs Sheridan has the there tellin' me I didn't have as heavy if he ever wakes up! The thousands burdens as many another man you of men fit for the life you want him to "Bibbs' will you come down town with it-he's obeying something that begs something more. You're half mad, with a consuming fury against the very Sheridan looked at Gurney and then self of the law-the law that took Jim from you. The very self of the law took Roscoe from you and gave Edith the certainty of beating you: and the high-priced a workin- man either to very self of the law makes Bibbs deny live in my house or work in my shop?" you tonight. The law beats you. But you've set yourself against it, to bend it to your own ends, to wield it and twist it-"

The voice broke from Sheridan's heaving chest in a shout. "Yes! And by God, I will!"

"So Ajax defied the lightning," said Gurney.

"I've heard that dam'-fool story, too," Sheridan retorted, fixedly. "'Defied the lightning,' did he, the jackass! If he'd been half a man he'd 'a' got "There! That's my son! That's the defyin' the lightning-we hitch it up and make it work for us like a black steer!"

> "Well, what about Blbbs?" said Gurney. "Will you be a really big man now and-"

"Gurney, you know a lot about bigness!" Sheridan began to walk to and fro again, and the doctor returned gloomily to his chair. He had shot his bolt the moment he judged its chance to strike center was best, but the target seemed unaware of the marksman.

"I'm tryin' to make a big man out o' that poor truck yonder." Sheridan went on, "and you step in, beggin' me to let him be Lord knows what-I don't. I suppose you figure it out that now I got a son-in-law, I mightn't need a son! Yes, I got a son-in-law now-a spender!"

"Oh, put your hand back!" said Gurney, wearly,

There was a bronze inkstand upon the table. Sheridan put his right hand in the sling, but with his left he swept the inkstand from the table and halfway across the room-a comet with a destroying black tail. Mrs. Sheridan shricked and sprang toward it.

"Let it lay!" he shouted, flercely. "Let it lay!" And, weeping, she obeyed. "Yes, sir," he went on, in a voice the more ominous for the sudden hush he put upon it. "I got a spender for a son-in-law! It's wonderful where property goes, sometimes. There was ole man Tracy-you remember him Doc-J. R. Tracy, solid banker

He went into the bank as messenger,

"Go on," said Sheridan, curtly, as Bibbs paused timidly.

"It hasn't seemed to get anywhere, that I can see," said Bibbs. "You think this city is rich and powerful-but what's the use of its being rich and powerful? They don't teach the children any more in the schools because the city is rich and powerful. They teach them more than they used to because some people-not rich and powerful people - have thought the thoughts to teach the children. And yet when you've been reading the paper I've heard you objecting to the children being taught anything except what would help them to make money. You said it was wasting the taxes. You want them taught to make a living, but not to live. When I was a little boy this wasn't an ugly town; now it's hideous. What's the use of being big just to be hideous? I mean I don't think all this has meant really going ahead-it's just been getting bigger and dirtier and noisier. Wasn't the whole country happier and in many ways wiser when it was smaller and cleaner and quieter and kinder? I know you think I'm an utter fool, father, but, after all, though, aren't business and politics just the housekeeping part of life? And wouldn't you despise a woman that not only made her

housekeeping her ambition, but did it so noisily and dirtily that the whole neighborhood was in a continual turadditions built to her house when she had; and suppose, with it all, she made

ever been right about anything?" "I don't quite-"

Have you ever been right upon any about or talked about? Can you men-

He was flourishing the bandaged hand as he spoke, but Bibbs said only, "If I've always been wrong before, surely there's more chance that I'm



a Week?"

a skull that's thicker'n a whale's thigh-bone, but it's cracked spang all miss me a little after you go." the way across! You're cracked! Oh. but I got a fine layout here! One son other days, if you'll let it," he said. moil over it? And suppose she talked died, one quit, and one's a loon! The and thought about her housekeeping loon's all I got left! Well, mister, loon 'let it'!" all the time, and was always having or no loon, cracked and crazy or whatever you are, I'll take you with me couldn't keep clean what she aiready Monday morning, and I'll work you "Just one minute!" Sheridan inter- business man! I'll keep at you while ing of it; but it was always the same. ful, dandelion-pickin' sleep-walker!" last word.

CH. PTER XXV.

delicate and serene; it's really art that ever known, and that's what you were wistful for."

plumbing."

He stopped and looked at her.

"You boy!" she murmured again.

Bibbs looked doubtful and more his pedestal. wistful than ever; but after a moment or two the matter seemed to clarify itself to him. "Why. no," he said: "I wanted something else more than that.

