

The
TURMOIL
A NOVEL
BOOTH TARKINGTON
 AUTHOR OF
 "MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRES"
 "THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN"
 "PENROD" ETC.

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CHAPTER XXVI—Continued.

—14—

Old Man Sheridan has been storming madly after hearing of his daughter's marriage to Lamhorn, the profiteer, in New York. He is trying to bend the will of his son Bibbs.

"By the way," interposed Gurney, "didn't Mrs. Sheridan tell me that Bibbs warned you Edith would marry Lamhorn in New York?"

Sheridan went completely to pieces; he swore, while his wife screamed and stopped her ears. And as he swore he pounded the table with his wounded hand, and when the doctor, after storming at him ineffectively, sprang to catch and protect that hand, Sheridan wrenched it away, tearing the bandage. He hammered the table till it leaped.

"Poo!" he panted, choking. "If he's shown gumption enough to guess right the first time in his life, it's enough for me to begin learnin' him on!" And, struggling with the doctor, he leaned toward Bibbs, thrusting forward his convulsed face, which was deathly pale. "My name ain't Tracy, I tell you!" he screamed, hoarsely. "You give in, you stubborn fool! I've had my way with you before, and I'll have my way with you now!"

Bibbs' face was as white as his father's. "No. You can't have your way," he said. And then, obeying a significant motion of Gurney's head, he went out quickly, leaving them struggling.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mrs. Sheridan, in a wrapper, noiselessly opened the door of her husband's room at daybreak the next morning, and peered within the darkened chamber. At the "old" house they had shared a room, but the architect had chosen to separate them at the new, and they had not known how to formulate an objection, although to both of them something seemed vaguely reprehensible in the new arrangement.

Sheridan did not stir, and she was withdrawing her head from the aperture when he spoke.

"Oh, I'm awake! Come in, if you want to, and shut the door."

She came and sat by the bed. "I woke up thinkin' about it," she explained. "And the more I thought about it the surer I got I must be

*Parker**"No. You Can't Have Your Way."*

right, and I knew you'd be tormentin' yourself if you was awake, so—well, you got plenty other troubles, but I'm just sure you ain't goin' to have the worry with Bibbs it looks like."

"You bet I ain't," he grunted.

"Look how biddable he was about goin' back to the works," she continued. "He's a right good-hearted boy, really, and sometimes I honestly have to say he seems right smart, too. Now and then he'll say something sounds right bright. 'Course, most always it doesn't, and a good deal of the time, when he says things, why, I have to feel glad we haven't got company, because they'd think he didn't have any gumption at all. Yet, look at the way he did when Jim—when Jim got hurt. He took right hold of things. And Doctor Gurney says he's got brains, and you can't deny but what the doctor's right considerable of man. He acts sleepy, but that's only because he's got such a large practice—he's a pretty wide-awake kind of a man some ways. Well, what he says last night about Bibbs—that's what I got to thinkin' about. You heard him, papa; he says,



Bibbs 'll be a bigger business man than what Jim and Roscoe was put together—if he ever wakes up,' he says. Wasn't that exactly what he says?"

"I suppose so," said Sheridan, without exhibiting any interest. "Gurney's crazier 'n Bibbs, but if he wasn't—if what he says was true—what of it?"

"Listen, papa. Just suppose Bibbs took it into his mind to get married. You know where he goes all the time?"

"Oh, Lord, yes!" Sheridan turned over in the bed, his face to the wall, leaving visible of himself only the thick grizzle of his hair. "You better go back to sleep. He runs over there—every minute she'll let him, I suppose. Go back to bed. There's nothin' in it."

"Why ain't there?" she urged. "I know better—there is, too! You wait and see. There's just one thing in the world that'll wake the sleepiest young man alive—yes, and make him jump up—and I don't care who he is or how sound asleep it looks like he is. That's when he takes it into his head to pick out some girl and settle down and have a home and children of his own. Then, I guess, he'll go out after the money! You'll see. Now, I don't say that Bibbs has got the idea in his head yet—er else he wouldn't be talkin' that fool-talk about nine dollars a week bein' good enough for him to live on. But it's comin', papa, and he'll jump for whatever you want to hand him out. He will! And I can tell you this much, too: he'll want all the salary and stock he can get hold of, and he'll hustle to keep gettin' more. That girl's the kind that a young husband just goes crazy to give things to! She's pretty and fine-lookin', and things look nice on her, and I guess she'd like to have 'em about as well as the next. And I guess she isn't gettin' many these days, either, and she'll be pretty ready for the change. I saw her with her sleeves rolled up at the kitchen window the other day, and Jackson told me yesterday their cook left two weeks ago, and they haven't tried to hire another one. He says her and her mother been doin' the housework a good while, and now they're doin' the cookin', too. 'Course Bibbs wouldn't know that unless she's told him, and I reckon she wouldn't: she's kind o' stiffish-lookin', and Bibbs is too up in the clouds to notice anything like that for himself. They've never asked him to a meal in the house, but he wouldn't notice that, either—he's kind of innocent. Now I was thinkin'—you know, I don't suppose we've hardly mentioned the girl's name at table since Jim went, but it seems to me maybe if—"

Sheridan flung out his arms, uttering a sound half groan, half yawn. "You're barkin' up the wrong tree! Go on back to bed, mamma!"

"Why am I?" she demanded, crossly. "Why am I barkin' up the wrong tree?"

"Because you are. There's nothin' in it."

"I'll bet you," she said, rising—"I'll bet you go to church with her this morning. What you want to bet?"

"Go back to bed," he commanded. "I know what I'm talkin' about; there's nothin' in it, I tell you."

She shook her head perplexedly. "Then—do you know something about it that you ain't told me?"

"Yes, I do," he grunted. "Now go on. Maybe I can get a little sleep. I ain't had any yet!"

"Well—" She went to the door, her expression downcast. "I thought maybe—but—" She coughed prefatory. "Oh, papa, something else I wanted to tell you. I was talkin' to Roscoe over the phone last night when the telegram came, so I forgot to tell you, but—well, Sibyl wants to come over this afternoon. They expect to get off by the end o' the week, and I reckon she wants to feel she's done what she could to kind o' make up. Anyway, that's what he said. But what I thought was, no use bein' rough with her, papa—I expect she's suffered a good deal—and I don't think we'd ought to be, on Roscoe's account. You'll—you'll be kind o' polite to her, won't you, papa?"

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