

bare dormitory, with its gray-blanketed beds and fly-specked walls, a last ray of golden sunlight glittered on the glass over the picture of the Praying Jews at the Temple of Jerusalem. The three old men gathered about the table where, for years, they had played a silent, evening game of cards. Besides his own, Hyman held a dummy hand that took the place of Daniel Stern, the fourth inmate of the dormitory, who had died the week before. The coat of contention was behind them, and except for an occasional grunt from Solomon all trouble seemed at an end.

At Minyon, the sundown prayer of mourning they held for the comrade whom death had taken from among them, seven of the ten old men who gathered in the snuffy parlor suspected nothing of the tempest that grumbled in the bosoms of two of their members. David, the smallest of the bowed figures garbed in praying-shawls, had forgotten for the moment the treasure that was not for him, and, swaying to the rhythm of the sing-song Hebrew, beat his breast in a very agony of religious ecstasy.

Hyman officiated as rabbi. His sonorous voice rose and fell in measured cadence. The others droned through their responses unmeaningly; but, moved by the poetry of the words and the promises they contained, David, seeing with eyes that passed the boundaries of the dark, close room, left his crooked hampered body for the time being, and, like the other Psalmist lifted his voice in joyful praise.

The odor of Sabbath eve's dinner crept in to them as the Minyon ended. Solomon shut his prayer-book noisily. Hyman hurried from the room almost before the mumbled "Amen" were over. When Solomon and David reached the dormitory they found him brushing busily at the coat that hung upon the door.

Solomon snorted. The red in his face purpled darkly. For an instant he watched Hyman's deliberate movements. Then he chuckled ironically, and, taking his own clothes brush from the bureau drawer, began sweeping the other side of the frock-coat. His eye was that of the fighting cock, but Hyman smiled at him.

"You are good to help me clean the coat," he said guilelessly. "I am getting it ready for the Sabbath."

"When I shall wear it with my silk hat," retorted Solomon.

"Well—we shall see what we shall see." Hyman's smile deepened and became enigmatic.

The spirit of the bully in Solomon was daunted by this show of prophecy. He turned on the unconscious David.

"You! Did you see Mrs. Mark give him the coat?" he demanded.

"What? The coat—I don't know." David's dreamy brown eyes looked vaguely at Solomon's angry countenance. "Mrs. Marks didn't give it to me."

"No, I guess not." Solomon laughed brutally, and David shrank from his mirth as from a blow.

Hyman looked with sudden friendliness on the hunchback, and lent a hand in knotting his necktie.

"Prince Albert coats are not meant for such as you, David," he said. "The dinner waits. Let us go in."

But after he and Solomon had left the room, David Hertz laid his wrinkled cheek caressingly against the folds of the smooth cloth coat for a moment before he followed them to the dining hall.

When the long feast of the Sabbath eve was finished, the consecrated bread blessed and munched, and the wine drunk, the three gathered in the dormitory and resumed their game. The strained relations continued, however. At last Solomon could stand the suspense no longer. He flung down his cards and scowled savagely at the others.

"I want you to understand that I get the coat!" he cried. "I say, I get the coat! And I wear it when I go to the synagogue and when I visit my brother-in-law and my brother-in-law's cousin!"

Hyman did not answer, but again he smiled in an aggravatingly knowing fashion. Solomon's bravado died in the silence, and he turned sulkily back to his cards.

They had been long asleep in the dark, tobacco-scented dormitory where Solomon's snores and Hyman's loud wheeze chorused with the slow, deliberate tick of the clock. A stray beam from a street-lamp fell across the wall and hovered on the sombre breadths of the Prince Albert coat. The rattle of a wagon over the cobbles set the brass candlestick on the marble mantel-shelf tinkling with faint metallic notes.

The creaking of a board at the foot of Solomon's bed awoke him. He sat up, staring stupidly into the darkness. On the other side of the room Hyman stirred also. Stretching his long arms, he opened his eyes and looked at something that moved in the blackness across the floor.

A little hunched figure, with the sure steps of the sleep-walker, came from the corner where David's bed stood. The night-shirt hung in pitiless, revealing lines over the bent back as the small form came from the shadow into the ray of the street lamp. The watchers, held by the superstitious fear of a hasty awakening's bringing death to the somnambulist, did not move, but noted with strange intentness each of his actions.

David felt confidently over the wall until he encountered the Prince Albert coat. He took it down, stroked it, and flicked an imaginary dust-speck. Then, sighing as a child in slumber, he slipped into its great folds.

"He—he—he is dreaming about it, so much does he want it." Solomon could contain himself no longer, and his hoarse whisper reached Hyman. "See! See, what is he doing now!"

David had found his way to the bureau. With trembling hands he buttoned the Prince Albert and fondled it as it draped about him. It fell to the length of an overcoat, and at the bottom his white night shirt bordered it grotesquely.

"Peace be with him!" Hyman murmured piously. "The Lord God of Hosts watches over him. Think of it, Solomon Cohen! To want a thing so much that one rises up at the midnight hour and finds it in his sleep!"

David was pacing to and fro in the bare space before the window. He held something tightly under his arm that Solomon peered at as he passed his bed.

"It is his prayer-book, Hyman. He thinks he is going to the synagogue, Ach, du lieber Gott! To want the coat so bad, so bad, and yet say no word about it. Hyman, I—I am willing he should have—"

"Yes, and I too," Hyman broke in. "When he wakes we will tell him."

At ten o'clock the next morning the little procession from the home wended its

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way to the synagogue. David headed it, walking beside Mrs. Marks. His wistful, child-eyed face beamed with a bewildered delight. About him hung the Prince Albert coat, loosely, like a robe almost, and reaching to his heels. On his head was Solomon's silk hat, a bit of the newspaper band that had been used to make it fit him, protruding over behind his thin gray hair. He carried his prayer book in one hand and Hyman's silver-headed cane in the other.

After him came his two benefactors talking amicably, following with smiles—half of pride and half of a protecting, al-

most paternal love—the strange little figure that went before them.

"It is not such a very great deal that we did for him," Solomon confided. "But think of it, he cried for joy. Have you ever seen one made so happy before, Hyman?"

New Boarder (disdainfully)—I don't see how you fellows eat this bread.

Old-Timer—We force ourselves to eat it, so it won't come back to us as bread pudding.

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