I wanted you." like those two in "The Cloister and 'tall now. He ain't nothin' 'tail to the Hearth." I'm just the rough Bur- what he was 'while ago. You done gundian crossbow man. Denys, who miss' it, Mist' Bibbs. Doctuh got him

hoarse little bell in the next room be- graph form. "Here what come," he gan a series of snappings which said. "I pick 'er up when he done proved to be ten, upon count. "He stompin' on 'er. You read 'er, Mist' gets into the clock whenever I'm with Bibbs-you' ma tell me tuhn 'er ovuh you." And, sighing deeply, he rose to you soon's you come in." to go.

leaving me."

"There's one little time in the twentyfour hours when I'm not happy. It's now, when I have to say good night. But now's the bad time-and I must go through it, and so-good night." And he added with a pungent vehemence of which he was little aware. 'I hate it!"

"Do you?" she said, rising to go to the door with him. But he stood motionless, gazing at her wonderingly. "Mary! Your eyes are so-" He

stopped. "Yes?" But she looked quickly away. "I don't know," he said. "I thought

just then-"What did you think ?"

"I don't know--- it seemed to me that there was something I ought to understand-and didn't."

Shè laughed and met his wondering gaze again frankly. "My eyes are pleased," she said. "I'm glad that you "But tomorrow's coming faster than hall, beckoned to her son. She inclined her head. "Yes. I'll-

"Going to church," said Bibbs. "It is going to church when I go with you!" She went to the front door with him; you will permit me? Have you down to die I'll be whisperin' at you he reached the sidewalk, and there he right cuff. till they get the embalmin' fluid into always turned and looked back, and me! Now go on, and don't let me hear she waved her hand to him. Then he cried, as Bibbs appeared. "There's the in a walk! What's taken Roscoe from "I ask the simple question: Have from you again till you can come and went on, half-way to the new house, hope o' the family-my lifelong pride you? Timbers bear just so much you ever been right about anything tell me you've waked up, you poor, piti- and looked back again, and Mary was and joy! I want-" not in the doorway, but the door was Bibbs gave him a queer look. There open and the light shone. It was as Gurney, sharply. subject or question you've thought was something like reproach in it, for if she meant to tell him that she would

right about this. It seems reasonable whooping wind, but neither this storm beautiful symbol of her friendship-of you want Bibbs to say?"

"He hit 'at ole lamidal statue," said George, "Pow!" "My father?"

ma run tell me git doctub quick 's I Bibbs a chance to live?" he said, cool- bein' the beatin' heart o' this town in "And here I am!" she laughed, com- kin telefoam-she sho' you' pa goin' ly. "I would if I were you. You've its time. Well, that ole man used to pletely understanding. "I think we're bus' a blood-vessel. He ain't takin' on had two that went into business." followed that gentle Gerard and told all quiet' down, to what he was. Pow! everybody that the devil was dead." he hit 'er! Yessuh!" He took Bibbs' "He isn't, though," said Bibbs, as a coat and proffered a crumpled tele-

Bibbs read the telegram quickly. It "You're always very prompt about was from New York and addressed to Mrs. Sheridan.

> taken as was so wretched my health shop again, and he did go, and he's would probably suffered severely Robert made good there. Now, see: Isn't and I were married this afternoon thought best have quiet wedding abso-lutely sure you will understand wisdom of step when you know Robert better am you know that he couldn't do it if you happiest woman in world are leaving for gave him a chance? How do you know Florida will wire address when settled will remain till spring love to all father will like him too when he knows him like to say that might make the world just do he is just ideal. EDITH LAMHORN.

> > CHAPTER XXVI.

Bibbs, convinced that the mere than his physical body, and you'll kill father, was about to make his escape into the gold-and-brocade room when he heard Sheridan vociferously demanding his presence.

"Tell him to come in here! He's out there. I heard George just let him in. Now you'll see!" And tear-stained Mrs. Sheridan, looking out into the

Gurney sat winding a strip of white to understand that you've been strugcotton, his black bag open upon a gling against actual law."

chair near by; and Sheridan was striding up and down, his hand so heavily and learn you-yes' and I'll lam you, she always went that far. They had seemed to be wearing a small boxing- Did Edith, herself, beat you? Didn't the house altogether unpeaceful and if I got to-untitl I've made something formed a little code of leave-taking. glove. His eyes were bloodshot: his she obey without question something out of you that's fit to be called a by habit, neither of them ever speak- forchead was heavily bedewed: one powerful that was against you? Edith ted, adding, with terrible courtesy. I'm able to stand, and if I have to lay She always stood in the doorway until and there were blood stains upon his aginst her, but you set yourself against side of his collar had broken loose. wasn't against you, and you weren't

once; but there was more than that- never shut him out; he could always a sound like a howl. "For God's sake, Well, you couldn't! Now here's Bibbs, tion one single time when you were he seemed to be startled by his father's see that friendly light of the open sing another tune!" he cried. "You There are thousands of men fit for the doorway-as if it were open for him to said you 'came as a doctor but stay life you want him to lead-and so is come back, if he would. He could see as a friend,' and in that capacity you he. It wouldn't take half of Bibbs' it until a wing of the new house came undertake to sit up and criticize me-" brains to be twice as good a business

"There's Our Little Sunshine!" He Cried.

There had been a massacre in the throat. "That's my one chance to edge, that bank? It was diamond live-that thing you see in the door- edged? He used to eat a bag o' peaway yonder!"

"Yessuh! Pow! he hit 'er! An' you' bag. "What's the matter with giving an institution, and it come pretty near Sheridan's mouth moved grotesquely before he could speak. "Joe Gurney." he said, when he could command him. Tracy didn't. Speak to him? God! the responsibility for the death of my wouldn't 'a' let him clean the cuspison James?"

doctor. "But just once I'd like to have he'd 'a' had him run off the street. And it out with you on the question of yet all Tracy was doin' every day of Bibbs-and while he's here, too." He his life was workin' for that cigarette got up, walked to the fire, and stood boy! Tracy thought he was givin' warming his hands behind his back his life and his life-blood and the and smiling. "Look here, old fellow. let's be reasonable," he said. "You

he hasn't some message-something a little bit happier or wiser? I'm not speaking as doctor now. But I tell you one thing I know: If you take him down there you'll kill something that I feel is in him, and it's finer, I think.

glimpse of him, just then, would prove it deader than a door-nall! And so nothing less than insufferable for his why not let it live? You've about come to the end of your string, old chance?"

Sheridan stood looking at him fixedly. "What 'fighting?' "

"Yours-with nature." Gurney sustained the daunting gaze of his fierce Bibbs went as far as the doorway, antagonist equably. "You don't seem "What law?"

"Natural law," said Gurney, "What

wrapped in fresh bandages that he do you think beat you with Edith? the power that had her in its grip, and "There's our little sunshine!" he it shot out a spurt of flame-and won strain, old man; but you wanted to "Keep your hand in that sling." said send the load across the broken bridge,

and you thought you could bully or Sheridan turned upon him, uttering coax the cracked thing into standing. between, when he went up the path. "Oh. talk sense," said the doctor, man as Jim and Roscoe put together." There was sleet that evening, with a The open doorway seemed to him the and yawned intentionally. "What do "What!" Sheridan goggled at him ilke a zany.

seventeen years old; he was president at forty-three, and he built that bank like the spoil of a barbarians' battle. that seemed to leave ashes in his with his life for forty years more. Gilt nuts and an apple for lunch; but he Doctor Gurney thoughtfully regard- wasn't stingy-he was just livin' in his ed the bandage strip he had been business. He didn't care for pie or winding, and tossed it into the open automobiles-he had his bank. It was pass one o' these here turned-up-nose and turned-up-pants cigarette boys on the streets. Never spoke to him, self so far, "are you accusin' me of he wouldn't 'a' coughed on him! He dors at the bank! Why, if he'd 'a' just "I accuse you of nothing," said the seen him standin' in front the bank blood of his brain for the bank, but he wasn't. It was every bit-from Sure you will all approve step have were bound Bibbs should go to the the time he went in at seventeen till health shop again, and he did go, and he's be died in harness at eighty-threeit was every last lick of it just that enough? Can't you let him off slavin' for a turned-up-nose, turnednow? He wants to write, and how do up-pants cigarette boy. And Tracy didn't even know his name! He died not ever havin' heard it, though he chased him off the front steps of his house once. The day after Tracy died his old-maid daughter married the cigarette-and there ain't any Tracy bank any more! And now"-his voice rose again-"and now I got a cigarette son-in-law!"

> Gurney pointed to the flourishing right hand without speaking, and Sherfdan once more returned it to the sling.

"My son-in-law likes Florida this fellow. Why not stop this perpetual winter." Sheridan went on. "That's devilish fighting and give Bibbs his good, and my son-in-law better enjoy it, because I don't think he'll be there next winter. They got twelve thousand dollars to spend, and I hear it can be done in Florida by rich sons-inlaw. When Roscoe's woman got me to spend that much on a porch for their new house. Edith wouldn't give me a minute's rest till I turned over the same to her. And she's got it, besides

what I gave her to go east on. It'll be gone long before this time next year, and when she comes home and leaves the cigarette behind-for goodshe'll get some more. My name sin't Tracy, and there ain't gola' to be any Tracy business in the Sheridan family, And there ain't goin' to be any college foundin' and endowin' and trusteein'. nor God-knows-what to keep my property alive when I'm gone! Edith'll be back, and she'll get a girl's share when she's through with that cigarette, but-

Doesn't it appear now that Old Man Sheridan will set about to have Edith's marriage to Lamhorn annulled as soon as she comes to her senjes? Would you do so if you were her father?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)